

# Healthy Schools Toolkit



# Healthy Schools Toolkit

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# Why Healthy Schools?

The Healthy Schools approach is an internationally recognized framework to create a healthy school environment and improve student learning. This approach supports improvements in students' educational outcomes and promotes resilience by addressing school health in a planned, integrated and holistic way. There is evidence that health and learning are interdependent; healthy children make better learners and better educated children are healthier.

The effectiveness and sustainability of this approach relies on a partnership between health, education, parents, students and community stakeholders working together on a school health committee.

The Healthy Schools Toolkit is designed to guide schools through the steps to creating a healthier school. School Health Committees may choose to use all or any of the resources in the Toolkit to support their Healthy Schools work.

# The Benefits of Creating an Active, Healthy School Community

## Students in Healthy Schools will:

- Be able to concentrate and learn better in class because their basic needs are met (i.e., nutrition, physical activity and emotional well-being)
- Develop greater confidence, motivation, self-esteem and will have the commitment and capacity to make important life and health choices
- Have access to community services
- Be more likely to achieve better academic results
- Have strategies to interact effectively with peers
- Attend school more regularly

**A comprehensive Healthy Schools approach is the most effective method to address the needs of children and families.**

This integrated approach to health promotion gives students numerous opportunities to participate in, observe and learn positive health attitudes and behaviours.

## Foundations for a Healthy School

### 1. 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.

### 2. School and 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.

### 3. Student Engagement

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.

### 4. Social and Physical Environments

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

### 5. Home, School and Community Partnerships

Partnerships engage families, 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.

# Roles and Responsibilities of the Healthy School Committee

## **The Role of the Healthy School Committee:**

- Survey parents, students and teachers/ staff to identify priority health issues
- Identify, brainstorm and discuss strategies to address health
- Oversee planning, delivery and evaluation of Healthy School activities
- Involve the school community in decisions
- Provide leadership and direction for promoting health in the school
- Keep the school community informed by sharing progress made by the committee

## **Getting Started**

- A Healthy School approach will be more successful when a dedicated committee person is in place to act as a champion to lead others in the planned activities.

## **A Healthy School Champion:**

- is keen and enthusiastic about improving the health of the school community
- is a role model for healthy behaviour
- is someone who is in the school regularly such as a teacher, parent, administrator, child and youth worker or a community coordinator
- has enough time in their schedule to devote to Healthy Schools
- encourages support of Healthy Schools within the school
- follows the Healthy Schools approach
- will be supported by a public health nurse from Toronto Public Health

## **A Healthy School Committee Member:**

- is keen and enthusiastic about improving the health of the school community
- is a role model for healthy behaviour
- is a member of the school community such as a teacher, parent, administrator or student
- has enough time in their schedule to attend regular meetings and planned Healthy School activities
- works as part of a team to plan and carry out a Healthy School action plan

## **A Healthy School Committee Member can:**

- learn more about your committee's chosen health issue and share your knowledge with others
- volunteer to chair a committee meeting, take notes, lead an action plan activity, collect surveys and evaluations, etc.
- recruit other members to join your committee
- spread the word about your committee and all of the great things you are doing!
- help the committee stay on track

# Steps in a Healthy Schools Approach




## Step 1: Form a Healthy School Committee



### Goals









- Raise awareness of the benefits of becoming a Healthy School
- Motivate the school community to support Healthy Schools
- Recruit school community members for the Healthy School Committee

### PART A • Determine level of **interest** and establish **commitment**

- Consult with your principal to discuss Healthy Schools and determine if the timing is right
- Contact a public health nurse for assistance
- Develop a plan to inform and educate the school community about Healthy Schools  [2,4](#)
- Provide a presentation about Healthy Schools for staff and parents  [3](#)
- Offer facts to back up the benefits of Healthy Schools  [5](#)
- Identify ways your school is already doing things that promote mental health
- Mobilize and empower students by explaining how they can have a voice in school decisions
- Inform the school community about [OPHEA's Healthy Schools Certification Program](#)
- If you find there is little interest, do not get discouraged; keep spreading the word and be ready to proceed when you find more support



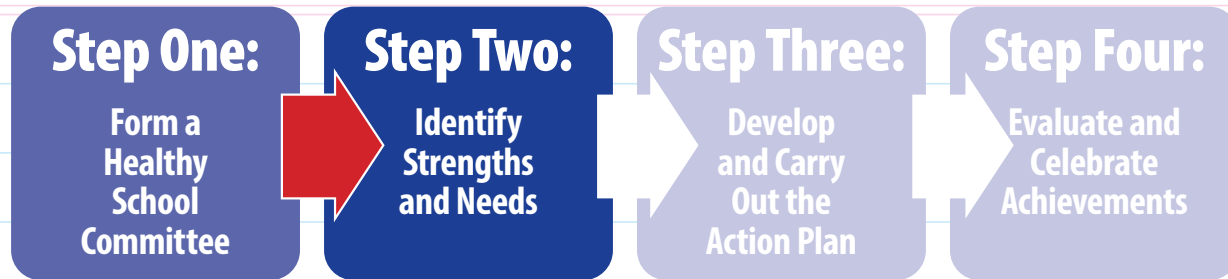
## **PART B** • Form the **Healthy School Committee**

- Announce the formation of the committee and promote the committee through posters, newsletters, and school events  [6, 7, 8](#)
- Invite interested school members to get involved in creating a healthier school
- The Healthy School Committee may be a sub-committee of the school council or of another existing committee
- Recruit a diverse group by including staff, students, parents, administrators, and community members  [1, 6](#)
- Organize the first **Healthy School Committee** meeting  [9](#)
  - Create an agenda  [10](#)
  - Record minutes to track progress, decisions and actions  [12](#)
  - Complete a member contact list  [11](#)
  - Establish roles and responsibilities  [13](#)
  - Decide on a convenient meeting schedule (e.g., on lunch hour, before or after school)
  - Select a chairperson or rotating chair
  - Discuss how you plan to work effectively as a group  [14](#)
  - Come up with a name for your committee (e.g., Healthy Champs, Snack Attack, Health Squad –perhaps have a naming and/or logo contest)
  - Provide each member with a folder to keep track of all materials
  - Discuss a general vision of a Healthy School
- Monitor the committee regularly to ensure it is running effectively

### **Checklist for Step 1:**

- Educated the school community about the Healthy Schools approach
- Communicated with key school community members about Healthy Schools
- Formed a diverse Healthy School Committee representing the whole school community
- Conducted the first Healthy School Committee meeting
- Established a general vision of what a Healthy School looks like
- Determined readiness to move to Step 2



## Step 2: Identify strengths and needs



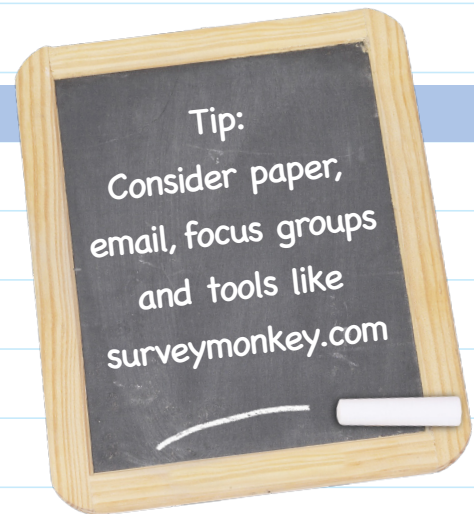
### Goals

- **Identify** the **strengths, needs, interests** and **health** of the school community by providing a survey for staff, students and parents
- **Review** and **discuss** the results and **identify priority areas** for action



### PART A • Survey your school community

- Develop a survey or adapt an existing one for students, teachers and parents to identify the current health status of your school \*  [16](#), [17](#), [18](#)
- Determine how to conduct the survey and obtain approval from the principal
- Inform the school community that the committee will be conducting surveys and encourage their participation  [15](#)
- Promote the survey as a way for school staff, students, parents and community partners to share their ideas
- Create a Healthy Schools suggestion box (Place the box in a central location and encourage the school community to voice concerns and ideas throughout the school year!)

