

School Health Matters

Volume 10 - Issue 1
Spring 2014

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Celebrating National Tree Day by
planting trees for sun protection!

Peterborough County-City
HEALTH UNIT
...because health matters!

Electronic version available at: www.pcchu.ca

Shade Auditing for Schools



What's a shade audit?

A shade audit is a way to inventory and analyze shade in a given location, and can suggest actions to improve shade access. Fleming College GIS students completed a placement project with Peterborough County-City Health Unit (PCCHU) in 2013 to undertake a shade audit of the Rhema Christian School property and make recommendations to improve the school's outdoor environment.

Why focus on shade?

Exposure to ultraviolet radiation (UVR) from the sun is a major risk for development of skin cancer, particularly in children. A child's skin is thinner than an adult's; as a result children burn faster and to a greater degree than adults. Children who are frequently exposed to UVR and/or experience numerous sunburns are at greater risk of developing melanoma as adults. Providing adequate shade at school can significantly reduce children's UVR exposure.

What's the opportunity for my school?

The Fleming students developed a shade audit manual incorporating GIS and applied it to assess the Rhema school property and create maps for tree/shade structure placement. Using the shade audit recommendations, the Health Unit partnered with the school to increase shade by planting trees. Students planted fruit trees adjacent to the school garden along with trees to shade the play structure area, increase shade at the soccer field, and to create a living outdoor classroom.

The Health Unit can support interested schools in applying this concept at your school.

Call the PCCHU School Liaison at
705-743-1000, ext. 314.

"In September, Mr. Slofstra and two guests from the Health Unit helped our grade 3-4 class plant trees in different parts of the playground and field. There were pear trees, oak trees, trembling aspens and golden locust trees for us to plant. We planted the pear trees close enough so they can pollinate each other and we can eat the fruit someday. We planted the trembling aspens in a circle to create an outdoor classroom and spaces were left so we could put benches in between. I think it will be fun to sit on a bench and learn there someday. Planting these trees was like bringing more of God's creation to the school grounds and God created them so people can have shade and animals and insects can have food and shelter. I loved seeing my friends working together and helping each other. When some kids were done, they helped other kids. Another day, a neighbour of our school named Linda, who walks her dog, donated a tree and planted it with us. We thought this was so nice."

Written by Grade 3 student
Claire



Jump on the Bus for FREE

The Grade 8 Transit Quest aims to introduce youth to the Peterborough Transit System, giving them a chance to navigate the routes and schedules for FREE!



Middle school students are beginning to travel independently around the city, but often describe being unfamiliar with how and when to catch the bus, where to buy tickets and how to get dropped off at the right spot. These are skills that will benefit them as they move into high school, as many high schools are beginning to provide transit passes in lieu of yellow school buses. Increased familiarity with city transit also provides youth with an alternative to the family vehicle, one that builds confidence and independence.

One student from Queen Elizabeth remarked, "My friends came back to class saying how awesome it was. It gives us a sense of responsibility. We didn't have to bug our parents and ask them to take us everywhere. Overall, it was a really good thing!"

Grade 8 students receive the two-week pass just before March Break. Last year, over 850 passes were delivered and nearly 2500 rides were taken over the two-week period!

Active and Safe Routes to School Peterborough (ASRTSP) works with local school boards to organize the program, so classroom teachers are not required to register.

Other programs offered by ASRTSP this spring include:

On the Bus: A transit-focused field trip for Grade 3 classes. Practice map reading skills and learn about air quality, while touring our city onboard a Peterborough Transit Bus. Registration begins in January.

Cycling Safety Training: A multi-day course cycling safety and skills course for Grade 5 students. Bike gear, maintenance and repair, and handling skills are covered as students work towards becoming safe, confident cyclists. Offered through a partnership between GreenUP and BIKE, on a first come, first serve basis.

To find out more information on these programs, please visit www.peterboroughmoves.com, or contact Lindsay Stroud, Program Coordinator at lindsay.stroud@greenup.on.ca.

