



Healthy Schools Planner

Partnering for healthy schools

Acknowledgements

A number of individuals and organizations contributed to creating the Healthy Schools Planner. The Region of Peel is thankful to the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board, the Peel District School Board, and their teachers for their valuable feedback on information provided in this resource. We are especially appreciative to York Region for inspiring the foundational elements and development of this resource, which has been adapted to fit the Region of Peel's requirements of a Peel specific Healthy Schools Planner.

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What is the Healthy Schools Planner?



The purpose of the Healthy Schools Planner is to:

- Assist schools to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate health initiatives that encourage and support students to adopt healthier lifestyles
- Involve and engage the entire school with targeted activities to enhance teaching and learning, school policy, and partnerships opportunities
- Provide tools to support activities that focus on health issues and solutions that are important to school communities

The Healthy Schools Approach involves school administrators, teachers, students, parents/guardians, and the community to create a positive healthy learning environment for children and youth.

The Foundations for a Healthy School

Source: Ministry of Education (2014). **Foundations for a Healthy School**.
Toronto, ON: Queens Printer for Ontario

In November 2014, the Ministry of Education released its revised **Foundations for a Healthy School** resource. This framework outlines how school communities can work together to develop a healthy learning environment that supports student well-being – one of the four core goals in **Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario** (2014). This vision supports the close link between education and health, as healthy students are better learners, and education is an important determinant of health.

The revised Foundations for a Healthy School resource supports student well-being through the integration of healthy school policies, programs and initiatives into school and school board planning and implementation processes. It is now considered a companion resource to the **K-12 School Effectiveness Framework** (2013), supporting its components through five key areas:



Curriculum, Teaching and Learning

Offers 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

Focuses on 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

Involves the extent to which students identify with and value their learning; 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

Healthy, safe and caring social and physical environments support learning and contribute to the positive cognitive, emotional, social and physical development of students.

Home, School & Community Partnerships

Engaging parents, extended family, school staff, child care and family support programs and community groups in a mutually beneficial way to support, enhance and promote opportunities for learning and well-being.

The full resource is available for download at:
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/foundations.html>

Get Started

This section describes how to...

- A. Establish a Healthy Schools Committee
- B. Create a Vision/Inspirational Message for Your Committee



A. Establish a Healthy Schools Committee

A Healthy Schools Committee is a team of individuals who care for the health of the entire school community. It can be a brand new committee, or a committee already in existence. The committee should include representation from the whole school:

- School staff and administrators
- A variety of students
- Parents/Guardians
- Community members

Why?

Form a healthy schools committee to...

- Create a health-related vision and goal(s)
- Assess strengths and identify areas to build upon
- Plan, implement, monitor and evaluate health-related activities
- Recognize and celebrate successes

How?

Make connections...

- Meet with your principal or vice-principal to talk about the benefits of a healthy school
- Select a champion who will act as the committee leader (teacher, parent)
- Recruit members from the school community and organize meetings with support from the principal or vice-principal

Tips for successful meetings...

- Start the first couple of meetings with a fun activity so members get to know each other
- Take notes of your discussions for future reference
- Offer healthy snacks when possible

B. Create a Vision/Inspirational Message for Your Committee

Once you have formed a committee that represents your school community, work together to develop a vision statement.

Why?

An inspirational message/vision...

- Captures passion, hopes and dreams for the future
- Identifies strengths and areas for growth
- Sets direction for planning

How?

To develop your vision statement...

Have members brainstorm what their healthy school community would:

- Look like
- Feel like
- Sound like

See appendices for tools to support "Get Started."



Notes



Assess Your School Community

This section describes how to...

- A. Scan and Survey Your School Community
- B. Determine Your Focus Areas
- C. Share the Results

A. Scan and Survey Your School Community

Use the Foundations for a Healthy School to guide you to identify areas that work well and opportunities to further enhance the health of your school community.