\* Consider using results from previous surveys



### PART B • Share results, establish the vision and prioritize the health issues

- Examine the results of the survey and determine the current strengths, needs, challenges and opportunities associated with implementing a Healthy Schools approach
- Examine areas where the school is doing well and look at what helped make these areas successful
- Communicate results of the survey to your school; present successes first  [20](#)
- As a committee, continue to develop a shared vision of Healthy Schools by brainstorming and creating your ideal school - be creative and have fun!  [19](#)

## **PART B** • Share results, establish the vision and prioritize the health issues (continued)

- Based on your vision and survey results, prioritize the most important health issues your school can realistically commit to over the school year; it is okay to start small as many small changes can add up to big successes!
- Keep a record of all the issues/suggestions that you are not using this year; they can be worked on in subsequent years
- Remember to monitor the progress of the committee; review any problems with the committee now, to avoid problems in the future
- Give students, staff and parents a voice in the Healthy Schools process!

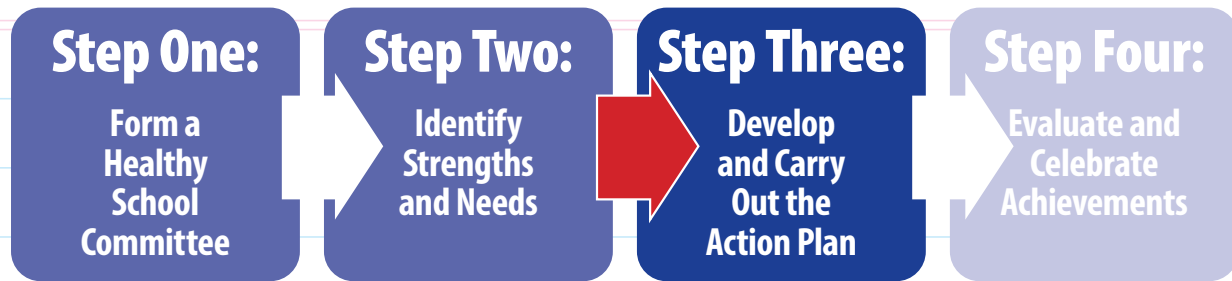
### **By identifying your school health needs, your committee will be able to consider:**

- Activities the school will enjoy participating in
- The overall vision of teachers, students and parents
- The most important health issues in your school

### **Checklist for Step 2:**

- Completed a survey for:
  - Parents
  - Teachers/Staff
  - Students
  - Administration
- Reviewed and discussed the results of the surveys
- Established priority areas for your school
- Communicated the results and priority areas with the school community
- Determined if your committee is ready to move to Step 3

## Step 3: Develop and Carry Out the Action Plan

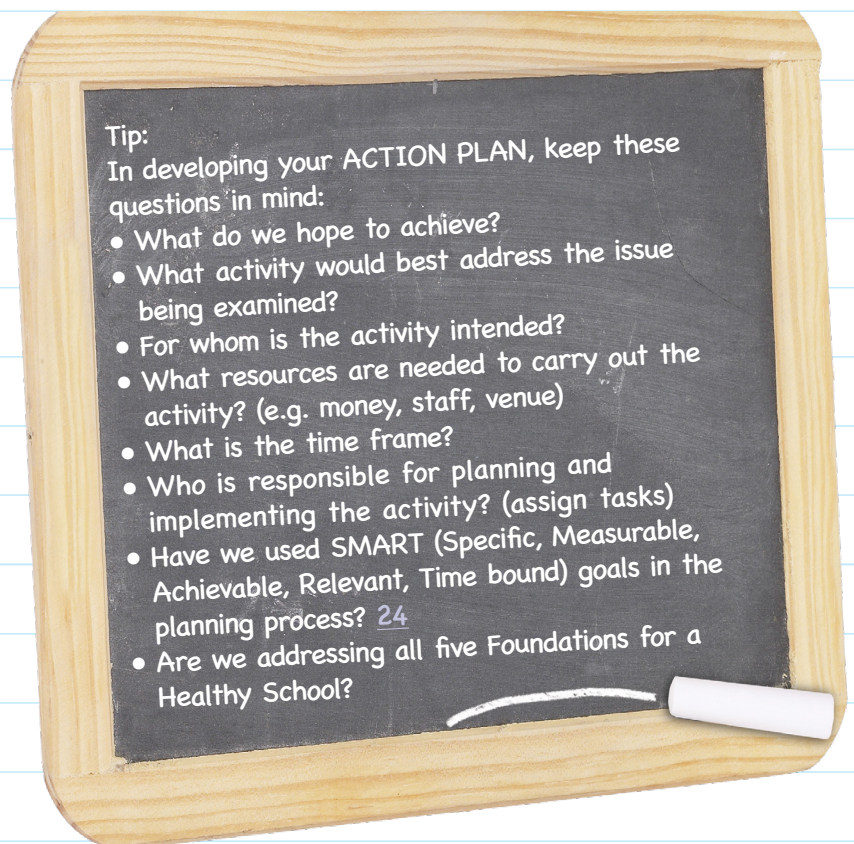


### Goals

- **Develop an action plan** to chart the future directions and activities of the Healthy School Committee based on the health issue(s) identified
- **Carry out** your Healthy Schools action plan activities in the school

