



Healthy Schools

NEWSLETTER

ideas and information for a healthier school community

FALL 2010

York Region Community and Health Services is pleased to present the fall edition of our *Healthy Schools* newsletter. This newsletter contains updates on exciting local Healthy Schools activities. You will also find valuable information and tips on improving the health of your school community. We wish you a healthy and happy school year!

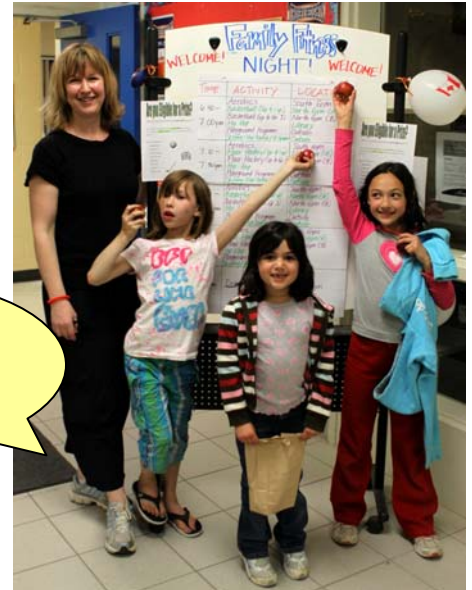
What's your story?

Seven Healthy Schools received an *inukshuk* plaque from York Region Community and Health Services to recognize their outstanding efforts in 2009/2010.

Congratulations to these winning schools :

- ★ St. Veronica CS
- ★ Blessed Trinity CS
- ★ St. Clare CS
- ★ Crosby Heights PS
- ★ Lincoln Alexander PS
- ★ Coledale PS
- ★ Aurora Heights PS

Crosby Height PS hosted a family fun/fitness night.



St. Clare CS Healthy Living committee celebrated another successful year. Silvana Pileggi, the committee champion, was recognized for her hard work and dedication in promoting student health and well being.



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iCANwalk to School ... can you?

IWALK Day: Wednesday, October 6
IWALK Week: October 4-8



This initiative brought to you by Green Communities Canada and the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario

Green Communities Canada and the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario are collaborating this year to bring Ontario schools an exciting new spin on walking to school or walking at school throughout the year. Schools are encouraged to register for International Walk to School Month (IWALK) at www.saferoutestoschool.ca/registration.asp and take the **iCANwalk to school ... can you?** pledge by checking this option on the registration form.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation believes that every child deserves to grow up healthy and is committed to helping schools create healthy community environments. *Spark Together for Healthy Kids*, *Jump Rope for Heart* and the *Heart Healthy Kids* tool kits are three unique **resources to help our children be active and healthy**. Find out more at <http://tinyurl.com/2dkd9pg>.

The pledge will take effect from IWALK Day, October 6, 2010. Schools can log their kilometres walked throughout the year on the web site.



Schools can choose to have a weekly or monthly walk to/at school campaign, or they can participate in Winter Walk Day on February 9 during *Heart Month*, and *Spring into Spring* from April to June. The key is for schools to complete the pledge and log the kilometres walked on the website throughout the school year to be **eligible for prizes** (selected from the Heart and Stroke Foundation's HeartSmart™ Points).

For more information, please check the **iCANwalk** website, www.icanwalk.ca

Register now! More prizes coming!!

Register online at www.saferoutestoschool.ca before October 6, 2010. Schools will receive stickers, promotional posters and a class set of pedometers.

Creating a healthier workplace at school

Did you know that October is healthy workplace month in Canada?

The theme this year is *Healthy Mind, Healthy Body, Healthy Work...A Positive Workplace Works!* Visit www.healthyworkplacemonth.ca to access free tips, tools, activities and challenges to kick start employee wellness at your school.

Are you looking for more information about developing a comprehensive workplace wellness program at your school? Call **Health Connection** at 1-800-361-5653, TTY 1-866-252-9933 or visit www.york.ca/workplacewellness.

pause to PLAY



We all win when we choose to get active! Our bodies, our minds and our schools are healthier and happier. Congratulations to all the schools who participated in the *pause to PLAY* week in April 2010! Over 10 000 students turned off their screens and turned their physical activity levels up. They chose to get active, eat healthy and stay safe, and also had plenty of fun. Great job everyone and keep moving!

Also, three schools each won a \$200.00 gift certificate to purchase sports equipment to help keep their school and playgrounds active!

Congratulations to *Aurora Heights P.S., As-Sadiq Islamic, and Fairwood P.S.* on promoting *pause to PLAY* in your school.

Schools were creative and encouraged students to help run the *pause to PLAY* campaign by making posters and creative announcements, handing out the log sheets and planning activities for recess and after school. Some students started classroom challenges and made bar graphs of how active they were, what they did more often and what they did less often. Some schools are still encouraging students and families to turn off their screens more often and get active instead.