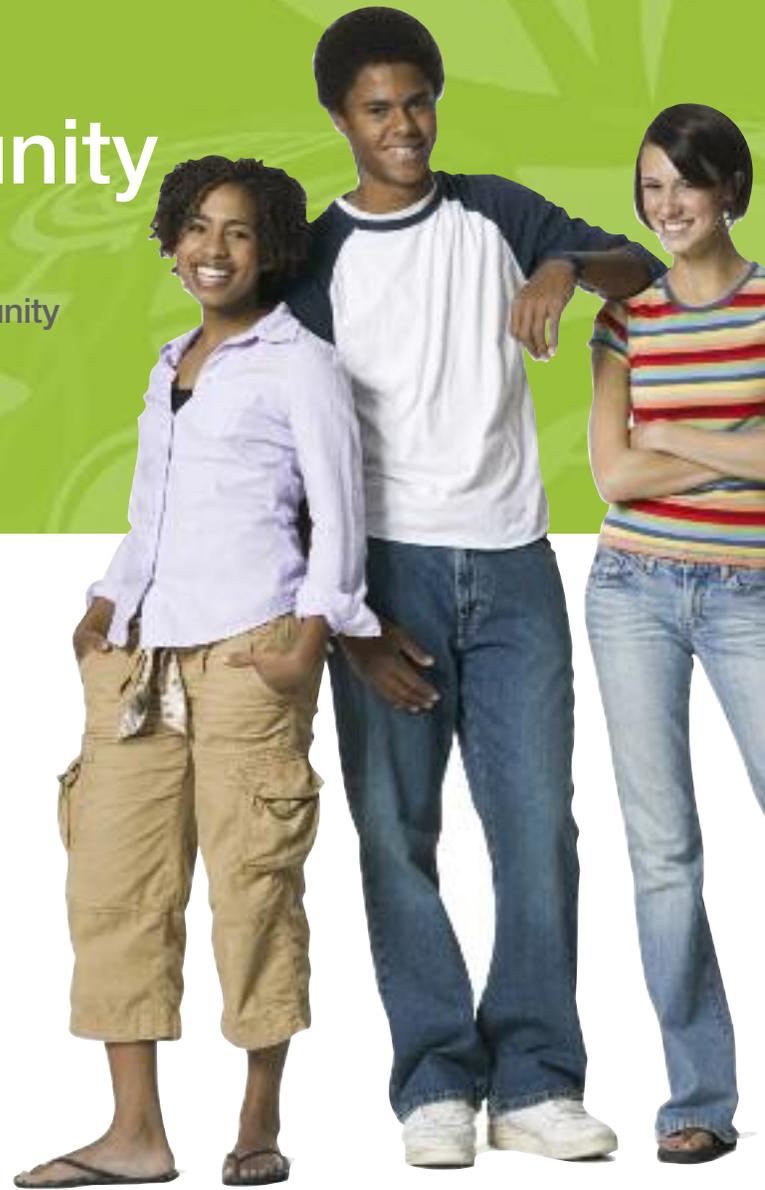
Why?

Collecting data from
different sources...

Provides a more complete picture
of the strengths and needs of your
school community

How?

- Develop questions and survey students, parents, staff and other members of your school community to receive their feedback
- Promote the survey as a way for students, staff, parents and community partners to share their ideas
- Look at the school community and neighbourhood to find out what health related activities are already happening



B. Determine Your Focus Areas

Your committee will start to notice common themes in the information you collect. In order to determine your focus areas consider both your identified themes and available resources.

Why?

- Helps the committee to stay focused on their work
- Sets the foundation for future projects

How?

Choose a focus area that considers the following factors ...

- Is it do-able?
- Determine how much the committee can realistically undertake within the school year

Impact

- Determine if the issue is a need by the school community
- Does the focus area lead to:
 - More physically active school communities
 - Healthier food choices made more often
 - Less risk for physical injuries
 - More inclusive and supportive environments
 - Less exposure to harmful substances

Available Resources

Check to see if the committee has the resources (money, people, equipment, knowledge, skills) to take on the activities that are planned

Partnership Opportunities

Check to see if there are agencies already working with the school and if they able to help



C. Share the Results

Share results as often as possible with your school community to keep people informed.