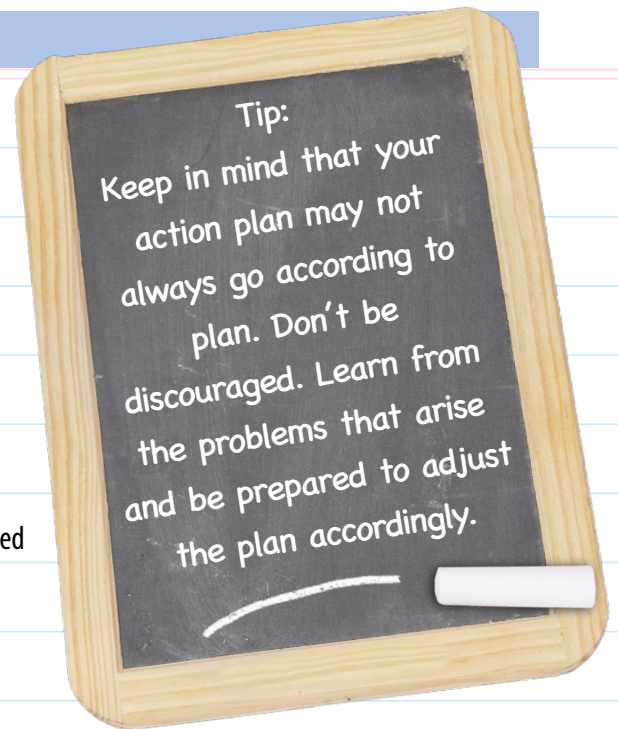
### PART A • Develop the Action Plan

- An action plan builds awareness, keeps activities on track and measures success
- Brainstorm and choose activities for your priority areas - start small and plan easy to accomplish activities so you will experience success and be motivated to continue 21
- To help children develop long lasting knowledge, healthy attitudes and behaviours, your plan should address all Five Foundations for a Healthy School: Curriculum Teaching and Learning, School and Classroom Leadership, Student Engagement, Social and Physical Environments, Home, School and Community Partnerships 21
- Develop goals for the chosen activities 23
- Align activities with existing school board priorities and school improvement plans
- Transfer your goals and activities to the action plan. 22
- Determine what success will look like by developing indicators - ask yourself, how will we know if we have met our goals?
- Speak with others in your school community before you begin to carry out the activities, to ensure there will be adequate support to see them through



## **PART B • Carry Out** the Action Plan

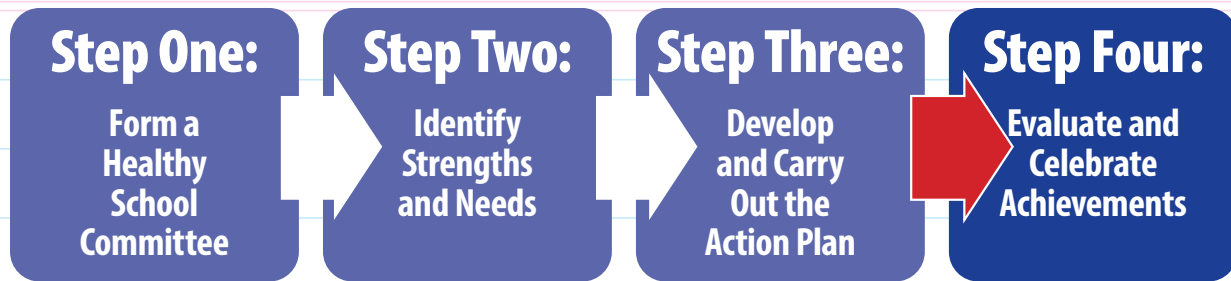
- Share and promote action plan activities with the school community. For example, you may choose to:
  - Send a letter to parents and community partners to keep them informed of the action plan and provide regular updates
  - Host a Healthy School kick-off assembly for parents and community partners to see what your school will be doing to support health
  - Invite students to be actively involved in planning and carrying out Healthy School activities – the more you engage others, the greater support and motivation you will receive
- Ensure school staff, students, parents and community partners are equipped to implement the activities effectively
- Review progress by discussing problems with certain activities, revision of timelines, communication issues or new resources
- Update the action plan after each activity



### ✓ Checklist for Step 3:

- Developed an overall goal for health issues and selected appropriate activities
- Developed an action plan addressing all five Foundations for a Healthy School
- Communicated and promoted the action plan with school community members
- Started working on the activities according to the action plan
- Reviewed action plan progress and revised as needed
- Carried out Healthy Schools action plan and activities
- Determined if the committee is ready to move to Step 4

## Step 4: Evaluate and celebrate achievements



### Goals

- **Review, evaluate and celebrate** your Healthy Schools activities

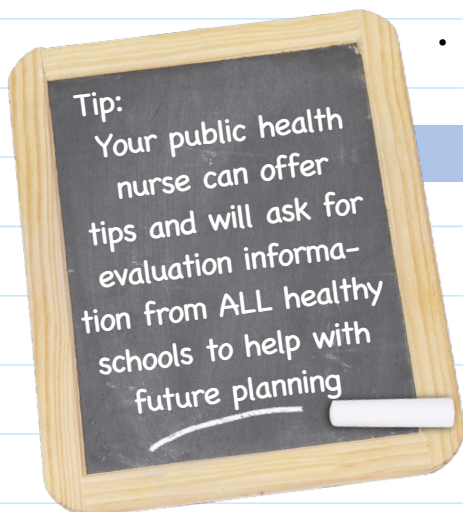
### PART A • Evaluate

As you complete each activity from your action plan, evaluate what worked well and any problems you may have experienced. Add this information to the action plan [22](#)

- Evaluation is important to learn if the activities were worthwhile, identify any problem areas, inspire new ideas and reconsider areas to avoid in the future
- Determine how you will evaluate (e.g., survey, focus groups, and interviews) - your evaluation does not need to be complicated; simple and concise is better

### Evaluation areas to focus on:

- The steps of the Healthy Schools process – were you able to complete them all? [31](#)
- The school community – did the school enjoy the activities? Is there a difference in the health status of the school? [25, 26](#)
- The action plan – have you met your activity goals as outlined?
- The Healthy School Committee – how effective was the committee? [24](#)
- Discuss and reflect on successes and challenges - identify and reflect on achievements, areas to reconsider and any new or emerging needs






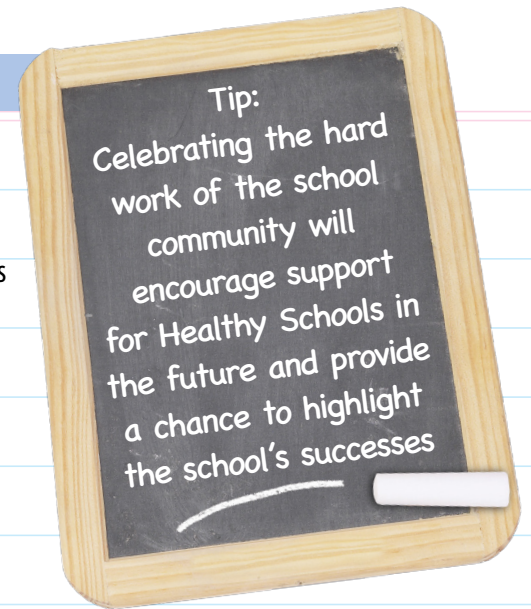
- Look for and record any changes within the school that may be a result of Healthy Schools and record them as successes on your committee's Healthy Schools action plan

### PART B • Plan for next year

- Discuss any changes that may be occurring that could affect next year's activities
- Set a date and plan the agenda for next year's first meeting
- Discuss next year's Healthy Schools action plan – include activities you did not get to this year and come up with new ideas [27](#)

## PART C • Celebrate Achievements

- Provide opportunities for the school to hear about the completed activities
- Share successes with students and staff through a newsletter or announcement  [30](#)
- Encourage students and teachers to communicate their successes and submit new ideas
- Acknowledge and celebrate the efforts of the Healthy School Committee and the whole school community, to strengthen school-wide support and commitment  [29](#)
- Celebrate small changes, as any change is a step in the right direction
- Plan a year-end celebration for the committee and for the whole school - check out the tip sheet for healthy celebration ideas!  [28](#)