Healthy Schools:

"Strengths, Priorities, Engagement"

"Healthy Schools" offer more than just special projects, educational activities or specific characteristics; it is an approach to thinking and working that is adopted by the whole school. This type of approach enhances the physical, mental, social and spiritual health of the whole school community. Healthy Schools starts with school strengths and priorities, and engages students, parents and staff in the process. The Health Unit is supporting Healthy Schools work with eight schools this school year:



Chemong Public School has formed their Healthy Schools Committee and will focus on activities to promote healthy eating, including further development of their school garden, a partnership with local farmer Erin McLean from McLean Berry Farm/Buckhorn Berry Farm, and a focus on foods from around the world at their "Chemong Olympics".

James Strath Public School has surveyed students, parents and staff to identify how to help their school community become more mentally healthy. The next step is to use the survey results to develop an action plan; the response to a request for volunteers to help has been overwhelming!

King George Public School introduced a stretching and breathing program for students in grades 2-4, to extend their Mentally Healthy Schools work on helping students develop self-regulation. Students benefit from increased physical activity and learning how to deal with stress and emotions. Staff wanted a program too, so a similar program was offered after school for them!

Prince of Wales Public School is implementing a peer-led playground program (PALs) to increase opportunities for students to be involved in fun physical activity at break time. Student leaders will run activities for younger students, giving them the opportunity to develop their leadership skills and be more active during the day! The PALs program is in conjunction with the new KPR Mentally Healthy Schools initiative at Prince of Wales school.

Queen Mary Public School will focus on dance as a way to increase opportunities for physical activity and to build inclusiveness and unity within their school community. The initiative will start with students in intermediate grades, followed by students in the junior and primary divisions.

Rhema Christian School activities to date include development and adoption of a school nutrition policy, continued development of the school garden and promoting local foods, as well as planting a variety of trees in follow up to a shade audit of the school property.

St. Anne Catholic Elementary School is working with their school community to promote healthy eating. One of their exciting projects will be to plan and plant a school garden.

St. Paul Catholic Elementary School healthy eating activities include smoothie promotions, student developed "Nutrition Blasts" (ie., announcements, posters and skits), and starting a student nutrition program. Physical activity includes yoga and "Spirit Club" running/walking program. The school's Mind, Body, Spirit committee ensures that students are involved in program delivery and suggestions for future improvements/ideas, and maintains their interest and ownership of the program.

Challenges, Beliefs & Changes (CBC)

The CBC program is a proven effective means of increasing knowledge, correcting misconceptions about high school drug use and increasing resistance skills amongst younger students in Ontario. CBC uses a peer-to-peer education approach to assist youth with their transition to high school and the decisions they will face about alcohol and other drugs. The program engages senior high school students and trains them as peer educators, focusing on leadership and group management techniques, communication and refusal skills, personal attitudes clarification, and information about tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, prescription and other drugs. The peer educators travel to grade 8 feeder school classrooms to deliver two 90-minute interactive sessions exploring the challenges of high school, specifically relating to substances and encouraging younger students to make well informed decisions.



The Peterborough Drug Awareness Coalition (PDAC) and Peterborough Drug Strategy (PDS) have partnered to facilitate the CBC program locally for the past couple years. The program has been very successful! Past peer educator participants have said: *'it is an amazing experience to teach people coming into high school things that you were maybe not taught and would have valued' and 'it's fun and you get the satisfaction of knowing you're helping people in your community'.* In 2012, 97% of the grade 8's who received the interactive workshop said they think other grade 8 classes should have this program. Some comments from these grade 8's included: *'the program was fun and I like (learning about) what can happen to people with drugs and alcohol' and 'I really had fun and feel more confident about not using drugs'.*

In collaboration with St. Peter Catholic Secondary School and Adam Scott Collegiate Vocational Institute, 35 peer educators were trained in September 2013. PDAC and PDS are currently looking for another high school to join this initiative for the 2014/2015 school year.

