

HEALTHY KIDS | HEALTHY SCHOOLS | HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Healthy Schools



Healthy Child Manitoba
Putting children and families first

Manitoba 

Healthy Schools is Manitoba's provincial school health initiative designed to promote the physical, emotional and social health of school communities. It is based on the belief that good health is important for learning and that schools are in a unique position to have a positive influence on the health of children, youth and their families. The Healthy Schools Initiative facilitates and supports progress towards positive health and education outcomes for all students.

Our mission is to create school environments that enhance the healthy development of children and their families by working in partnership with community service providers and resources.

Goals

The goals of the Healthy Schools Initiative are to:

- increase understanding of the interdependence between health and education
- strengthen partnerships at both the provincial and local levels
- enhance the focus on good health within schools and the community
- empower school communities to participate actively in improving their health status
- increase access to health promotion, disease prevention and intervention services
- develop environments that support good health within the school and the community
- bring about changes that positively influence health and learning

History

Healthy Schools was first introduced in Manitoba in 2000 as the “Nurses-in-Schools” program. The primary goal of “Nurses-in-Schools” was to increase public health and primary health capacity in Manitoba schools and to promote wellness activities within the larger school community.

In December 2002, a provincial consultation forum brought together government, non-government, health, education and community representatives to develop a “Healthy Schools” framework for Manitoba. As a result of this consultation, the original concept grew into a broader initiative called “Healthy Schools,” better reflecting the needs of school communities.

Since then, regional health authorities, schools, and other community agencies and organizations throughout the province have embraced the Healthy Schools concept. The Healthy Schools framework currently guides the planning activities of many school communities.

Healthy Schools is delivered by Manitoba Healthy Living, Youth and Seniors in partnership with Manitoba Education and Healthy Child Manitoba.

Guiding Principles

The Healthy Schools Initiative is consistent with the comprehensive school health approach. This internationally-accepted approach aims to reinforce health on many levels and in many ways. It recognizes that lots of different factors affect student health and also encourages partnerships among all those who contribute to the well-being of students.

Healthy Schools supports a broad range of health promotion activities within the school community. These activities enhance student health and well-being, allowing children and youth to develop to their fullest potential.

The following guiding principles reflect the comprehensive school health approach and are the basis of the Healthy Schools Initiative:

- incorporating a population health focus
- recognizing that neighbourhoods (environmental factors) affect health
- acknowledging that families and communities can positively influence the health of students



- complementing (rather than replacing or duplicating) existing services and supports
- recognizing the interdependence between health and learning
- promoting partnerships
- encouraging community development
- incorporating the principles of best practice and evidence

Comprehensive School Health

Comprehensive school health is an internationally recognized model for supporting improvements in student educational outcomes while addressing school health in a planned, integrated and holistic way. It is not just about what happens in the classroom; rather it encompasses the whole school environment with actions addressing four distinct but inter-related pillars that provide a strong foundation for comprehensive school health:

1. social and physical environment
2. teaching and learning
3. healthy school policy
4. partnerships and services

When actions in all four areas are harmonized, students are supported to realize their full potential as learners – and as healthy, productive members of society.

Comprehensive school health:

- recognizes that healthy young people learn better and achieve more
- understands that schools can directly influence student health and behaviour
- encourages healthy lifestyle choices to promote student health and well-being
- incorporates health into all aspects of school and learning
- links health and education issues and systems
- needs the participation and support of families and the community at large



Priority Health Topics

Healthy Schools focuses on six priority health topics within the context of the school community:

Healthy Eating

Mental Health Promotion

Physical Activity

Safety and Injury Prevention

Sexual and Reproductive Health

Substance Use and Addictions

Healthy Schools Activities

The Healthy Schools framework includes three main components as well as several related activities:

1) Community-based Activities

As part of the Healthy Schools Initiative, school divisions/schools receive funding to support local Healthy Schools plans and priorities. These funds create an opportunity for school divisions and local schools to work as partners with regional health authorities, as well as other community organizations and individuals, to develop plans and implement activities consistent with the Healthy Schools framework. Activities are to be selected based on identified needs within the school community. Funding is provided to schools divisions, independent schools and band-operated schools.