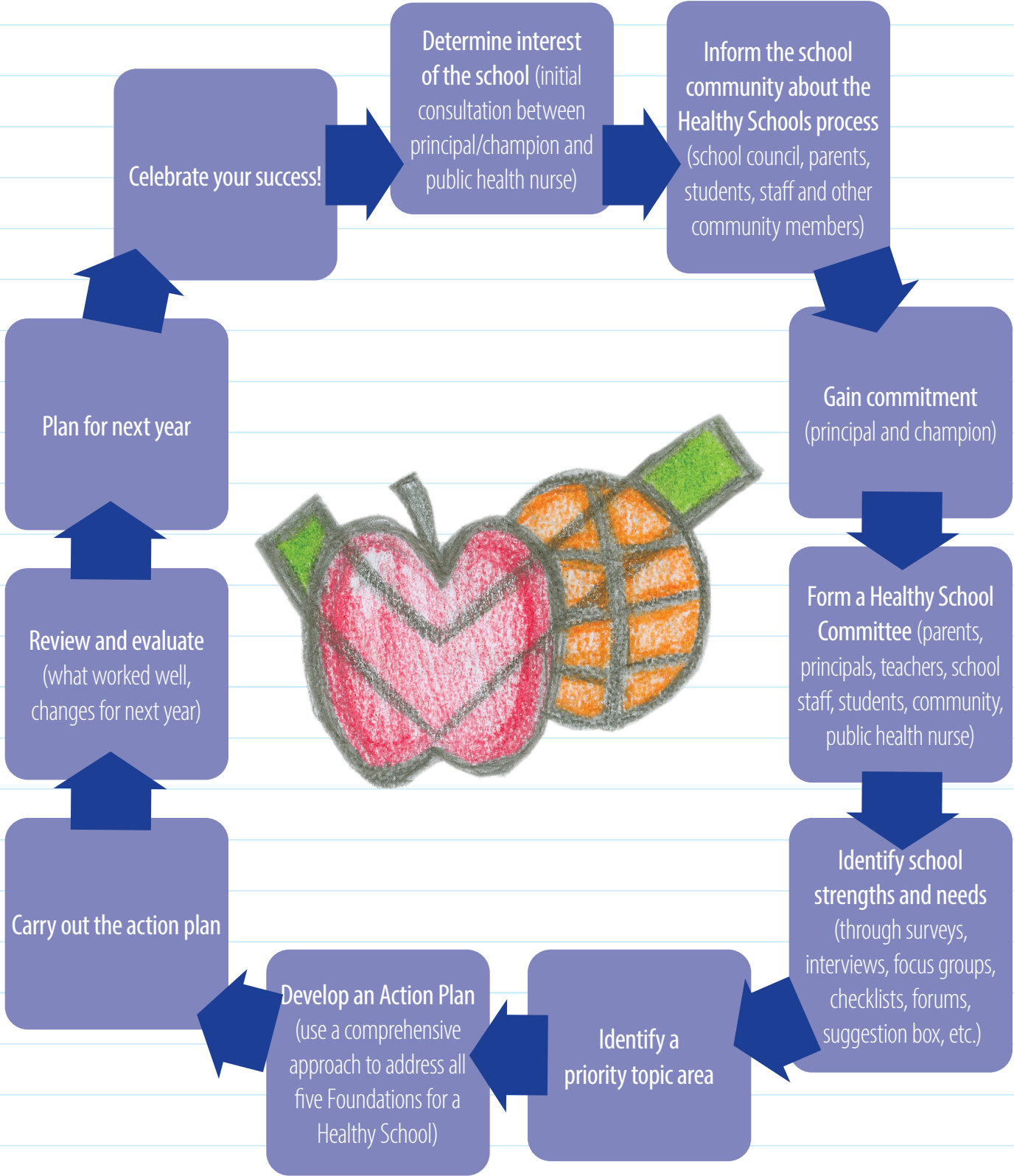
## Congratulations!

### ✓ Checklist for Step 4:

- Determined if you have met your activity goals
- Completed the steps of the Healthy Schools process
- Completed the Healthy School Committee End-of-Year Evaluation
- Gathered feedback from:
  - Parents
  - Teachers/Staff
  - Students
  - Administration
- Planned for next year's Healthy School Committee and activities
- Communicated achievements with the school community
- Celebrated with the committee and the entire school community



# Process of Creating a Healthy School



# Healthy Schools Resource List







1. [Recruitment Strategies Tip Sheet](#)
2. [Awareness Newsletter](#)
3. [Presentation Invitation](#)
4. [Healthy Schools Brochure](#)
5. [Benefits of Healthy Schools Fact Sheet](#)
6. [Invitation](#)
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30. [End-of-Year Update](#)
31. [Implementation Checklist](#)



# Recruitment Strategies Tip Sheet

## The Student

- Invite a variety of grades to participate; remember, older students will be graduating and leaving the school so include grades 4-12 for a broader age range
- Invite participation on the committee by promoting Healthy Schools and the Healthy Schools Committee at your:
  - School Council meeting
  - Staff meeting
  - Student Council meeting
  - Other Committee meetings
- Put up posters around the school advertising Healthy Schools
- Hand out flyers at School Barbecue night or Meet the Teacher night  [4](#), [5](#)
- Have a sign-up sheet at curriculum and interview nights for those interested in participating
- Use current research and statistics supporting Healthy Schools to provide evidence of its effectiveness  [5](#)
- Provide a presentation on Healthy Schools for the whole community
- Run an announcement that the school is recruiting Healthy School representatives  [8](#)
- Insert an announcement into the school newsletter requesting involvement  [2](#), [6](#)
- Talk to parent volunteers already in the school
- Post information on the school website
- Have the principal or lead teacher in Healthy Schools spread the word, they may have more influence on parents and teachers
- Promote recognition of Healthy School volunteers' participation through features in the school newsletter or a recognition awards at the end of the school year
- Find more champions who believe in a Healthy School and encourage these people to promote the benefits to the school
- Promote and highlight the healthy activities already existing in the school
- Look at other schools for examples of what is working well to encourage the school to promote the benefits of a Healthy School
- Create a Health Committee board to post information about the Committee



## HEALTHY SCHOOLS TOOLKIT

# Awareness Newsletter

### Healthy Schools, Healthy Learners!

Health is a key factor in school performance. A Healthy School can provide children with opportunities to experience positive role models, healthy food choices, physical activity and positive student-teacher bonds. School staff, students, parents and community partners can work together to improve the health of our school community.

\_\_\_\_\_ (insert school name) is interested in becoming a Healthy School. A Healthy School promotes opportunities for, not only students, but staff and parents to learn positive health attitudes and behaviours. The whole school community is involved in achieving this goal. A public health nurse from Toronto Public Health will support our efforts with tips, guidance and resources.

If you would like to learn more about Healthy Schools, contact \_\_\_\_\_ (insert name of Champion) at \_\_\_\_\_ (insert contact information). An information session will be held in the next little while. Stay tuned to hear more about it!

Thank you!



# Presentation Invitation

## Come and learn about Healthy Schools!!

\_\_\_\_\_ (insert school name) is interested in creating a healthier school environment for students, staff and all others involved in the school community! We want to promote and support healthy choices in the school, at home and in the community. The school setting can provide an outlet for children, staff and parents to learn about health and develop skills in order to make positive, healthy choices.