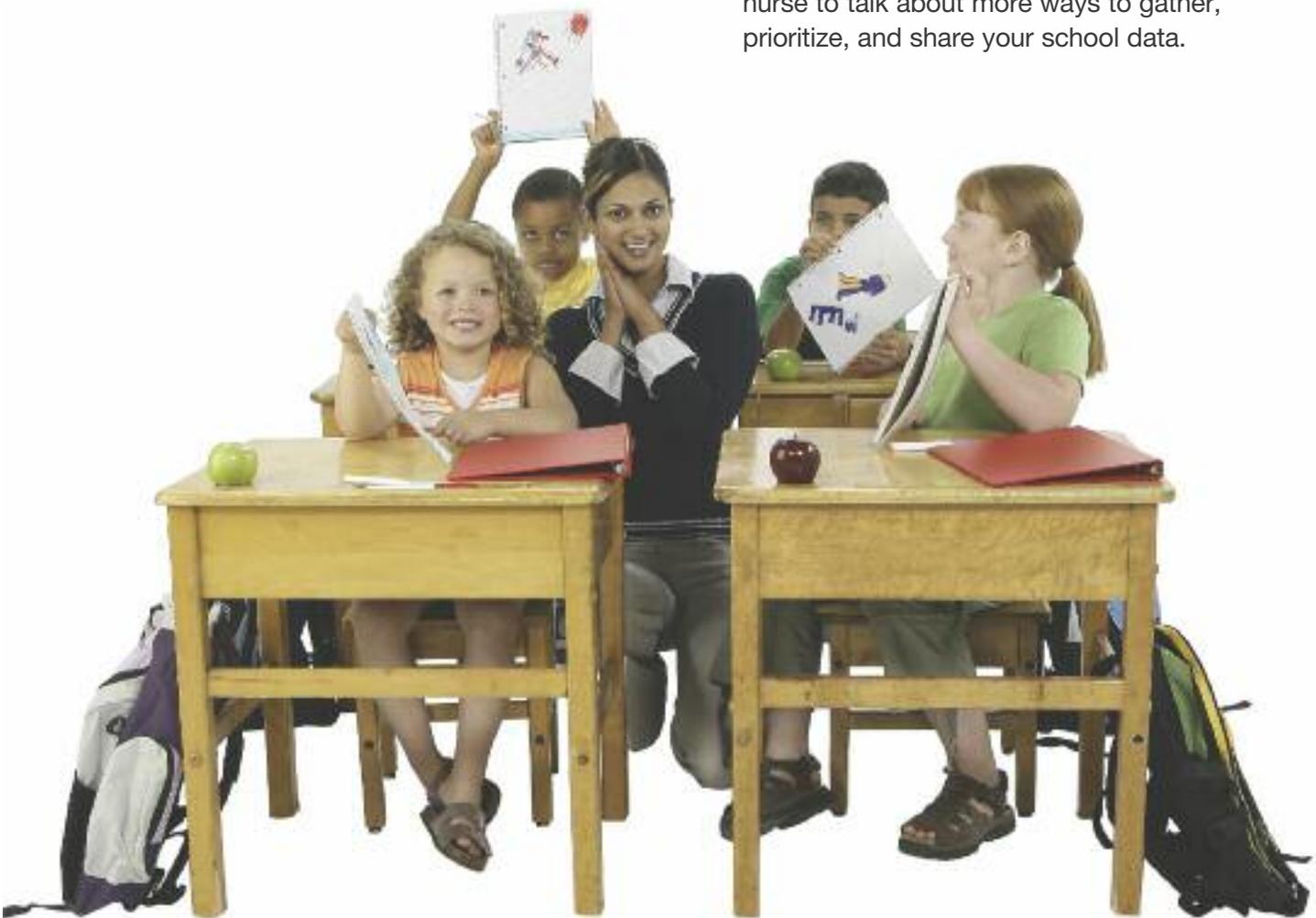
Why?

Sharing results back with your school community acknowledges their contributions and updates them on the direction the committee is focusing on.

How?

- Post survey results on the school's website
- Create a healthy schools updates area in your school newsletter
- Present results to related school committees/groups/clubs

Connect with your school's public health nurse to talk about more ways to gather, prioritize, and share your school data.



See appendices for tools to support "Assess Your School Community."

Plan and Take Action

This section describes how to...

- A. Create Your Action Plan
- B. Share and Promote Your Action Plan
- C. Implement and Monitor Your Activities



A. Create Your Action Plan



Why?

An action plan is a way to monitor your progress.

How?

- Set S.M.A.R.T. goals and outcomes
- Use the Foundations for a Healthy School to brainstorm and select activities
- Determine time needed for each activity
- Identify what resources you will need:
 - Committee members
 - Funds
 - Equipment
- Determine the success of your activity:
 - Track number of participants
 - Collect comments
 - Observation

Reminder...

Set goals and activities using the Foundations for a Healthy School to ensure that your committee is addressing the health needs in a holistic or comprehensive manner. The goal is to encourage positive behaviour change.



Other Considerations

To have immediate success and to help with buy-in from the school community, ensure that initial activities are easy, small and attainable. This will also keep committee members motivated and may recruit additional members. As you move from activities that are quick to implement to activities that require more thought and planning, such as policy development, you will see long-term benefits related to positive healthy behaviours.

Activities...

Short-term

- Poster contest
- Assembly
- Fundraising celebrating “health days”

Medium-term

- Social skills program
- Milk program
- Painted playground
- Walk to school program

Long-term

- Anti-bullying policy
- Food and beverage policy
- Lunch period procedure policy
- Kiss and ride guidelines

B. Share and Promote your Action Plan

Share and promote your committee's action plan with the larger school community to provide on-going updates on your activities.

