



Healthy Schools

NEWSLETTER

ideas and information for a healthier school community

SPRING 2010

York Region Community and Health Services Elementary School Program is pleased to present the spring edition of the Healthy Schools Newsletter. This issue contains updates on exciting local Healthy School activities and valuable information and tips on improving the health of your school. We wish you a healthy and happy spring and summer!

What's your story?

Fairwood dreams the Olympic dream!

February 18, 2010 was Olympic Day at Fairwood Public School in Keswick. Opening ceremonies were followed by a day full of physical activity and fun, with each student receiving a gold medal.

"Wow, I never heard the students sing *Oh, Canada* so loudly," said proud Healthy School Champion and teacher, Ms. Janis Waters.

Students laughed and learned new games including curling, luge, biathlon, skiing, hockey and torch relay races!

Grade 6 student Thomas Gallagher said, "I was nervous and excited to carry the torch; I think it would be really cool to do this for real someday!"



St. Clare skips for health!



The rhythmic sounds of jumping and rope turning could be heard at St. Clare Catholic School in Woodbridge. In the skipping club's first year, at least 70 boys and girls came out for some fun.

Rodney De Freitas, skipping instructor, and Vilma Tanel-Logozzo, P. E. teacher, were pleased with the enthusiastic response.

"Skipping is an excellent activity to improve overall health and cardio," says Vilma.

"A lot of boys think skipping is for girls - not so," adds Rodney. "Skipping is actually one of the core training regimens for a lot of national, international and professional athletes."

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Get your school moving!

**Take the 2010
Earth Week to Clean Air Day
Challenge.**

**Choose a week between
April 19 – June 2**

**Challenge your students
To walk, skip or jump!**

For activity resources, stickers and prizes

Register at:

www.saferoutestoschool.ca

Let's get Physical!

Pause to PLAY encourages students to turn off their screens and turn up their activity levels for the week of April 19-23. From texting to video games, internet to television, students are taking in an average of six hours per day of screen time and only 10% are getting the recommended 90 minutes of daily physical activity¹. The benefits of physical activity include improved sleep, increased ability to cope with stress, healthier weights, and overall improved self esteem.

Physical activity improves student achievement

Research clearly demonstrates that regular physical activity improves learning and academic performance. Teachers face the challenge of fitting it into a day packed with curriculum. The 2009 Physical Activity Report Card demonstrates that "time allocated for physical education does not negatively affect academic achievement, even when the time is taken away from other subjects" (www.activehealthykids.ca). Physical activity increases attention span, perceptual skills, and achievement in math tests and reading, intelligence quotient and academic readiness. Even frequent, short bursts of activity add up!

Pause to PLAY!

Pause to PLAY promotes healthy eating and safety while encouraging students to spend time trying new activities with their families. Students record their activity, healthy foods they eat, and time spent with their family on a log sheet.

Register your school now at www.york.ca/healthyschools. You can **download** great resources including announcements, tips and ideas for encouraging physical activity at home. The first fifty schools registered will receive posters and skipping ropes. By completing the evaluation form you become eligible to win one of three \$200.00 gift certificates for physical activity equipment!

Pause to PLAY week is also a great time to implement a walk to school program. Encourage kids to be more active by getting to school the **ABC** way: **A**ny way **B**ut in a **C**ar!

Teach your students that every step matters and encourage them to "sweat a little bit more, a little more often" during *Pause to PLAY* 2010 and beyond!

For more ideas on Daily Physical Activity and small space activities contact **Health Connection**



If a child tells you their teeth hurt, we can help

The Children in Need of Treatment Program (CINOT) now includes children and teenagers up to the age of 17 from low-income families who do not have dental insurance.

Free urgent dental care:

- fillings, extractions and sedation
- preventative care, including cleaning and fluoride
- dental health support and information

To determine eligibility for the CINOT Program, a dental screening appointment can be arranged by contacting York Region Community and Health Services at:

1-800-735-6625 or 905-895-4512

Because no child should ever have to suffer.



Red Flags: A Quick Reference Guide for Early Years Professionals in York Region

What is it?

Red Flags is a quick reference guide to assess the growth and development of children up to the age of six by functions. It includes factors which affect parent-child interaction and impact child health, growth and development, such as postpartum mood disorder and abuse.

This guide allows early years professionals to understand when and where to make referrals for further investigation or intervention as well as contact and resource information for services in York Region.

Who should use it?