A presentation will be given by \_\_\_\_\_ (insert presenter's name, title) on \_\_\_\_\_ (insert date and time) about the Healthy Schools initiative and how we as a school community can become healthier!

Your participation is welcomed as we would love to hear any ideas you may have regarding the health issues you feel are important to address.

If you plan on attending the Healthy Schools presentation, or if you have further questions, please contact

\_\_\_\_\_ (insert name of Champion)

at \_\_\_\_\_

(insert contact information). Looking forward to seeing you in support of

\_\_\_\_\_

(insert name of school) becoming a healthier school!



## Healthy Schools...

Have learning environments where children and youth are supported by their school community to make healthy lifestyle choices.

### The Healthy Schools program:

- ✓ Is ongoing, with participation and collaboration from your entire school community including: students, parents, school staff and community partners
- ✓ Focuses on health issues specific to the needs and concerns of your school community
- ✓ Uses a comprehensive approach to school health, which includes:
  - Curriculum Teaching and Learning
  - School and Classroom Leadership
  - Student Engagement
  - Social and Physical Environments
  - Home, School and Community Partnerships

### Why a comprehensive approach?

This type of approach enhances the physical, mental, social and spiritual health of the whole school community. It can strengthen your school's capacity as a healthy setting for living, learning and working.

### Best practice findings

Health status is a key factor in school performance. Nutritional, physical, social, and mental challenges as well as risky lifestyle choices can reduce academic success. A child's feeling of being welcome and connected in school affects academic and health status.

## **"Healthy learners are better learners"** (Health Canada, 2002)

### The Healthy Schools program complements school improvement and safe and supportive schools.

#### All of these strategies:

- focus on academic achievement and health for all
- promote access to community resources
- engage parents and students
- promote positive relationships
- use multiple approaches to address identified problems
- identify early signs of detrimental social issues within the school and respond effectively
- are processes as opposed to events



# Healthy Schools Brochure

**Healthy Schools promote engaged, motivated learners and help young people to:**

- enhance their health
- develop to their fullest potential
- establish productive and satisfying relationships in their present and future lives (Canadian Healthy Schools Alliance)

## **Become a Healthy School**

**Consult with key stakeholders** at your school to discuss Healthy Schools and determine if the timing is right.

**Identify your champion.** This consistent, committed person will provide leadership to your Healthy Schools initiative.

**Call Toronto Health Connection** at 416-338-7600 to link with a public health nurse. The nurse will guide your champion and school in using the Healthy Schools approach by providing valuable tips, ideas and resources.

**Step 1: Form a Healthy School Committee** Form a committee made up of parents, students and teachers. It may be part of an existing committee. Meet regularly to walk through the steps to a healthier school.

**Step 2: Survey your school to identify strengths & needs** Based on your findings, you may decide to take on a topic such as handwashing, nutrition, physical activity or bullying.

**Step 3: Develop and carry out the Action Plan** Use a comprehensive approach.

**Step 4: Evaluate and celebrate achievements** Review, evaluate and celebrate your Healthy Schools activities.

## **Healthy Schools success story. Here is an example of what one school did:**

- Formed a Healthy Schools Action Committee
- Held a logo contest with students and families and painted the Healthy Schools are Cool logo on a wall in the school
- Set up a Healthy Schools information booth on curriculum night

**Addressed the following key elements:**

**Healthy fundraising:** Changed from cupcakes to healthy, low fat, high fibre recipes

**Healthy refreshments at school events:** Provided fruit and vegetable trays for every classroom after launching the Healthy Schools program at an assembly

**Healthy classroom celebrations:** Communicated with all school community members to send only healthy snacks for classroom celebrations



# Benefits of Healthy Schools Fact Sheet

## The Student

- A positive school environment can improve learning
- Physical activity can improve brain functioning, increasing academic performance
- Students who experience success at school understand the value of good health
- Healthy behaviours learned in childhood are likely to continue in adulthood
- Children who are empowered to take responsibility for their health take pride in their school

## Staff

- Staff wellness programs can reduce stress and improve performance
- Staff who participate in health promotion activities are more likely to model positive health messages through daily interactions with students
- Teachers can teach more effectively when their students are healthier

## The Family/Parent/Guardian/Caregiver

- Parents become involved with their children, helping them apply and integrate the new health information they are learning
- Opportunities are created for parents to get involved in the school community
- Parents can learn about keeping their children and their families healthy

## The School Community

- Healthy Schools lead to: improved student success, lower absenteeism, reduced drop-out rates, lower incidences of smoking and alcohol use
- When students know how to communicate, resolve conflicts without violence and manage stress, they help create a healthy school environment
- In a Healthy School, priorities can be established and instructional and administrative time can be maximized
- A Healthy School improves relationships between students and staff and makes the school a healthier place to learn and work

**Source: Health and Life Skills Guide to Implementation (K-9) Alberta Learning, 2002**



# Invitation

## Do you want to make a difference in our school?

As a result of our Healthy Schools presentation by \_\_\_\_\_ (insert presenter's name, title), \_\_\_\_\_ (insert school name) learned how we as a school community can create a healthier school environment. We also learned that in order to provide an optimal environment for our children to learn and grow, we must encourage opportunities for health and wellness. We had a great discussion about how we can support health in our school and what our next steps will be.

We have decided that to address the health needs of our school, we need to create a Healthy School Committee. The Healthy School Committee will be responsible for promoting and supporting health in our school through various activities. We encourage students, staff, parents and community members to join the committee and show their support.

If you are interested and would like to learn more about the committee, please join us at the first Healthy School Committee meeting on \_\_\_\_\_ (insert date and time) in \_\_\_\_\_ (insert location).

If you plan on attending the Healthy School Committee meeting, or if you have further questions, please contact \_\_\_\_\_ (insert contact name) at \_\_\_\_\_ (insert contact information). Looking forward to seeing you in support of \_\_\_\_\_ (insert name of school) becoming a healthier school!



## Attention all Parents!

The (insert school name) committee wants to know...

**What are important health issues for you?**

**How can we work together to find solutions?**

Parents are a very valuable part of a "Healthy School" approach and we are inviting all interested parents, along with teachers, students and school staff to work together towards improved health!

Come join the Healthy School Committee!

Get involved and make a DIFFERENCE in the health of your school, the health of your children and the health of your school community!

Our next meeting will be held on \_\_\_\_\_.  
(We meet approx. once a month)

To sign up, please sign your name below and return it to the school office or speak to either of the contact people mentioned below.

Interested parent's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

If you have questions please contact: (insert contact name and number) \_\_\_\_\_



# Sample Announcement

## **We are on our way to becoming a healthier school!**

\_\_\_\_\_ (insert school name) conducted the first Healthy School Committee meeting on \_\_\_\_\_ (insert date). We would like to thank all those who came out in support of Healthy Schools; your enthusiasm is appreciated!

As a result of this meeting, we can officially announce that we have formed a Healthy School Committee for our school. Our goal is to support and promote healthy choices and activities that will make our school community a healthier place to work and learn.