For more information please contact Deanna VandenBroek at dvandenbroek@pcchu.ca, call 705-743-1000, ext. 223, or visit <http://parentactionondrugs.org/program-resources/peer-education-programs/cbc/>.

This project is supported by an investment from the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

Positive Mental Health at School

Positive mental health is critical to ensuring that children and youth thrive at school, at home and in their communities. Here are ideas to support positive mental health in your school, within the four foundations of a healthy school: high quality instruction and programs, a healthy physical environment, a supportive social environment and community partnerships.

High Quality Instruction and Programs

- Integrate positive mental health across subject areas – for example in selecting [reading materials](#), studying [the arts](#), looking at [brain science, health and phys ed](#).
- Organize staff training to recognize signs and symptoms, and strategies to deal with mental health issues.
- Refer to the [OPHEA HPE lesson plans](#) purchased by your board; ask your principal for the password.
- Borrow the [PCCHU Resiliency Workshop Kit for Grade 7 and 8](#) to help your students discover and use their strengths.

A Healthy Physical Environment

- Link to the [Healthy Families Centre](#) to access reliable information on mental health topics.
- Involve students to build a [peace garden](#) or quiet area where they can go to meditate and quietly socialize.
- Develop opportunities for students to participate in physical activity and clubs at school. Help students take on leadership of activities.
- Post [Kids Help Phone posters](#) around your school. They're free!
- Provide a welcoming, student-centred environment; e.g. sofas, decorative plants, student artwork, quotes and photos on display. Not sure where to start? Click on the [Welcoming Schools Quick Assessment](#) tool.

A Supportive Social Environment

- Survey students, parents and staff to find out their mental health concerns and where to focus in your school. Click on the [Positive Mental Health Toolkit](#) for schools.
- Provide students with information about mental health; give them the opportunity to take action in their school, such as creating posters, bulletin boards and messages for your school newsletter.
- Did your school participate in the 2012 Mental Health Summit for Grade 7 students? Apply to [Dare to Dream](#) and/or [Imagineaction](#) for project funding to make a difference in your school.
- Use morning PA messages to provide students with positive mental health messages and strategies.

Community Partnerships

- Provide information from community partners in your school newsletter to parents.
- Include positive mental health tips for parents in your school newsletter.
- Sign on with the Health Unit as a Healthy School to access support, seed funding and resources.
- Share the PCCHU [Youth Services App](#) download with parents and staff.
- Plan activities that bring together children/youth and seniors in the school setting or community settings. These types of activities have mental health promoting benefits for children and seniors alike!

Reading a hard copy of our newsletter? Go to www.pcchu.ca under the section [For Professionals | Schools | Administrators | Your School Newsletter](#) to access hyperlinked resources.

Cooking Matters: Helping Students Build Food Skills at School

The classroom is an ideal setting to teach students about food skills whether students are working directly with food or creating and discussing healthy recipes. Food skills are needed to prepare and provide safe, nutritious, and culturally acceptable meals. They foster independence among children and youth and assist in the development of lifelong healthy eating habits.

Integrating Food Skills into the Curriculum Food skills activities in the classroom can reinforce the healthy eating messages you teach while allowing students to engage in active learning. Food skill lesson plans provide opportunities for students to learn about food and nutrition while also building on their ability to observe, describe, calculate, graph, etc. Food can be a useful teaching tool to develop and strengthen student understanding of a variety of curriculum concepts including:

Health: Make a healthy meal or snack;

Language: Read a recipe, write a grocery list, learn new vocabulary, and follow instructions;

Math: Count, sort, measure and work with fractions;

Science: Make and test predictions. "What will happen when we put this in the oven?";

Social Studies: Discover where certain food is grown. Find out more about ethnic cuisines from around the world;

Small and Large Muscle Control: Stir, chop, knead, and pour; and

Social Skills: Work together, take turns, and share utensils.