Healthy Schools community-based activities should:

- encourage community, student and family participation
- build and strengthen partnerships among health providers, educators, parents, children and the community
- use a comprehensive, collaborative approach
- incorporate best practices and evidence
- encourage activities that support wellness and promote healthy environments within the community, at home and at school
- build capacity and provide evidence of sustainability
- support the sharing of knowledge and expertise across the province



2) Targeted Provincial Campaigns

Manitoba schools are eligible to receive funding through Healthy Schools Targeted Provincial Campaigns. Through these campaigns, schools can undertake projects that support important health and wellness issues in their school community.

Two campaigns are offered every year. For each campaign, Healthy Schools makes available to schools \$100 (plus additional funding based on student populations) to undertake an activity related to a specific health theme.

Previous campaigns have focused on health and wellness topics that include:

- safety/injury prevention
- healthy relationships
- physical activity
- environmental health
- healthy eating
- mental health promotion

The Healthy Schools Targeted Provincial Campaigns have demonstrated that local schools can do great things to support their larger school community with modest funding.

3) Provincial Resources

WEBSITE

www.gov.mb.ca/healthyschools

The Healthy Schools website provides information and educational materials to assist school communities in promoting comprehensive school health.

The following resources are available on the website:

Services and Supports Directory

The Healthy Schools Services and Supports Directory is a searchable listing of services, programs and organizations throughout Manitoba related to child health and education, as well as a variety of other useful topics.

Healthy Schools worked with CONTACT Community Information (a program of Volunteer Manitoba) to develop this customized directory. CONTACT houses Manitoba's most comprehensive listing of province-wide community services, programs and organizations.

Healthy Schools eNews

Healthy Schools eNews keeps subscribers up-to-date on the latest Healthy Schools news via an electronic subscription service. This service provides the latest information about Healthy Schools, Healthy Food in Schools and Healthy Schools *in motion*. Visit the website to subscribe.



Healthy Schools Stories

Manitoba schools are invited to share their Healthy Schools story. These stories are posted on the Healthy Schools website and are a great way to share what schools are doing to promote health at their school and inspire other schools in their efforts to create a healthy school community.

Presentation

The Manitoba Healthy Schools presentation is available to assist stakeholders in promoting comprehensive school health in their school community.

Related Activities

HEALTHY KIDS, HEALTHY FUTURES

www.gov.mb.ca/healthykids

In August 2004, the Manitoba government announced the creation of the *Healthy Kids, Healthy Futures All-Party Task Force*. Its mandate was to ask Manitobans for their views on how to help our children and youth enjoy the benefits of optimal health now and throughout their adult lives.

The task force focused on factors affecting children's health in the areas of nutrition, physical activity and injury prevention. Based on its findings, the task force developed 47 recommendations, using feedback from Manitobans to identify priorities, initiatives and actions to support healthy environments.

Healthy Schools works closely with several provincial government departments to develop plans and guide the implementation of the task force recommendations.

HEALTHY SCHOOLS IN MOTION

www.manitobainmotion.ca/schools

Healthy Schools and Manitoba *in motion* have partnered to offer Healthy Schools *in motion*.

Manitoba *in motion* is a provincial strategy to help all Manitobans make physical activity part of their daily lives for health benefits and enjoyment. With the support and involvement of community partners in physical activity, health, healthy living, recreation, sport and education, *in motion* aims to raise activity levels and reduce barriers to physical activity.

A Healthy School *in motion* values the benefits of physical activity and ensures that it is a visible priority in the daily life of the school by working towards the

goal of providing 30 minutes of daily physical activity for each student. This is achieved through any combination of physical education, physical activity breaks, physical activity programs, intramurals and special events.

