



Healthy Schools Program

What's Your Healthy?

What is a Healthy School?

A Healthy School promotes the physical, mental, social and spiritual health of the whole school community. It is a healthy setting for living, learning and working.

The Healthy School program:

- Involves the entire school community: students, parents, staff and community partners.
- Focuses on health topics identified by the school community.
- Uses the *Foundations for a Healthy School* to comprehensively address a health topic(s) under the following areas:

Curriculum, Teaching & Learning

Offering a wide range of opportunities for students to learn, practise and promote positive and healthy behaviours, and to practise how to lead healthy, active lives.

School & Classroom Leadership

Creating a positive classroom and school environment by identifying shared goals and priorities that are responsive to the needs of the school community.

Student Engagement

Students feel a sense of belonging at school; and are informed about, engaged with and empowered to participate in and lead academic and non-academic activities.

Social & Physical Environments

Includes school led initiatives that support learning and contribute to the positive cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development of students.

Home, School & Community Partnerships

Engages parents, school staff, organizations such as public health, social services, parks and recreation, and local businesses and community groups to help address the school's specific health topic(s).

Why Healthy Schools?

The Ministry of Education states,

“Good food, daily physical activity and a healthy environment that supports learning and growth are vital to helping students reach their full potential.”

The World Health Organization recognizes,

“Overall child health status positively affects educational performance and attainment.”

Young people who feel connected to their school, and have positive relationships with their teachers and classmates are more likely to develop self-confidence and emotional well-being.

Benefits of a Healthy School

Healthy Schools promote youth engagement and resiliency, which helps students to:

- Reduce the likelihood of risk taking behaviours.
- Develop a sense of pride, satisfaction and accomplishment in their achievements.
- Obtain a greater sense of empowerment, meaning and connectedness.
- Increase mental well-being.
- Develop positive relationships and environments.
- Use multiple approaches to address school needs.
- Gain leadership experience and the opportunity to earn community service hours.

How To Become a Healthy School



Talk with key stakeholders at your school to see if the time is right to start a Healthy Schools program.



Identify your champion to engage the school community and provide leadership to your Healthy Schools program.

Now you are ready to get started with the Healthy Schools process:

STEP 1

Form a Healthy Schools committee. Identify an existing committee, or form a new one made up of parents, students and staff who can meet regularly.

STEP 2

Survey your school to identify strengths, needs, and topics of interest. Based on the survey results, identify the health topic priorities for your school (e.g. physical activity, nutrition, mental health, etc.).

STEP 3

Develop and carry out an action plan. Develop an action plan with the committee to address the health topic you choose. The action plan outlines the activities to be implemented in the school.

STEP 4

Evaluate and celebrate achievements. Review and evaluate the action plan activities. Celebrate your success!



Call York Region Health Connection at **1-800-361-5653**, TTY **1-866-252-9933** to speak with a public health nurse who will provide ongoing support and share tips, resources and information.

Support Available to Your Healthy School

York Region Community and Health Services provide support on a variety of topics. The health team consist of public health nurses, nutritionists, health inspectors and dental professionals.

We can provide:

- Ongoing consultation
- Resources
- Support for health policy development
- Links to community organizations
- Referrals to public health services
- Educational workshops
- Displays



Resources Available

Support and resources are available on the following topics:

- Early identification tools and resources
- Environmental health
- Food safety
- Hand washing
- Healthy eating and nutrition
- Healthy schools student clubs
- Injury prevention (home, recreational and road safety)
- Lyme disease
- Mental health promotion/ stigma reduction
- Physical activity
- Preconception health
- Rabies
- Oral health
- Safe drinking water and beach water
- Sexual health
- Student leadership
- Substance misuse prevention
- Sun safety
- Tattooing and body piercing
- Tobacco-free living
- Vaccine preventable disease (Hepatitis B, Meningitis) and Human Papillomavirus (HPV) immunizations
- West Nile virus
- Youth engagement





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York Region Health Connection

Community and Health Services

Public Health

www.york.ca



6689 12_2014