

School Health Matters

Volume 9 - Issue 1
Spring 2013

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*Becoming a
Healthy School!*



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

Electronic version available at: www.pcchu.ca

Healthy Schools

Healthy Schools is an approach to thinking and working comprehensively to make school the healthiest possible place to learn, and where the healthy choice is the easy choice. It's more than just special projects, educational activities or specific characteristics. Healthy schools are built on a foundation of quality programming, a healthy physical environment, a supportive social environment and community partnerships.

How to become a Healthy School

1. Talk to key stakeholders in your school to get their support. Consult the principal/vice-principal, parent council, staff and students.
2. Identify a champion in your school. This consistent, committed person will provide leadership to your Healthy Schools initiative.
3. Once you have school support, contact Anne Gallant, School Health Liaison, at 705-743-1000, ext. 314 to get started. The Health Unit will support your school community to:
 - form a steering committee (either a new or an existing group within a school such as Safe School Committee);
 - assess the strengths and interests of the school community;
 - develop an action plan;
 - implement the plan;
 - evaluate outcomes; and
 - celebrate successes.

Healthy Schools work encompasses the whole school community, including students, parents, staff and community partners. The Health Unit can provide funding for schools to help implement their Healthy Schools action plan.

Becoming a Healthy School: Rhema's Story

Last fall, Rhema Christian School chose to become a Healthy School building on interest within the school to create a community garden on school property. Mrs. Wilson, Grade 3-4 teacher, is the tireless champion for the project! The Peterborough Garden Network is a key community partner. The whole school is participating in creating and implementing a plan for the garden including students, staff and parents. Activities undertaken to date include:

- Presentation of an information display for parents attending a parent-teacher night, to present the garden idea and gather parent and student input.
- Grade 3-4 students were introduced to growing plants by creating pop bottle sprout gardens in the classroom. Students are responsible for watering and caring for their garden ... and free to taste it!
- Grade 3-4 students learned about plants and developed cooking skills through hands-on activities to create pizza sauce recipes using at least one ingredient from each plant part; you really can put parsnip in pizza sauce! In addition to making pizzas, students learned about fruits and vegetables and created fruit parfaits, and made delicious muffins using roasted squash and learned about seed collection.
- Participation of students, staff and parents to brainstorm and create "graffiti sheets" to share their vision for the garden.
- Researching funding opportunities to develop the garden.

January 16
Today we made pizza with garden vegetables. First we organized are vegetables than cut them. There was types of vegetables, there were stem, leaf, bulb, seed, flower, fruit, root. Our stem was celery, our flower is broccoli, our root is carrot, our pea is the seed, our bulb was garlic, our leaves were spinach, our fruit was red pepper. It was really fun, And ^{maybe} delicious.

Jan 25
2013
Today Ann came and We made fruit Parfaits. A fruit is a fruit Because they have seeds and they come from the flower. People get confused Because some people think that a tomato is a vegetable But it has seeds and it the same thing with squash. We made our parfait a Healthy as possible By putting in low fat plain yogurt natural sweetener Honey and LOT OF FRUIT. My favourite fruit is Dragon fruit Because it has cool looking skin and it tastes delicious. I tried starfruit and Pricale pear.

Next steps will include Grade 3-4 students mentoring kindergarten students to plant seeds, identifying themes from the graffiti sheets to create a master garden plan, planting seedlings for the garden, and starting to dig come spring.

The project creates opportunities for authentic learning and curriculum connections, development of a healthy physical garden environment, positive social connections within the school community and opportunities for mentoring, and community partnerships.



On the Cover

Joshua and Seth from Rhema Christian School making fruit salad in School Garden Healthy Schools Project.

Be Bug and Sun Smart During Outdoor Activities

Consider these sun safety tips when outdoors at school, at work, and at play. Whether you are a participant or spectator in outdoor activities, you need to protect yourself.

Remember these tips for sun safety:

Slip, Slap, Slide, Slather, Seek Shade, and Slurp!

- **Slip** on a long sleeved shirt;
- **Slap** on a wide brimmed hat;
- **Slide** on sunglasses;
- **Slather** on sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher. Apply 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every two hours or more frequently if you sweat or get wet;
- **Seek** shade whenever you can or create shade using umbrellas, portable canopies or tents;
- **Slurp** plenty of water to prevent dehydration when in the sun or summer heat; and
- Select early morning or later in the day for activities to avoid sun exposure. Sun rays are strongest between 11:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Signs of skin damage are sunburns and tans. Never intentionally tan. There is no such thing as a safe tan.



Be Bug Smart too!

Protect yourself from mosquito and tick bites that could transmit illnesses:

- when going into forested areas on school trips or for your leisure, wear long sleeves, long pants, socks and shoes (tuck pants into socks);
- wear light coloured clothing;
- apply an insect repellent containing DEET sparingly according to the package directions and never directly on the face. Apply sunscreen first, then the insect repellent; and
- when possible, avoid mosquito habitats such as swamps, forests and standing water.