School in the spotlight! Aurora Grove P.S. hosted their 2nd annual ball hockey night for students grades 4 and up. They also held an open gym night for students and their families kindergarten to grade 3. Their Healthy School committee provided healthy snacks for everyone. Way to go, Aurora Grove P.S!

If you are interested in finding out more about how to create a more active school environment or how to be part of the Healthy Schools program, please contact the York Region Public Health Elementary School Program by calling York Region *Health Connection* at 1-800-361-5653, TTY 1-866-252-9933.

Booster seats prevent injuries and save lives

Despite the introduction of booster seat legislation in several provinces, booster seat use among Canadian children aged 4 to 8 is still alarmingly low.

Booster seat use is mandatory for children under 8 years of age, who are between 18-36 kg (40-80 lbs) and less than 145 cm (4'9"). All caregivers, such as babysitters and grandparents, are required to use booster seats while transporting children in their care.

Unfortunately, only a third of kids (34.3 per cent) are correctly seated in booster seats. This puts 65.7 per cent of children at risk of serious injuries and fatalities. Children aged 4 to 8 experience about 10 times more deaths and injuries during car crashes than infants and toddlers. The use of booster seats needs to be promoted to parents and caregivers.

Look for the new booster seat resource that has been sent to your school for distribution to children in the primary grades.



You will also find valuable resources on our website www.york.ca/injuryprevention

Food safety at home

Don't get sick from... your food!

Families get sick from meals made at home more often than you think. Follow the four simple steps of *clean, separate, cook and chill* to minimize the risk of food-borne illness.

Clean:

Bacteria can easily spread throughout the kitchen. Frequent and proper cleaning can prevent that from happening.

- Wash your hands with soap and warm water for 15 – 20 seconds before and after handling food
- Wash cutting boards, dishes, utensils and countertops with hot, soapy water after preparing each food item and before you go on to the next food
- Wash fresh fruits and vegetables thoroughly under cool running water, including those with skins and rinds that are not eaten. If you use a vegetable brush, make sure it is clean

Separate:

Cross-contamination is how harmful bacteria spread. Keep raw meat, poultry, seafood and their juices separate from food that is cooked or ready-to-eat during purchase, transport and storage.

- Separate raw meat, poultry and seafood from other foods in your grocery shopping cart, grocery bags and during preparation
- Store raw meat, poultry and seafood on the lowest shelves in your refrigerator to prevent their juices from dripping onto other food

Cook:

Improper cooking of food could mean that harmful bacteria survive and make you sick.

Food is safely cooked when it reaches a high enough internal temperature to kill the harmful bacteria.

- Use a probe food thermometer to check the internal temperature of food. This is the only way to tell if the food has reached the proper final cooking temperature. You can not tell if food is cooked safely by how it looks
- Re-heat leftovers to 74°C (165°F) or higher. Bring gravy to a rolling boil and stir during the re-heating process

Chill:

Bacteria multiply fastest at the temperatures between 4°C (40°F) and 60°C (140°F), so chilling food properly is one of the most effective ways to reduce the risk of illness.

- Refrigerate or freeze all perishable food promptly after purchase. Perishable food left out for more than two hours should be discarded
- Keep the fridge at 4°C (40°F) or below. Use an appliance thermometer and check it often to make sure that your fridge is at the correct temperature
- Thaw meat in the refrigerator, under cold running water, or in the microwave. Food thawed in the microwave should be cooked immediately after being thawed. Never thaw meat at room temperature
- Cool hot food properly by portioning it into shallow containers, before storing it into the refrigerator or freezer

Symptoms of food-borne illness include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach cramps, headache and fever. People who think they are experiencing food-borne illness should seek medical attention. For more information on food safety at home, contact York Region *Health Connection* at 1-800-361-5653/ TTY 1-866-252-9933, or visit www.york.ca/foodsafety

P/PM 150 supports healthy eating at school

School Food and Beverage Policy (P/PM 150)... Moving beyond!

The Ministry of Education has taken an essential step toward improving the nutrition environment in schools by releasing the new [School Food and Beverage Policy](#). The policy provides Nutrition Standards that apply to all food and beverages *sold* to students at school and will come into effect September, 2011.

Assessing the nutritional value of food using the Nutrition Standards

The Nutrition Standards help to determine the nutritional value of foods and beverages. P/PM 150 classifies food into three categories: Sell Most, Sell Less and Not Permitted for Sale. It is important when selecting foods to offer at school that they are from the 'Sell Most' category and provide maximum nutritional value. For example, try these changes for your next pizza day:



| Minimum Nutritional Value | Maximum Nutritional Value |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| White crust (lower fibre) | Whole grain crust (higher fibre) |
| Pepperoni (higher fat and salt) | Vegetables and/or lean meat |
| Regular cheese (30% Milk Fat) | Lower fat (20% Milk Fat) cheese |
| Pop (high sugar and no nutrients) | Lower fat (2% Milk Fat or less) milk |

A success story

Canada's Food Guide recommends that we make at least half of our Grain Products whole grain each day. To help meet this recommendation, and meet P/PM 150 Nutrition Standards, Glad Park Public School began offering pizza on whole wheat crust for pizza days. By the end of the school year, almost half of the pizza orders were for whole wheat crust. Voices from Glad Park students...

