

## **Brunswick Learning Centres Inc. Scent-Free Policy**

In consideration of indoor air quality and the health of students, employees, volunteers and visitors, Brunswick Learning Centres has undertaken a scent free policy.

This policy is a result of an increased awareness of health concerns arising from odour-related complaints. Many students, staff, volunteers and visitors are adversely affected by the use of scented cleaning and personal products. The policy is meant to educate staff, students and visitors regarding indoor air quality issues associated with scented products. The goal is to improve indoor air quality by eliminating the use of scented personal products in the facility.

Medical evidence has shown that scented products are harmful to the health of sensitive individuals. Scented products may be harmful to those with allergies, environmental sensitivity, or chronic heart or lung disease. Children especially can be more at risk. A child's developing organs and tissues are more vulnerable to harm from toxic exposures. Also a child's smaller size means that concentrations of harmful substances are higher when swallowed or inhaled by a child.

Exposure to indoor air pollutants can have a different effect depending on the personal sensitivity of the individual and the concentration of the chemicals. A significant percentage of the population is hypersensitive to scented products (especially those suffering from existing respiratory disease). Even those without sensitivities can suffer eye and nose irritation from chemical irritants. For many people coming in contact with scented products can result in the following symptoms:

- Headaches
- Nausea
- Weakness
- Wheezing and coughing
- Stuffed nose
- Dizziness
- Numbness
- Memory loss
- Eye and throat irritations

The severity of the symptoms can vary as well as their duration. Some people may experience a mild irritation while others may be incapacitated.

While most people associate scent with personal care products such as perfumes, scents are included in a large range of products including:

- Shampoo and conditioners
- Deodorants
- Hairspray, styling products

- Lotions and creams
- Soaps
- Cosmetics
- Air fresheners
- Cleaners
- New furniture/equipment

Due to rising concerns surrounding indoor air quality and scent sensitivities, there is a broad range of scent-free and unscented products available. To find safer personal care products, visit the Skin Deep Database, <http://www.cosmeticsdatabase.com/index.php> , a site that assesses and compares the safety of many brands of shampoos, skin creams, baby wipes, etc. Skin Deep is run by the Environmental Working Group, an American non-profit research organization.

Indoor air quality is essential to a favourable learning and necessary for a safe and healthy work environment. Indoor air quality is especially important in schools as staff and students spend extended periods of time indoors and are potentially exposed to a variety of indoor air pollutants. The scent-free policy will also apply to events that take place outside of regular student occupancy hours.

The policy will restrict the use of scented products as follows:

1. Prohibit use of scented personal products by staff, students, and visitors
2. Off gassing of any newly introduced materials or equipment for required time
3. Use of scent-free material and cleaning product for daily cleaning
4. Restrict use of scented cleaning products to non-occupied hours and allow for off gassing of cleaning products before the premises become occupied.

In cases where personal scented products become an issue with school occupants, the school administration will work on an individual basis with the help of the School District and Province if need be to resolve the issue.

Students, staff, parents and visitors will be notified of this policy prior to the opening of the school. The school will display appropriate signage informing and encouraging students, employees, volunteers and visitors to refrain from wearing or using scented products. The policy will be included in school policy handbook and will be posted on the school's website.