March is Nutrition Month and the perfect time to integrate food skills into your classroom curriculum and celebrate this year's theme of "Simply Cook and Enjoy!" Visit www.nutrition2014.ca for more information.

For fact sheets and grade-specific lesson plans related to food skills, register as a teacher and then visit the Nutrition Tools for Schools® website at www.nutritiontoolsforschools.ca and check out the newly released Action Guide titled "Cooking Matters". For more information call 705-743-1000, ext. 251.



Amphibians, Reptiles, Feeder Rodents AND Salmonella



Amphibians (frogs, newts and salamanders), reptiles (snakes, turtles, bearded dragons and lizards) and rodents (mice and rats fed to the reptiles) often carry Salmonella germs without showing any signs of illness. They shed these germs in their droppings, and these can contaminate their bodies and the environment around them, including where they are housed or handled.

The Health Unit recommends that schools avoid having amphibians, reptiles and feeder rodents in schools.

If amphibians, reptiles and feeder rodents are present in the school:

1. assign two people who understand the risks associated with them to handle and clean them;
2. emphasize good hand washing after handling amphibians, reptiles and feeder rodents and any surfaces or item they have touched and do not let them run freely;
3. clean and disinfect any surfaces where feeder rodents were prepared, thawed or stored;
4. dispose of amphibian and reptile waste water and droppings in the toilet or in a dedicated trash can away from food preparation areas;
5. do not keep amphibians and reptiles in areas with children younger than 5 years of age, pregnant women or people with weak immune systems;
6. do not keep amphibians and reptiles in rooms where staff and students' food is prepared or eaten; and
7. use a dedicated container to bathe animals and clean their habitats, not in a kitchen or bathroom sink.

For more information, contact a Public Health Inspector at 705-743-1000.

Partners in Education: Making the Right Decisions

The success of the tobacco-free sports and recreation movement is dependent on two key pillars: having clear messages about its importance, and having those messages supported by local, tobacco-free champions. That's why in Peterborough, we are excited to work with the Peterborough Petes and Crime Stoppers as we raise awareness about the importance of tobacco-free living.



As part of the 2013/14 Partners in Education assembly tour, the Petes, PCCHU, and Crime Stoppers are coming together in an effort to encourage students to make the right choices. The assemblies, which are organized for students in Grades 3-8, are based on the Petes model for success and include curriculum linked discussions on tobacco use prevention.

"It's important for students to know that if they find themselves in a situation they are uncomfortable with, or see something they know is wrong, that the right thing to do is to tell an adult they trust," Detective John Stoeckle said about Crime Stoppers' message to students. Likewise, the same could be said about PCCHU's messages to students – it's about making the right, healthy choices.

In advance of the assembly, teachers in Grades 6, 7, and 8 are provided with curriculum linked activities that *explore the harms* that can come from using commercial tobacco products; specifically, how using such products *can affect ones athletic prowess*. Teachers then work with their students, exploring the resources, and in turn ask the Petes informed questions about the importance of staying tobacco-free. A student from Adam Scott, for example, was keen to know "What keeps you motivated to stay away from harmful things like alcohol and chewing tobacco?" The answer was both insightful and honest: "I see some of my friends using that stuff," said Left Wing Nick Ritchie, "but it's not for me. I know that using tobacco is going to make me slower and less fit, and I need to play my best every night. Hockey is a team sport, and if everyone isn't putting in 100% every game, or taking care of their health, we won't have success. One day I hope to play in the NHL, and if I want to realize that dream, I need to be the best player I can be, and part of that means staying away from tobacco," he added.

There have been some emerging trends with the questions the students are asking the Petes. "How do you deal with peer pressure?", "Do you know anybody that smokes?", "Have you ever thought about smoking?", "How can tobacco use affect how you play?" are some of the questions that get asked the most often, indicating that the students are eager to have a frank discussion about tobacco use.