Our Healthy School Committee members include: (List names of all members)

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Our committee will keep you up to date on various Healthy School activities going on in the school through the school newsletter and/or school bulletin board. Stay tuned for exciting activities soon to come!

New members are always welcome! If you are interested in joining or have a question please contact our Healthy School Champion \_\_\_\_\_ (insert contact name) at \_\_\_\_\_ (insert contact information)

## **We are one step ahead in making our school healthier!**




# Getting Organized for the First Meeting

## Introductions

Welcome everyone! Use an icebreaker to encourage interaction among members. This is the time to learn more about your peers!

## Visioning exercise

Before getting started, conduct a visioning exercise asking the group about their vision of a healthy school. Highlight what the school may already be doing to promote health.  [19](#)

## An organized group is a successful one!

Provide a folder or duo-tang to each member to keep track of all papers and materials related to Healthy Schools. This will also make students feel important!

## Review the agenda [10](#)

Have an agenda ready to hand out to members. The agenda should include topics for discussion, a time guideline and the name of the person responsible for the item for the first meeting, the Healthy School Champion may choose to chair. If possible, try rotating the chair for subsequent meetings.

## Have a volunteer take the minutes [12](#)

Briefly explain how to take minutes for those who are unfamiliar. Use the template provided in the resources as a guide. Provide members with a copy of the minutes after the meeting.

## Establish roles and responsibilities [13](#)

The roles and responsibilities determine how the committee will run. These guidelines will prevent any miscommunication right from the start.

## Discuss working as a group [14](#)

Briefly discuss basic guidelines the group will use to work cooperatively.

## Complete a Healthy School Committee contact list [11](#)

Make a list of contact information for each member. If a member is a student, have them provide their classroom and teacher's name. Post a copy of the list on the school bulletin board so school community members know who to contact if needed.

## Participation is a step in the right direction!

Commend the committee members for joining in and participating. Encourage and build excitement for the things to come as a result of their help!



# Sample Agenda for First Meeting

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Warm-up/Icebreaker
3. Agenda review
4. Volunteer to take minutes
5. Establish roles and responsibilities
6. Working as a group
7. Healthy School Visioning Exercise
8. Establish a committee name
9. Contact information
10. Next steps
11. Next meeting date: \_\_\_\_\_







# Roles and Responsibilities Template

**Purpose of Committee:** Why the committee exists

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**Objectives:** Actions: how they plan to achieve their goal

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**Reports to:** Link with School Council, principal, lead teacher

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**Membership:** Include teacher, parent, student, administrator, public health nurse, principal, community members

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**Roles of Members/Chair:** Outline tasks of members

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**Meetings:** How often, when, how long and location

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**Decision Making:** How will decisions be made e.g. by consensus, majority or other

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# Working as a Group Effectively Tip Sheet

Many people are not used to working in groups and may find it challenging. The following tips will assist the Healthy School Committee to work effectively as a group to achieve success

## **Establish good communication**

- Listen to others when they are speaking
- Share information on each other's working styles
- Build mutual trust – keep team members informed, provide an open atmosphere for expression of ideas
- One person speaks at a time; take turns presenting ideas so there is not one person dominating the meeting
- Communicate equally among all members

## **Identify roles of members**

- Encourage group members to attend meetings regularly
- Identify individual preference for roles they would like to take on
- Have each person identify their strengths and weaknesses
- Be open minded with ideas
- Ensure all members have equitable roles
- Support completion of responsibilities and jobs assigned
- Respect everyone's opinion and ideas
- Ask questions when needed
- Participate regularly

## **Other important tips**

- Start and end meetings on time
- Watch for conflict and deal with them proactively – negotiate problems and accommodate differences in working habits
- Involve people in different ways based on the skills they possess
- Make sure everyone on the committee is clear about decisions made in the meetings
- Rotate responsibilities to ensure roles are divided up equally



# Sample Survey Newsletter

## **We want to know what is important to you!**

The \_\_\_\_\_ (insert school name) Healthy School Committee would like to know what health issues are most important to you. The committee will be providing surveys for students, staff and parents to complete. We would appreciate your participation as these surveys will help determine the health issues and the healthy activities we will be doing in our school.

The surveys will help us determine the level of commitment our school has to becoming a healthier school. We want to know what we are already doing to support and promote health and how we might be able to improve areas that need help.

The Healthy School Committee will collect the results and share them with you. We hope this will encourage you to work with us to make our school a healthier place. Your ideas and input are important to us and we will support any new ideas you may have throughout the school year. We are all a part of our school community and we can make a difference!

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the survey please contact our Healthy School Champion  
\_\_\_\_\_ (insert name of Champion)  
at \_\_\_\_\_ (insert contact information). We thank you for your input!

## **Have a voice in your school - speak up and be a part of the change!**



# Sample Student Survey

A healthy school environment is important to everyone. We are asking parents, staff and students to provide input on how to create a healthy school. Please complete the questions below and return the survey to your teacher.

1. What is happening at your school now that makes you healthy and feel good? e.g. clubs , activities

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2. What would you like to see at your school to help you be healthier?

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3. How can we do this?

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4. As a student, what issues are important to you? Please check all the boxes that apply then place a star next to the three most important issues.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy eating            | <input type="checkbox"/> Peer pressure                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical activity         | <input type="checkbox"/> Suicide                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playground safety         | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth and development       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loneliness                | <input type="checkbox"/> Racism                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying/school violence  | <input type="checkbox"/> Stress and anxiety           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The environment           | <input type="checkbox"/> Injury prevention            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dating                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Tobacco use                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Relationships with friends   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Relationships with family | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health and well-being |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol and substance use |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____               |   |

5. What is your idea of a Healthy School? (If you prefer, you can draw a picture on back).

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6. Are you interested in being part of the Healthy Schools Team? If yes, please complete below:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_



# Sample Teacher/Staff Survey

A healthy school environment is important to everyone. (Insert school name) is working in collaboration with Toronto Public Health to start a Healthy Schools initiative. A Healthy Schools approach focuses on health issues specific to the needs and concerns of the school community. We are asking parents, staff and students to provide input on how to create a healthy school. Please complete the questions below and return the survey to the Healthy School Committee by (date).

1. What is happening at your school now that makes you healthy and feel good?

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2. What would you like to see at your school to help you be healthier?

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3. How can we do this?

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4. As a teacher, what issues are important to you? Please check the boxes that apply.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy eating            | <input type="checkbox"/> Peer pressure                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical activity         | <input type="checkbox"/> Suicide                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playground safety         | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth and development       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loneliness                | <input type="checkbox"/> Racism                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying/school violence  | <input type="checkbox"/> Stress and anxiety           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The environment           | <input type="checkbox"/> Injury prevention            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dating                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Tobacco use                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Relationships with friends   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Relationships with family | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health and well-being |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol and substance use |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____               |   |

5. What is your vision of a Healthy School?

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**Thank you for helping our school to become a healthier, safer place to learn.**

If you have any questions or comments, please speak with (name of champion) or public health nurse (insert contact information)

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# Sample Parent/Family Survey

A healthy school environment is important to everyone. Toronto Public Health, in collaboration with (school board name) is starting a Healthy Schools initiative at (school name). A Healthy Schools approach focuses on health issues specific to the needs and concerns of the school community. We are asking parents, staff and students to provide input on how to create a healthy school. Please complete the questions below and return the survey to the school by (date).