This document is intended for use by early years professionals working with young children and their families. **A basic knowledge of healthy child development is assumed.**

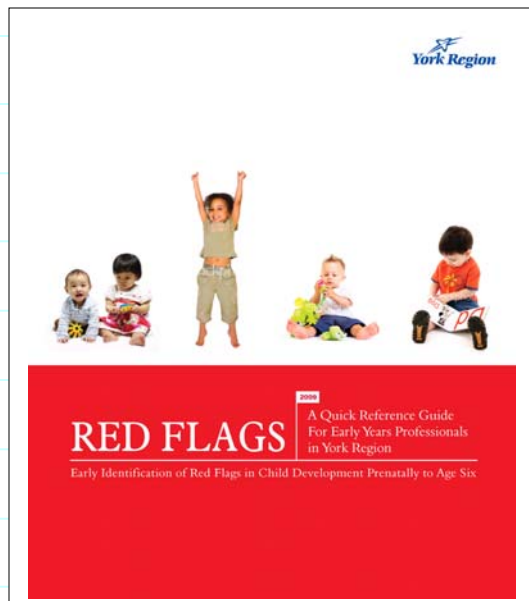
Where can I get a copy?

The guide can be downloaded from: www.york.ca/redflags

For a hard copy of the guide, fill out the order form available on the above web site and mail, fax or email to the address indicated. There is a charge for orders of five copies or more.

Your feedback is important!

Please fill out the online survey at www.york.ca/redflags to be eligible for a draw for a gift certificate to *York Region Eat Smart!* restaurants.



Health = Success in Learning! A whole family approach

What?

Health = Success in Learning! is a resource with strategies and an easy-to-use chart to track and monitor healthy habits and routines at home. The chart includes: Healthy Eating, Healthy Activity, Healthy Relationships and Healthy Environment.

Why?

Healthy habits and routines have a positive impact on classroom learning, test scores and overall student success. The choices families make about what they eat, physical activity, relationships and home environment influence a child's educational experience. Having enough sleep and a healthy breakfast can make a big difference in the classroom.

Who and when?

Great for grade three and grade six students who are preparing for the provincial EQAO testing in May, but useful for all families, any time.

Teacher feedback

Over half of the teachers who used this resource noticed positive changes in their students and over 40 per cent commented that participants were more alert and attentive in class.

For more information please contact your Public Health Nurse or **Health Connection**.

Creating healthier workplaces at school: Don't die of embarrassment...get screened

Colorectal cancer is one of the most common cancers in both men and women. It is the second deadliest form of cancer and Ontario has one of the highest rates in the world. Colorectal cancer, often referred to as "bowel cancer", includes cancer of the large intestine and rectum.



The risk for colorectal cancer increases with:

- age - particularly after 50
- polyps - small growths on the inner wall of the colon and rectum
- family history - of polyps, colon, breast or uterine cancer
- diet - especially high in fat and red meat and low in fruits and vegetables
- obesity
- physical inactivity
- heavy alcohol consumption
- inflammatory bowel disease
- smoking

Over 90 per cent of colorectal cancers can be prevented or successfully treated if detected early. A simple fecal occult blood test (FOBT) could save your life. Adopting a healthy lifestyle over the long term may lower your risk of developing colorectal cancer. For more information, go to www.coloncancercheck.ca

Consider promoting cancer screening in your workplace during the month of April (National Cancer Month). To access your free workplace toolkit contact your Public Health Nurse or **Health Connection**.

Sun Smart Poster Contest winner!

Upcoming health promotion events...

May

Allergy Awareness Month
www.on.lung.ca; www.aaia.ca

Rabies Awareness Month
www.york.ca

Spring into Spring
www.saferoutestoschool.ca

National Summer Safety Week
www.safety-council.org (May 1-7)

World Asthma Day
www.ginasthma.com (May 4)

York Children's Water Festival
www.ycwf.com (May 17-21)

National Road Safety Week
www.safety-council.org (May 11-17)

Safe Kids Week
www.safekidscanada.ca (May 31-June 5)

World No Tobacco Day
www.who.int (May 31)

June

Recreation and Parks Month
www.recandparksmonth.ca

World Environment Day
www.unep.org/wed (June 5)

Clean Air Day
www.cleanairday.com (June 2)

National Sun Awareness Week
www.dermatology.ca (June 7-13)

Congratulations to

**Richmond Hill
Montessori School**

**for submitting the
winning entry!**

Second place - Mother Teresa

Third place - St. Michael

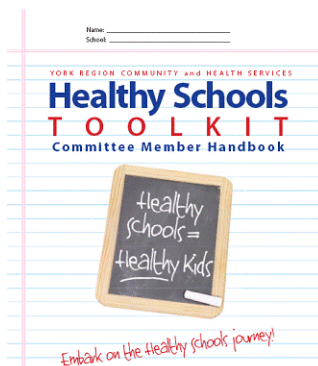


Healthy Schools: Evaluation and getting ready for next year

As your Healthy Schools activities wind down, we encourage you to evaluate them. Your Public Health Nurse can offer tips on how to evaluate the activities you have done through the year. Once your Healthy School Committee has had the chance to review feedback and your Action Plan, you will begin to see what you should build upon for next year.

Take time to step back and look at your successes and celebrate them. Identify areas where you see gaps and try to work on these for next year. To help you through this process, complete the final page of the Action Plan. This will provide a summary and an evaluation of the year to share with the committee and your Public Health Nurse.

While you don't need to commit to a firm action plan for next year now, some advance planning will help give you a great head start!



**For more
great tips,
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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