"In a town with such a rich hockey heritage," noted Keith Beecroft, Youth Development Worker at the Health Unit, "it only made sense for us to partner with the Petes on this initiative. The students are captivated by the Petes players at the assembly, and the Petes truly embody the importance of tobacco-free living."

Tobacco use prevention remains a priority for the Province of Ontario, PCCHU and the local school boards. As such, being able to combine the messages of our community partners into an interactive and meaningful assembly - and have those messages delivered by local tobacco-free champions - is a huge win for local students that are keen to make the right choices.

DID YOU KNOW? Tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable death and disease in Canada, and in **Peterborough there are roughly 285 deaths every year** attributed to commercial tobacco use. Likewise, in the recent Youth Smoking Survey, it was found that **9% of Peterborough youth in grades 6-12 smoke**. With your help, **we can engage and empower your students** to remain tobacco-free, leading healthy and active lives as they mature.

Classroom Activity:

An opportunity for your students to develop their research and critical thinking skills: Have your students visit the Play, Live, Be ... Tobacco-Free (www.playlivebetobaccofree.ca), and Know What's in Your Mouth (www.knowwhatsinyourmouth.ca) websites and start a discussion about how tobacco use could impact their lives. For example:

What are some of the consequences of using or trying commercial tobacco products? How could this impact their goals, dreams, or lives?

What chemicals are found in commercial tobacco products? What other products are these chemicals found in? (Housing insulation, floor cleaners, etc.) What is gained from putting these chemicals in your body?

What are some of the myths associated with using commercial tobacco products? (I'm an athlete, it's what we do. You don't smoke chewing tobacco, so it can't be harmful, etc.). What is the reality?

As a culminating task, your students could:

- Put their answers together in the form of a pledge
- Create and act out a newscast with their findings
- Use visual arts to express their knowledge

Need assistance with more curriculum linked tobacco-free activities? Contact Keith Beecroft 705-743-1000 or kbeecroft@pcchu.ca.



Curriculum Resources

Pan Am/Parapan Am Games Resources for Teachers

Teachers of Grades 5, 6, 7 and 8 can borrow resource kits (lesson The Pan Am/Parapan AM Games are coming to Toronto and area in Summer 2015. The Games are a great opportunity to build your students' excitement about sport and physical activity; the Games include everything from bowling and fencing to wheelchair rugby! Check out these resources for teachers:



Kids N' Play Resource Guide

http://ppakids.ophea.net/sites/default/files/PLAY_KNPResourceFINAL_15NV13.pdf

The Resource Guide is built to support educators and sport and recreation leaders in connecting children, through quality physical activities and healthy living lessons, to the fun and challenge of the TORONTO 2015 Pan Am/Parapan Am Games. The Guide includes activities for Grades 1-3, 4-6, and 7-8.

Passport to Fun

http://ppakids.ophea.net/sites/default/files/PLAY_KNPPassportFINAL_15NV13.pdf

In using the Passport to Fun, children earn points as they actively participate in and explore an array of activities designed to get them active, to expose them to the cultures of the Pan Americas, to develop and maintain a healthy lifestyle, and to create opportunities for community celebration.

Passport For Life

<http://www.passportforlife.ca/what-passport-life/information-teachers>

Passport for Life supports the awareness, assessment, development and advancement of physical literacy among students and teachers. The four components of physical literacy that are assessed in Passport for Life are Active Participation, Living Skills, Fitness Skills and Movement Skills.

Playsport

<http://ppakids.ophea.net/playsport>

This online resource for elementary and secondary educators is being developed by the Ministry of Education and can be linked to the Ontario curriculum. It is focused on encouraging health and physical literacy, and helping students develop the skills and knowledge that lead to healthy, active lives. This resource will provide a wide range of physical activities as well as videos promoting healthy living and decision making, and student leadership.