1. What is happening at your school now that makes you healthy and feel good?

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2. What would you like to see at your school to help you be healthier?

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3. How can we do this?

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4. As a parent/guardian/caregiver, what issues are important to you? Please check the boxes that apply.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy eating               | <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol and substance use  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical activity            | <input type="checkbox"/> Peer pressure              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playground safety            | <input type="checkbox"/> Suicide                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loneliness                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth and development     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying/school violence     | <input type="checkbox"/> Racism                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The environment              | <input type="checkbox"/> Stress and anxiety         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dating                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Injury prevention          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Tobacco use                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Relationships with family    | <input type="checkbox"/> Relationships with friends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health and well-being |   |

Other \_\_\_\_\_

5. Are you interested in being part of the Healthy Schools team? If yes, please complete below:

- Committee       Project       Event       Other

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

6. What is your vision of a Healthy School? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Thank you for helping our school to become a healthier, safer place to learn.** If you have any questions or comments, please speak with (name of champion) \_\_\_\_\_

or public health nurse (insert contact information) \_\_\_\_\_



## HEALTHY SCHOOLS TOOLKIT

# 19 Visioning Exercise

**Complete as a committee to help establish a shared vision of Healthy Schools**

### Discussion Questions

**Champion/chair records responses on a flip chart:**

1. When I say the word “healthy”, what comes to mind?
2. When I say “healthy school community”, what images/thoughts do you have?
3. What are the strengths of your school and your school community right now?
4. What makes one child healthier than another child?
5. What barriers do you see (either currently, or in the past)?

### Visioning Activity – What is your vision of a healthy school community?

Imagine your school community two years from now. You are at a Healthy Schools celebration event to celebrate the successes you have achieved. On this piece of paper take a few minutes to write down all your thoughts (list them, mind maps, just get them down) then we will share together.

What does your school look like as a healthy and thriving school community?

What do you see/hear/feel?

What does the school community look like?

How do people feel?

What programs and services are there in place?

What has changed?

Now, based on this exercise and your school survey, choose the three priority areas you feel need to be addressed. Break up into groups and write your ideas onto flip chart paper and share your priority area with your group, then choose a group member to present them to the larger group. As a team, we will prioritize them. Use one colour sticker for most important issue and another colour sticker for second choice. This will help organize the focus of your healthy school activities.



# HEALTHY SCHOOLS TOOLKIT

## Sample Survey Update

### Another step in the right direction!

The \_\_\_\_\_ (insert school name) Healthy School Committee conducted surveys of students, staff and parents to identify the health needs of our school. In doing so, the committee has learned a lot about the health of our school. Thanks to all who completed the survey; your input was invaluable in determining the needs of our school.

As a result of the survey, we learned that we are already supporting health in several areas: (insert examples)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

We also learned that there are several areas that need improving: (insert examples)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

As a committee, we have prioritized the issues. We have chosen to focus on:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

In the next few months, we will be developing activities based on these health issues for our school community. We may be requesting your help in the planning and carrying out of the activities, so we encourage your participation! We will keep you posted on upcoming activities.

If you have any questions, concerns or additional ideas on how we can address these issues, feel free to contact any of the committee members or our Healthy School Champion \_\_\_\_\_ (insert contact name) at \_\_\_\_\_ (insert contact information). Thank you for your input!

### You spoke, we listened! Stay tuned for fun activities coming your way!



# Activity Selection Template

Curriculum, Teaching and Learning	School and Classroom Leadership	Student Engagement	Social and Physical Environments	Home, School and Community Partnerships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Curriculum, teaching and learning is an area that 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.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating a positive classroom and school environment by identifying shared goals and priorities that are responsive to the needs of the school community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting learning and contributing to the positive cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development of students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaging families, 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.</li> </ul>
Activities				
<p><b>Curriculum:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classroom activities that pair the health topic with curriculum content</li> <li>Teaching and Learning:</li> </ul> <p><b>Staff in-service trainings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student-run learning e.g. secondary students teaching elementary students about health topic</li> <li>Utilize community resources to build on curriculum ex. interactive web-based resources, workshops</li> </ul>	<p><b>School Leadership:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School-wide initiatives ex. assembly, themed day, workshops</li> <li>Student survey to help determine student needs</li> </ul> <p><b>Classroom leadership:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students create informative bulletin board about topic</li> </ul>	<p><b>Student Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student involvement in survey creation, poster creation</li> <li>Students create/host PA announcements</li> <li>Teachers support student-led clubs specific to health topic</li> <li>Consider seasonal opportunities for student initiatives related to topic ex. around holidays, seasons, start of school year, etc.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Social environment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish school/community norms</li> <li>Student leaders, buddy programs</li> </ul> <p><b>Physical environment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equipment audit related to health topic ex. are health-related items missing or outdated?</li> <li>Informative posters</li> <li>Establish safe spaces</li> <li>Library resource section related to health topic</li> </ul>	<p><b>Home:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parent newsletter inserts, workshops</li> <li>Encourage students to discuss a health topic with family</li> </ul> <p><b>School:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilize interdisciplinary staff (e.g. Guidance, Psychologist, Community Support Workers) to support programs</li> </ul> <p><b>Community Partnerships:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health-focused e.g. hospitals, clinics</li> <li>Faith-based services</li> <li>Local, topic-focused partners e.g. local grocery store, gardens, fitness facilities, etc.</li> <li>Link with neighbouring schools for physical activity events, initiatives or challenges</li> </ul>



# Action Plan Template

The Healthy Schools Action Plan Template will be used by Healthy School Committees to guide the development, implementation and evaluation of a school community action plan. The template will be completed in consultation with the school community stakeholders to ensure that needs, assets and vision are reflected. Creating an action plan involves coordination with the school community partners and ongoing communication to ensure success. The action plan serves as a roadmap to achieve the Healthy School Committee’s goal(s) and should be revisited regularly and revised as needed. Effective Healthy Schools include action in each of the five foundations below:

Curriculum, Teaching and Learning	School and Classroom Leadership	Student Engagement	Social and Physical Environments	Home, School and Community Partnerships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Curriculum, teaching and learning is an area that 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.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating a positive classroom and school environment by identifying shared goals and priorities that are responsive to the needs of the school community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting learning and contributing to the positive cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development of students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaging families, 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.</li> </ul>
Activities				



# Action Plan Template

School Board:	
School Name and Number:	
School Address:	
School Phone:	
School Contact:	
School Year:	

## Healthy School Committee

Committee Member	Role (i.e. Administrator, Teacher, School Staff, Student, Parent, Community Partner)	Contact information



# Setting SMART Goals

**In developing the action plan, be sure that your goals and activities are SMART!**

## **Specific**

Set goals that describe what you specifically want to accomplish. To avoid being unclear, answer the questions who, what, where, when and how.

## **Measurable**

Know how you are going to measure whether or not you have achieved your goal. Be specific with how you will measure your achievements. Use specific targets and indicators to determine whether you have been successful at the end of the year.

## **Action Oriented**

Decide how you will meet your goal. What action(s) will be done to ensure you achieve your objective? Outline your actions in the action plan.