I didn't notice a difference between whole wheat and white crust. - Erin, Grade 2

I tried a piece of white crust and whole wheat crust and I liked the whole wheat one better!

- Justin, Grade 3

Now the school only offers pizza on whole wheat crust. Not only did the children not mind, but during the 2009/10 school year Glad Park saw an increase in their sales!

Take the next step...

So, what about when food is *offered* at school, such as during classroom celebrations and field trips? Or, when candy is used as a reward for good behaviour? Public health staff can support you in applying nutrition standards to *all* foods and beverages that are *offered* and *sold*. Doing this will help make the healthy choice the easy choice for all our students!

Adapted from Nutrition Tools for Schools Newsletter Ed 2. Ontario Society of Nutrition Professionals in Public Health August, 2010.

Where to go for help

York Region Community and Health Services *Health Connection* at 1-800-361-5653, TTY 1-866-252-9933 or visit www.york.ca/nutrition

Ministry of Education www.ontario.ca/healthyschools

EatRight Ontario www.ontario.ca/eatright or call 1-877-510-5102

Moving beyond P/PM 150...

Last Halloween, a parent made fresh vegetables into a 'scary' snack. She prepared a vegetable skeleton with a brain dip. Along with *Mr. Vegetable Skeleton*, she took extra bowls of vegetables for the kids to snack on. The students loved it and not one vegetable was left for any goblins to get!



Upcoming health promotion events...

September

- Breakfast for Learning Month
- 4 for Lunch Registration
- 11-19 AIDS Walk for Life
- 19 Terry Fox Run
- 30 Terry Fox National School Run
- 26 World Heart Day

October

- Healthy Workplace Month
- Influenza Immunization Awareness Month
- International Walk to School Month
- You're the Chef Registration
- 3-9 Mental Illness Awareness Week
- 10 World Mental Health Day
- 4-8 IWALK Week
- 6 IWALK Day
- 18-22 National Infection Control Week
- 16 World Food Day
- 3-9 National Fire Prevention Week

November

- Diabetes Month
- Osteoporosis Month
- 21-27 National Family Week
- 14 World Diabetes Day
- 20 National Child Day
- 25 International Day to End Violence Against Women
- 15-21 National Drug Awareness Week

December

- 1 World AIDS Day
- 6 National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women

Healthy Schools: New year, new committee!

Whether you are recruiting new members or forming a Healthy School Committee for the first time, the Healthy Schools Toolkit has lots of tips and resources to help build commitment and achieve the first step on the journey to a healthier school community.

Who is involved? A committee is made up of parents, students and school staff. This group may be part of an already existing committee.

Where and when does it take place? The committee meets regularly, usually once a month before or after school, or at recess.

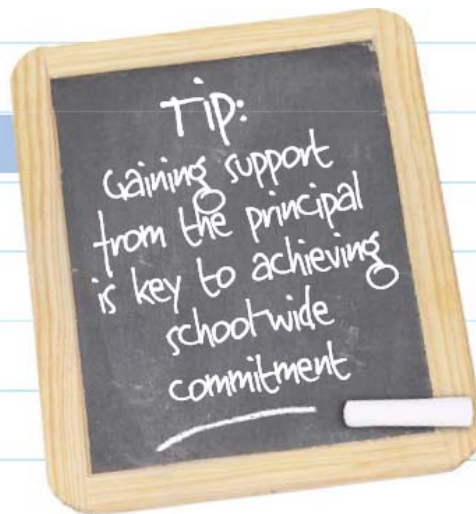
What are the goals of the committee?

- Raise awareness of the benefits of becoming a Healthy School
- Motivate the school community to support Healthy Schools
- Recruit school community members to help create and carry out a Healthy Schools Action Plan of fun, healthy activities for your school!

How to recruit members:

- Find champions who believe in a Healthy School and encourage these people to promote the benefits to the school
- Hand out flyers at school barbeque night or meet the teacher night
- Run announcements that the school is recruiting Healthy School representatives

For more ideas refer to **Tool #2, Recruitment Strategies Tip Sheet**, in your Healthy Schools Toolkit and contact Health Connection.



Check out the **Healthy Schools Toolkit** and other resources available at www.york.ca/healthyschools

For information contact
Health Connection
1-800-361-5653
or visit www.york.ca/healthyschools

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