*CONFIDENTIAL ADVICE TO JCSH MEMBERS*

BRIEFING NOTE

November, 2019

**AGENDA ITEM:** *SUBSTANCE USE RISKS FOR CANADIAN CHILDREN AND YOUTH: AREAS OF RESPONSE BY PAN-CANADIAN JOINT CONSORTIUM FOR SCHOOL HEALTH (JCSH)*

**LEAD JURISDICTION**: **PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND**

**DECISIONS REQUESTED:**

**Decision**   **Discussion**   **Information**

**BACKGROUND:**

* The Pan-Canadian Joint Consortium for School Health (JCSH) is a partnership of 25 Ministries of Education and Health / Responsible for Health Promotion across Canada, working to support the learning, health, and well-being of children and youth in school communities.
* It was established in 2005 by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) and the Conference of Ministers of Health to facilitate a comprehensive and coordinated approach to health promotion in the school setting.
* JCSH’s purpose is to facilitate the collaboration of the health and education sectors to better accomplish mutual goals and support shared mandates for the promotion of wellness and achievement in children and youth in Canadian schools.

**WORK OF JCSH:**

* JCSH contributes to leadership and capacity building in Canada in unique ways:
  + Develops and exchanges evidence and knowledge, leading to changes in supports for children and youth in the school setting
  + Develops and mobilizes research to support provincial and territorial improvements in healthy school communities
  + Provides expertise and consultation on pan-Canadian Working Groups
  + Links FPT governments on initiatives and emerging issues that impact the health, safety, and achievement of children and youth throughout Canada
  + Works with research and practice experts throughout Canada to develop resources that improve the supports for school staff, as well as children and youth
  + Contributes to improved conditions for all students, staff, and members of school communities.
* The work of the JCSH promotes comprehensive school health, an internationally recognized framework for supporting improvements in students’ educational outcomes while addressing school health in a planned, integrated, holistic, and sustainable way.

**CURRENT SITUATION**

* In response to the heightened concerns of the risks for health and safety of Canadian children and youth posed by current trends in vaping, cannabis, and other substances, JCSH has undertaken a series of environmental scans in 2019 to provide an overview of legislation, guidelines, resources, common messaging, and research.
* The following represent a sample of information gathered in each of the three environmental scans that reflect this work on substance use and Canadian school communities:
  + The vaping environmental scan has legislation updates, resources, and common messaging from a number of provinces and territories. The [JCSH Vaping Resource for Schools (2019)](http://www.jcsh-cces.ca/images/upload/Vaping%20Resource%20for%20Schools.JCSH.2019.pdf) as well as research from the [McCreary Centre Society](https://www.mcs.bc.ca/download_resources) and the [COMPASS Survey](https://uwaterloo.ca/compass-system/compass-system-projects/compass-study) are included.
  + The cannabis environmental scan reflects education initiatives in all provinces and territories to support post-legalization contexts. It also notes that curriculum work may focus broadly on substances and not specifically on cannabis, but resources available may also provide balanced information on the laws around cannabis, health risks, responsible use, and dangers of driving impaired.
  + The substance use environmental scan reflects curriculum outcomes on substance use education; these outcomes have a substantial focus also on communication skills for youth, high-risk dating practices, and decision making processes.

Prepared by JCSH Secretariat: November 2019