## **Realistic**

Reflect on your goals and determine whether success is possible. Are there any barriers in the school that may inhibit success? Develop goals that are attainable. If you set goals that are unachievable, the school may feel the activities do not work and will likely decrease participation in the future. Assess if there is enough time, resources and support available.

## **Time-Oriented**

Consider how much time is needed to complete the activity and meet the goal. Setting a realistic timeline, gives the school an idea of how long they have to achieve the goal. If a timeline is not established, there may be less motivation to reach the goal because the school has no end date to focus on. The target date gives students, staff and parents the motivation to reach the goal within a specific time period. Consider factors that may influence the time it takes to achieve the goal. If you set a time frame that is unrealistic, the school may not meet the goal and feel as if they have failed.



# HEALTHY SCHOOLS TOOLKIT

## End-of-Year Evaluation

I am a.... Parent/Guardian  School Staff  Student  Principal  Community Member

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	N/A
1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>

1. The meetings start and end on time.

1  2  3  4  5  6  7

2. I feel comfortable participating during the meetings.

1  2  3  4  5  6  7

3. The minutes are useful for recording and keeping track of the committee's progress.

1  2  3  4  5  6  7

4. I understand what is expected of me and my role as part of the committee.

1  2  3  4  5  6  7

5. Members of the committee work cooperatively with each other.

1  2  3  4  5  6  7

6. I have a say in the planning and decision making of Healthy Schools.

1  2  3  4  5  6  7

7. As a result of the committee, I'm more likely to speak out about health issues in my school.

1  2  3  4  5  6  7

8. As a result of the committee, I have developed new skills (leadership skills, brainstorming skills).

1  2  3  4  5  6  7

9. The committee includes a variety of members from the school community.

1  2  3  4  5  6  7

10. As a result of the committee, I am more aware of the health issues in my school.

1  2  3  4  5  6  7

11. I feel more connected to my school, as a result of being on this committee.

1  2  3  4  5  6  7

12. What do you like about the committee?

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13. What challenges/barriers exist with regards to the committee?

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14. How do you think the committee could improve?

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15. What changes would you like to see happen in order to increase/continue/gain your involvement?

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Thank you!



# Student Feedback Form

Three things I liked most about the Healthy Schools program were:

Being healthy is important because:

Next year I think we should:

My plan to do more healthy things is to:

I didn't like:

I learned:



# School Community Feedback Form

**Three things I liked most about our Healthy Schools program were:**

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**I didn't like:**

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**I learned:**

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**Being healthy is important because:**

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**I've started doing these other healthy things:**

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**Next year I think we should:**

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# Reflection and Planning for Next Year

## What changes may occur that could affect our Healthy School next year?

### Healthy School Committee members leaving the school (principal, students, parents)

Members may be leaving the school for various reasons such as graduation, new job or moving away


### Changes within the school structure

- New guidelines from the Ministry of Education
- New curriculum
- New school schedule

How will you address these? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## What needs to be done to prepare for next year?

- Healthy Schools update prepared and ready for next year's Fall school newsletter  31
- Plan how you will communicate to the school that Healthy Schools is continuing
- Look for activities from your action plan that can be implemented as soon as the next school year begins
- You can now adjust the action plan and add or remove things in preparation for next year

### Plan for next year's first meeting

Date and Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Minute Recorder: \_\_\_\_\_

Agenda Items: \_\_\_\_\_

### List of ideas for next year

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_


\_\_\_\_\_



## Healthy Celebration Ideas

Congratulations. You have made a difference in the health of your school community! Be proud and celebrate your accomplishments! Here are some healthy celebration ideas for your committee and school.

### Healthy School Committee:

- Potluck lunch or dinner: Have everyone bring a healthy food choice along with the recipe (you may choose to make copies of the recipe to give each member of your committee)
- Create a theme for the celebration (e.g. Hawaiian)
- Provide prizes such as a free day at the local gym or recreation centre (contact local businesses and ask for donations)
- Give each member a special certificate of recognition acknowledging their efforts and participation  [30](#)
- Take a picture of the committee and recognize them in the last school newsletter of the year

### School-wide celebration:

- Have a celebration assembly: Involve the school community by having a fun assembly that highlights the healthy achievements made by the school; involve performances/drama presentations and guest speakers
- Provide a free healthy school lunch for the whole school
- Have a health fair that parents and students can attend to see all of the good things the school has done to become healthier
- Provide a certificate to each student in the school to acknowledge their involvement in Healthy Schools activities
- Allow each classroom to have a healthy celebration over the lunch period
- Give each student a recognition prize such as a sticker, pencil or magnet as an appreciation gift (ask local businesses or organizations if they could donate)
- Send a thank you letter home to parents in appreciation of their efforts towards becoming a healthier school

**This certificate recognizes**

**(School Name)**

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**for helping to create a healthier learning  
environment in our school**

**Congratulations – great work!**

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Date

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Signature



# Sample End-of-Year Update

## Way to go!!

As we come to the end of the school year, the Healthy School Committee would like to thank the students, staff, parents and community members for supporting \_\_\_\_\_ (insert school name) on our journey to becoming a healthier school. We hope you have learned positive health behaviours you can use at school, home and in the community.

We have made excellent steps in the right direction! A few examples of our accomplishments include: (insert activities, changes to school health)

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

These accomplishments are a result of your hard work and input! We appreciate your enthusiasm and support and hope this will continue next year, as we carry on with developing a Healthy School community. We must always strive to become a healthier school, as this provides the optimal environment for children to learn and grow!

Stay tuned for new and upcoming activities next year! Remember, new members and ideas are always welcome for the Healthy School Committee.

Thanks again, and if you have any further questions please contact the Healthy School Champion

\_\_\_\_\_ (insert name of champion) at  
\_\_\_\_\_ (insert contact information).

## Congratulations!



# Implementation Checklist

## Step One:

1. Educated the school community about the Healthy Schools approach
2. Communicated with key community members about Healthy Schools
3. Formed a diverse Healthy School Committee with representation from the whole school community  
number of school staff \_\_\_\_\_, students \_\_\_\_\_, administration \_\_\_\_\_, parents \_\_\_\_\_, and community partners \_\_\_\_\_
4. Conducted the first Healthy School Committee meeting
5. Established a general vision of what a Healthy School looks like

## Step Two:

1. Completed a strengths/needs survey with representatives from
  - parents
  - school staff
  - students
  - administration
2. Reviewed and discussed the results of the surveys
3. Established priority areas for your school
4. Communicated the results and priority areas with the school community

## Step Three:

1. Developed goals and selected activities based on priority areas
2. Developed an action plan addressing all five components of a Healthy School
3. Communicated and promoted the action plan with school community members
4. Carried out Healthy Schools action plan activities
5. Reviewed the action plan progress regularly and revised as needed (i.e. monthly)

## Step Four:

1. Completed the Healthy School Committee Activity Evaluation form
2. Conducted a Healthy School End of Year Evaluation
3. Gathered end of year feedback from:
  - parents
  - school staff
  - students
  - administration
  - community partners
4. Communicated achievements with the entire school community
5. Celebrated with the committee and entire school community
6. Planned for next year

# References

Government of Ontario. [Foundations for a Healthy School](#).