For more information go to www.pcchu.ca and click on **My Life & Health** and **My Home & Environment**.

It's Time to *Bring Back Play*... Do it Through DPA!

ParticipACTION has recently launched a new campaign called **Bring Back Play**. It is a national movement to increase physical activity among children through the unstructured, active play that kept today's parents happy and healthy when they were kids. Although the messages are primarily addressed to parents, the release of this campaign presents a great opportunity for your classroom and school. Extending the **Bring Back Play** message to the school environment will help inform the activities you use to fulfill the twenty minutes of Daily Physical Activity (DPA) required by the Ministry of Education. Check out the following links for more information and game ideas:



ParticipACTION website – About **Bring Back Play**:
www.participaction.com/get-moving/bring-back-play

A mobile app (may also be viewed as a webpage):
www.bringbackplay.mobi

Need some fresh ideas to fulfill your DPA time? Check out the following links:
www.eworkshop.on.ca/edu/dpa/intro.cfm
www.ciraontario.com/ehr/page/fdintramurals
www.raisethebarintramurals.com

Teachers First

The World Health Organization predicts that mental illness will become the number one preventable chronic illness by 2020. One in five Canadians will experience mental illness in their lifetime and the other four will know someone who has. It touches us all, even at work. According to Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, "mental health is the number one cause of workplace disability in Canada, accounting for nearly 30% of disability claims and 70% of total disability costs."

The workplace itself can contribute to good or bad mental health by way of its culture, leadership, civility and respect, support, balance, workload, recognition and reward, engagement and psychological protection. A new national standard focuses on Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace and will incorporate these factors. While the standard encourages employers to create a healthy work environment, we all need to challenge our own assumptions and biases. By creating a supportive work environment, workers are more likely to reach out for help, and that benefits everyone.

If you are concerned that a co-worker is struggling with a mental health issue, here are some tips:

1. Encourage your co-worker to enlist the support of someone who can help to advocate on their behalf (*e.g. union steward, a sympathetic work friend, family member*).
2. Recommend resources available in the community and through work (*e.g. employee and family assistance programs or benefits*). Visit www.pcchu.ca for a list of services in our local community.

Link for mental health services in Peterborough:
www.pcchu.ca/my-life-health/adults/mental-health-2/

To obtain a copy of the Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace Standard (*simply fill in the information at the bottom and you will get a link to download the PDF of the Standard*):
<http://shop.csa.ca/en/canada/occupational-health-and-safety-management/cancca-z1003-13bnq-9700-8032013/inv/z10032013/>

Helpful Information When Students with Mental Health Concerns Return to School

You can create and role model an environment in your classroom that promotes acceptance and understanding of mental health issues. When students have access to adults whom they perceive as approachable, this can foster recovery and build resiliency. This article from Mental Health and Addictions Nurses for Central East Community Care Access Centre (CECCAC) provides some helpful strategies to support students with mental health issues returning to school.



Some of the things you might notice about the student:

- This is a very anxiety provoking time for the student. Worries may include catching up with schoolwork, what others may think of them, feeling different, and poor sense of belonging.
- His/her cognitive and behavioural functioning level may be altered. This could include their ability to complete homework, participate in class, maintain organization, and/or keep up workload.
- Medication side effects may include drowsiness, poor concentration, anxiety, upset stomach, and restlessness.

What can you do to help?

- Have open dialogue with the student, parents, school staff, and involved care providers about how best to support the student's mental health as they reintegrate back to school. Families may be feeling overwhelmed, so more frequent contact may be helpful.
- Review individual educational plans and specific needs that will help maintain their attendance and participation in school.
- Be mindful of the student's potential triggers and stressors from the school environment. The student will be learning about how to manage their symptoms every day.
- A modified attendance and homework schedule may be helpful.
- Provide frequent check-ins with the student, and how they are feeling.

Helpful websites:

The ABCs of Mental Health
www.hincksdellcrest.org/Home/Resources-And-Publications/The-ABC-s-of-Mental-Health.aspx

Teen Mental Health
www.teenmentalhealth.org

Nurture Your Resilience

Here are 10 tips to help nurture your resilience. When adults develop resilience and effective coping strategies, they can model and talk about these strategies to the children around them.

1. **Maintain perspective.** In challenging or stressful times, remind yourself that you make a difference. In what other profession do you have the chance to daily influence a person's entire life?
2. **Control your calendar.** Create time for family, exercise, and fun activities. If you find it difficult to leave school at a reasonable hour, place an alarm on your calendar or phone as a reminder to go home.
3. **Deal with conflict or difficult issues quickly and honestly.** Rarely do problems get better by ignoring them.
4. **Take care of your body.** Healthy eating, exercise, and sleep are fundamental to dealing with stress and building resiliency. Learn relaxation strategies; try yoga or meditation, practice deep breathing.
5. **Find a professional passion.** One of the best ways to stay current is to find and cultivate a professional passion. Find what you love most about teaching and learning; dive in and become an expert.
6. **Embrace change.** Change is a part of living. Accepting circumstances that cannot be changed can help you focus on the circumstances that you can alter.
7. **Laugh.** Humour is one of the best ways to combat stress, and it helps to place difficult or challenging situations into the proper perspective. Plus, a good laugh makes you feel better and makes you more pleasant to be around.
8. **Avoid complaining.** There is no such thing as a perfect school or a perfect organization. Work to make things better, but remember, the grass is rarely greener on the other side. Maybe also reread #3.
9. **Develop a professional support network.** Avoid the temptation to stay isolated in your classroom; seek out fellow educators for support and collaboration.
10. **Take a risk.** We ask students to learn something new, to try something they've never tried, and to be better than they were the day before. So be a model for your students. Stretch yourself beyond your comfort zone and try something new. If you fail, laugh and learn how to be better next time. If you succeed, celebrate.