Why?

- Involve as many members of the school community in implementing the plan and keep the whole school informed to expand your school's commitment to health

How?

- Post information about upcoming activities (bulletin board or the school website)
- Send a letter/newsletter to parents/guardians and community partners
- Host a kick-off assembly
- Have a suggestion box to collect feedback

C. Implement and monitor your activities

It is important to monitor your activities as they are implemented so that you are able to identify successes, challenges and recommendations to move forward.



How?

- Use the action plan to guide implementation of the selected activities
- Ensure students, staff, parents and community partners are equipped by providing the instructions/training required to implement the activities effectively
- Ensure tasks are shared and based on what each individual is able to contribute and handle
- Continue to evaluate your plan as you go and adjust as needed

Additional tips...

- Give careful attention to ensuring the plan is proceeding as hoped and accomplishing the goals and outcomes that have been set
- If things don't turn out as intended, be willing to adjust the plan, recruit more people or revise your time frames
- Throughout the implementation, show appreciation to the people involved

See appendices for tools to support "Plan and Take Action."



Evaluate and Celebrate

This section describes how to...

- A. Evaluate Activities
- B. Share Results
- C. Plan for Next Year
- D. Celebrate



A. Evaluate Activities

Why?

Evaluation plays an important part in any program or activity. There should always be a purpose for doing an evaluation. Success indicators can be evaluated through ongoing and outcome evaluation. This information will help you plan for future activities.

How?

The evaluation process is continuous ...

- Ideally, it should start at the beginning of the planning process when setting goals and objectives
- Next, monitor as you go to see if plans need to be altered or if you are having the effect you wanted (participant feedback, event attendance)
- At the end of the year look back at your goals, activities and evaluations to see if you are closer to the healthier school you imagined



Ongoing Evaluation:

An evaluation used to determine if the approach used and the way things were done helped the activities be successful. Things to consider:

- Who sat on your committee? (more hands make for lighter work)
- Collect data before and after activities, so you can make comparisons.
- What helped or made it difficult to work on your activities? (available funding)
- What feedback did the participants give you? (Did they enjoy the activities? Would they do it again?)

Outcome Evaluation:

An evaluation of all the activities throughout the year that help you see if you have met your school committee's goal. Things to consider:

- Did the activities change behaviour in your students? (more students bringing fruits and vegetables to school, an increase of students being physically active during recess)
- In order to know if the activities were successful, compare data that was collected before and after the activities were completed.

B. Share Results

Why?

The evaluation of your activities is now complete. It's time for the committee to share successes and challenges with the school community.

Sharing successes will....

- Highlight activities you completed this year and keep the momentum going
- Motivate those involved to continue their hard work and inspire others in the school community to participate

Sharing challenges will....

- Recognize barriers (funding, timing)
- Generate creative solutions to help with future planning

C. Plan for Next Year

Use what you have learned to plan for next year. It is never too early to start.

Why?

- Identify what you want to continue working on and what other topic needs attention
- Use your evaluation results for future planning
- Recognize factors that might impact your plans (new ministry policies)
- Consider available resources (funding, community partnerships)

D. Celebrate

Don't forget to celebrate!

Why?

Celebrating the hard work of your school community gives everyone a chance to highlight your school's success.

How?

- Acknowledge members and highlight activities during an assembly
- Highlight success stories in your school newsletter (see sample newsletter update)
- Provide recognition certificates (see sample recognition certificate)
- Send a thank you note to parents/guardians to appreciate their contributions
- Apply for the Ministry of Education Healthy Schools Recognition Program to showcase your initiatives



*See appendices for tools to support
"Evaluate and Celebrate."*

Notes



Appendices

**Usable versions of the appendices in the list below are available online to make use of or adapt according to your school's needs.*

Get Started

- Sample PA Announcement
- Sample Poster
- Sample Newsletter Insert
- Sample Student Commitment Form
- Sample Parent/Guardian Permission Form
- On-going Motivators to Keep Committee Members Engaged
- Sample Agenda and Minute Template
- Visioning Activity

Assess Your School Community

- Sample Survey Questions to ask Your School Community
- Sample Survey Notification
- Current and Future Activities Chart

Plan and Take Action

- Introduction to S.M.A.R.T. Goals
- Action Plan Template
- Sample Participant Feedback Questionnaire

Evaluate and Celebrate

- Evaluation Template
- Sample Newsletter Update
- Sample Certificate