Activity Day Kit

<http://ppakids.ophea.net/activity-days>

The kit is being developed by the Ministry of Education for elementary schools and after-school programs. The kit will include activity cards related to healthy living and sports in the Toronto 2015 Games, an implementation guide and a Pan Am/Parapan Am Kids banner.

Ontario Agri-Food Education

From "E is for Eggs" for early primary to Connexions entre Communautés for Grade 3 and Agri-Trekking for Grades 4-6, Ontario Agri-Food Education has many free curriculum-linked resources for elementary educators. Click on:

<http://www.oafe.org> to explore the resources that are available for your classroom.



Get "The Real Dirt on Farming II/ L'agriculture: des Bonnes réponses terre-à-terre II"

<http://www.farmfoodcare.org/pdfs/dirt/DirtEng2011.pdf>. Canadian farmers serve you the real facts on farming in our country.



Virtual Farm Tours

<http://www.virtualfarmtours.ca/>

You're only a click away from visiting a number of real, working Canadian and Ontario farms! Learn about egg farms, vegetable farms, and more.



We want to hear from you!

The School Health Matters newsletter is published twice a year by the Peterborough County-City Health Unit. If you have questions, suggestions, or stories to share please contact our School Health Liaison at 705-743-1000, ext. 314.

Peterborough Healthy Families 2014 Workshops

Oppositional and Defiant Children and Teens:

Understanding Them and Creative Management Strategies

Dr. Kevin Nugent, Child Psychiatrist

Wednesday, April 9, 2014

7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Emotional Intelligence

Dr. James Parker, Ph.D.,

Canada Research Chair in Emotion & Health;

Professor of Psychology, Trent University

Tuesday, May 6, 2014

7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

FREE

Everyone is welcome to attend
Peterborough Public Library,
Auditorium,
345 Aylmer Street North

For more information call:

705-742-3803/1-800-386-6561

Light refreshments are provided.



Speech, Language and Hearing Association of Peterborough

FRIDAY, MAY 9, 2014

Connecting Language and Mental Health in the Early Years

Dr. Chaya Kulkarni, BAA, M.Ed, Ed.D

Director, Infant Mental Health Promotion, the Hospital for Sick Children

This workshop will explore:

- the importance of building strong, positive parent-child attachment relationships and increasing parent skills in promoting early communication and pre-literacy development in infants and young children
- the profound impact of the early caregiver-infant/child relationship on the child's development
- strategies for building a foundation of positive mental health to support communication development in the early years will be provided.

LOCATION: Calvary Pentecostal Church,
1421 Lansdowne St W., Peterborough

COST: *Professionals* - \$65.00 (early bird fee);
OR \$75.00 (after April 15th)
Parents/Students - \$35.00



Triple P Positive Parenting Program

Triple P Seminar Series for parents of children 2-10 years – 3 evenings:

*The Power of Positive Parenting; Raising Competent,
Confident Children; Raising Resilient Children*

May 6, 13 & 20, 2014

6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Keith Wightman Public School

Every Parent's Survival Guide for parents of children

*2-10 years: Explore the Causes of Child Misbehaviour
and Learn to Make*

Positive Changes

March 19 & 26, 2014

1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Family Resource Centre (PFRC), Antrim Family Hub

Toddler/Preschooler Tips Discussion for parents of children 2-5 years:

Surviving Your Toddler

April 16, 23 & 30, 2014

6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

PFRC, Otonabee Valley Family Hub

Brief Discussion Groups for parents of children up to 10 years of age:

Managing Fighting and Aggression

May 27, 2014

1:00-3:00 p.m.

PFRC, Antrim Family Hub

Toddlers and Tantrums

March 18, 2014

6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

PFRC, Lakefield Family Hub

*Triple P Parenting Plans - Individual appointments
available*

Tuesday afternoons

PFRC, St. John Family Hub

To register for the above Programs,

call Peterborough Family Resource Centre

705-748-9144

For individual telephone consultations,

call Peterborough County-City Health Unit
Family HEALTHline

705-743-1000