Schools that register for Healthy Schools **in motion** receive resources and ongoing support to help them accomplish their physical activity goals, including a Healthy Schools **in motion** resource manual, an activity bin full of physical activity equipment, I Love to Run resources, physical activity DVDs and an annual Healthy Schools **in motion** Champions workshop.

LOW-COST BIKE HELMET INITIATIVE

The Low-cost Bike Helmet Initiative was developed in response to the *Healthy Kids Healthy Futures Task Force* recommendation to promote bicycle helmet use and introduce measures to help low-income families purchase helmets. It is available to all schools and child care centres in Manitoba. Since it was introduced in 2006, the Low-cost Bike Helmet Initiative has distributed more than 62,000 helmets to Manitoba families. The helmets cost under \$15 (including taxes, shipping and handling).



NUTRITION IN SCHOOLS

In 2006, the provincial government released *Manitoba School Nutrition Handbook: Getting Started with Guidelines and Policies* and distributed it to all Manitoba schools.

The handbook is designed to help school communities develop nutrition policies and implement changes to promote healthier eating options by providing practical, flexible guidelines that can be adapted to reflect local priorities.

The handbook includes:

- guidelines for food available in schools (ex. foods to serve most, foods to serve sometimes, and foods to serve least)
- information about developing a policy
- sample vision statements
- sample school nutrition policies (ex. vending machines, special events, cafeterias and canteens, classroom reward, fundraising, food safety)

MANITOBA SCHOOL NUTRITION SUPPORT TEAM

A toll-free information line is available to support schools with implementing a school nutrition policy.

To speak with a support team member call toll-free: **1-888-547-0535**.



FOOD IN SCHOOLS WEBSITE

Visit the Food in Schools website for resources and tools to promote nutrition in schools: www.gov.mb.ca/healthyschools/foodinschools.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION/HEALTH EDUCATION

Manitoba is the first province in Canada to mandate physical and health education curriculum from grades K-12. This occurred in September 2008, fulfilling a recommendation of the *Healthy Kids, Healthy Futures Task Force*. A formal evaluation is planned.

Joint Consortium for School Health

In spring 2005, the Provincial and Territorial Ministers of Education and Health and the Public Health Agency of Canada together established a Joint Consortium for School Health (JCSH). This consortium provides leadership and facilitates a comprehensive, co-ordinated approach to school health by helping schools and the health system to work together.

The JCSH is a leader in supporting the advancement of comprehensive school health in Canada. The consortium is made up of key representatives responsible for school health within each province and territory, as well as federal government representation.

The JCSH serves as a catalyst to:

- strengthen co-operation among ministries, agencies, departments and others in support of healthy schools
- build the capacity of the health and education sectors to work together more effectively and efficiently
- promote understanding of, and support for, the concept and benefits of comprehensive school health initiatives

These initiatives are generally designed, led and implemented at the local, regional or provincial/territorial levels with direct involvement from teachers, students, parents, school administrators, school health co-ordinators and other partners.

The consortium supports these efforts by providing a forum, tools and resources for keeping up-to-date on latest approaches to comprehensive school health in Canada and around the world.

Healthy School Planner

www.jcsh-cces.ca

The JCSh Healthy School Planner is an online tool designed to help Canadian schools create healthier environments. It offers individual schools a way to assess the overall state of their environment as well as the choice to zero in on one or more specific topics, such as healthy eating, physical activity or tobacco.

The planner guides schools through a step-by-step process that includes:

- a series of questions to determine the school's current health status
- an assessment of the school's results along with help interpreting those results
- a planning process to help develop goals and an action plan for making improvements
- links to resources to help develop and implement the action plan
- a comprehensive feedback report including the school's assessment results, action plan, and recommendations and resources for those areas selected for action

For more information about
Manitoba's Healthy Schools Initiative:

Healthy Schools

300 Carlton St.

Winnipeg MB R3B 3M9

Phone: (204) 788-6394

Fax: (204) 948-2366

Email: healthyschools@gov.mb.ca

Website: www.gov.mb.ca/healthyschools

