Foundations for a Healthy School Framework

Environmental Education Symposium
Tuesday, February 24-25, 2009
Purpose

This workshop will:

- provide an overview of the *Foundations for a Healthy Schools* framework that outlines the four components of a healthy school, including High-Quality Instruction and Programs, Healthy Physical Environment, Supportive Social Environment and Community Partnerships and

- examine specific ways that schools are incorporating environmental initiatives into this framework.
Ministry of Education - Vision

- Promote a strong, vibrant, publicly funded education system, focused on three goals:
  - high levels of student achievement
  - reduced gaps in student achievement
  - increased public confidence and support for public education.
Healthy Schools

- The healthy schools strategy is embedded in two key findings:
  - Healthy children are better prepared to learn.
  - Schools have a significant influence on the health and well-being of children and youth.

- The strategy is built on the premise that by providing and promoting opportunities for enhancing students’ social, emotional and physical health:
  - Healthy behaviours will be established that will last a lifetime.
  - Achievement levels will improve.

- Research shows that a healthy school environment enhances learning and success in school and provides academic, social, emotional and physical benefits.
Healthy Schools Initiatives

To date, the Ministry’s healthy schools initiatives have included:

- Foundations for a Healthy School framework
- Healthy Eating
  - Healthy Food and Beverages in Elementary Vending Machines
  - Healthy Food for Healthy Schools Act
  - Trans Fat Regulation
  - Eating Well Looks Good on You pilot project
- Daily Physical Activity (DPA)
- Secondary Student Engagement on Healthy Schools
- Swim to Survive
- Anaphylaxis: Sabrina’s Law
- Healthy Schools Recognition Program
The *Foundations for a Healthy School* framework was developed to establish a common understanding of the components that make up a healthy school.

**Components:**
- Quality Instruction and Programs
- Supportive Social Environment
- Healthy Physical Environment
- Community Partnerships

**Health-Related Topics:**
- Healthy Eating
- Bullying Prevention
- Substance Use and Abuse
- Mental Health
- Physical Activity
- Personal Safety and Injury Prevention
- Healthy Growth and Development
- Other topics relevant to your school
Tools

- The Foundations for a Healthy School framework includes sample ideas and shared practices for each component and health-related topic:
- Sample ideas provided by secondary students on how to make their high schools healthier:
  [http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/tipsStudents.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/tipsStudents.html)

## Building a Healthy School
Here are some ideas to help you get started on Healthy Eating

### Ideas for the Classroom
- Teach students about the relationship between diet and health.
- Create a classroom setting where healthy eating is encouraged.
- Integrate healthy eating activities into lessons and assignments.

### Ideas for a Healthy School
- Encourage students to make healthy choices at lunch time.
- Provide healthy snacks and drinks in school cafeterias.
- Establish a school garden program to grow fresh produce.

### Ideas for Social Support
- Encourage students to form healthy eating support groups.
- Host healthy eating workshops and speakers.
- Develop a school-wide healthy eating yearbook or newsletter.

### Ideas for Working with Your Community
- Work with local restaurants to feature healthy menu options.
- Encourage community organizations to offer healthy food options.
- Promote healthy eating behaviors in local media and social media.

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<tr>
<th>Ideas and Shared Practices</th>
<th>FOUNDATIONS FOR A HEALTHY SCHOOL</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ontario</strong></td>
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### Health-Related Topics

#### Healthy Eating
- Establishing a school-wide healthy eating program
- Providing nutrition education to students and staff
- Developing healthy recipes and menu options
- Implementing a positive approach to nutrition and healthy eating education

#### Physical Activity
- Promoting physical activity through structured and unstructured play
- Providing opportunities for physical activity outside of school hours
- Developing a school-wide physical activity policy
- Providing physical education programs

#### Nurturing Potential
- Providing opportunities for students to develop healthy eating habits
- Promoting healthy eating behaviors
- Providing opportunities for students to develop healthy eating behaviors
- Establishing a school-wide healthy eating policy

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**Maple Leaf Tools**

**Health-Eating Guide**

For more information and resources, visit [www.education.gov.on.ca](http://www.education.gov.on.ca).
High-Quality Instruction and Programs

- Quality instruction provides students with a wide range of opportunities to learn, practice, and demonstrate knowledge and skills related to living a healthy life.
  - Some curriculum areas that include healthy schools topics include: Health and Physical Education, Social Sciences, Science and Technology.
- Programs offered during the instructional day often lay the foundation for other activities done outside instructional time.
- Quality programs also include opportunities for teachers and school administrators to participate in professional learning opportunities.
Healthy Physical Environment

- A safe and healthy physical environment improves the conditions for learning.
- The physical environment includes the school building and grounds, routes to and from the school, and materials and equipment used in the school.
Supportive Social Environment

- A supportive social environment has a positive impact on students’ learning. Many practices within a school foster such an environment.
- Students, teachers, and parents can benefit from the support provided which may be formal (e.g. school policies, rules, clubs, or support groups) or informal (e.g. unstructured peer interaction or free play).
Community Partnerships

- Community partnerships provide access to resources and services available to support staff, students and families in the development and implementation of healthy schools initiatives.

- Various organizations can deliver services within a school setting, including public health.
  - Some of the organizations that can provide support include: public health units, universities/colleges, local businesses, police and fire services.
The Healthy Schools Recognition Program promotes and celebrates healthy behaviours and practices in Ontario’s schools.

The objectives of the Recognition Program are to:

- Raise awareness of the healthy schools concept.
- Challenge schools to become healthier places for students to learn.
- Encourage schools, in collaboration with the school community, to do an assessment of where they are at and to identify future priority areas.
- Promote continuous improvement.
Healthy Schools Recognition Program

- Over the past two school years, approximately 1,716 schools participated, pledging more than 4,550 new activities.
- EDU continues to encourage school staff, students, parents and community partners to find new ways to make schools healthier and be recognized through the Healthy Schools Recognition Program.

Tools:

- Tools to assist principals, teachers, students, and parents with the planning and organizing of healthy schools initiatives are posted on the Ministry of Education website: [http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/healthyschools.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/healthyschools.html)
- Schools interested in being recognized can fill out and submit the Healthy Schools Acceptance Form: [http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/challenge.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/challenge.html)
Healthy Schools Recognition Program

Examples of Environmental Education Initiatives:

- **3 R's: Responsible, Respectful Recyclers** - the junior grades have taken the helm to crank up the recycling program.

- **Greening our School Community** - through the establishment of a Green Club we plan to promote recycling and composting activities throughout the school, and hope to embed this in our students so that it becomes a lifelong behaviour.

- **Clean Air Achievers** - the goal of the CAA is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions via participants choosing more sustainable and ideally more active modes of transportation.

- **Healthy Litterless Lunches** - students will be encouraged to bring healthy lunches in reusable containers on a regular basis.
Healthy Schools Recognition Program

- Step 1: Identify your school's healthy activity
- Step 2: Complete and sign the acceptance form
- Step 3: Submit the completed form to your school board
- Step 4: Review the Healthy Schools Recognition Program Acceptance Forms
- Step 5: Submit the form to the Ministry of Education
Healthy Schools Recognition Program

- School boards should submit the Recognition Program Acceptance Form to the Ministry of Education by **Thursday, April 16, 2009.**

- The school board can send the form in three different ways:

  1. By email: healthy.schools@ontario.ca
  2. By fax:(416) 325-4344
  3. By mail:
     Policy and Program Branch
     c/o Healthy Schools Recognition Program
     Ministry of Education
     15th Floor, Mowat Block
     900 Bay Street, Toronto ON M7A 1L2
Thank you!