Adapted from ASCD <http://inservice.ascd.org/whole-child/ten-tips-for-building-teacher-resiliency>

Helpful Website:

The Road to Resilience
www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience.aspx



Putting Nutrition Policies into Action

School nutrition policies were implemented by both KPRDSB and PVNCCDSB in 2011. Nutrition policies aim to have everyone in the school, from teachers to parents, working together to ensure students receive the same messages about healthy eating wherever lessons are taught and food is served (i.e. offered and sold) – in the classroom, in the school, in the home and community.

Public health units across Ontario have joined to create Nutrition Tools for Schools® at www.nutritiontoolsforschools.ca. Teachers, administrators, parents, volunteers - register as a user to access tips, tools and ideas on how to make nutrition come alive at your school.

For more information, contact a Public Health Nutritionist at 705-743-1000, ext. 251.

Food For Kids Peterborough and County

Student Nutrition Programs (SNP) or Breakfast Programs, are school community based initiatives, coordinated by school staff or volunteers. The goal is to provide nutritious breakfasts and snacks to all students based on Canada's Food Guide in a welcoming environment. SNPs play a major role in encouraging healthy eating practices and improving the learning capacity of students. Food For Kids Peterborough and County supports local Breakfast Programs.

Funding for programs is critical. If you are interested in making a financial donation to the Breakfast Program at your school, visit www.pcchu.ca/ffk to learn how you can donate. For more information on how you can get involved at your school, talk to your School Coordinator or call 705-743-1000, ext. 251.

Breakfast Program Volunteers – Save the Date

The Annual Food For Kids Peterborough and County Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon will be held on Thursday, April 18, 2013 at the Evinrude Centre in Peterborough. Watch for more information coming soon! RSVP to 705-743-1000, ext. 316.



Q and A: School Based Vaccine Clinics

What vaccines are offered at school based clinics?

The Health Unit offers three vaccines free of charge through school-based clinics:

- Meningococcal (meningitis) Vaccine is offered in one dose to grade 7 students;
- Hepatitis B Vaccine is offered in two doses to grade 7 students; and
- HPV Vaccine is offered in three doses to grade 8 girls.

1. Meningococcal (meningitis) Vaccine offers protection from the bacteria *Neisseria meningitidis* (commonly known as meningococcus) which can result in meningitis and meningococemia. Meningitis is an infection of the fluid and lining that covers the brain and spinal cord.

How is meningitis contracted? The bacteria that can cause meningitis occurs naturally in the body. The bacteria is spread through droplets in the air from coughing or sneezing, and from the transfer of saliva from an infected person (e.g., sharing beverages, toothbrushes, lip balm, and kissing).

Why get vaccinated? Meningococcal Disease can progress rapidly and can cause severe and life threatening illness in healthy individuals.

www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/pub/immun/meningococcal_phu_qa.html

2. Hepatitis B Vaccine offers protection against the viral infection that can cause serious damage to the liver.

How is hepatitis B contracted? The virus is transmitted through blood and other body fluids from an infected person. Common ways to contract hepatitis B are through sharing needles, sexual intercourse, tattooing or piercing with dirty equipment.

Why get vaccinated? Approximately 150 cases of hepatitis B are reported in Ontario each year. People with the disease often become tired, feverish, lose their appetite, and sometimes get yellow skin and eyes (called jaundice). However some people can get the virus and not have symptoms. That means they can infect someone else without knowing. It can lead to liver disease and liver cancer.

www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hcai-iamss/bbp-pts/hepatitis/hep_b-eng.php

3. HPV Vaccine offers protection from human papillomavirus, which is the leading cause of cervical cancer and genital warts.

How is HPV spread? HPV is spread through direct physical contact. This can include vaginal intercourse, anal intercourse, oral sex, as well as skin-to-skin contact with infected areas.

Why get vaccinated? In Ontario almost 500 women develop cervical cancer and 140 women die from the disease each year. The 140,000 HPV related procedures performed each year could have been avoided by being vaccinated.

www.hpvinfos.ca
www.health.gov.on.ca/en/ms/hpv/hpv_vaccine.aspx

Air Pollution and Your Health: The New Air Quality Health Index

Air Pollution and Health Effects

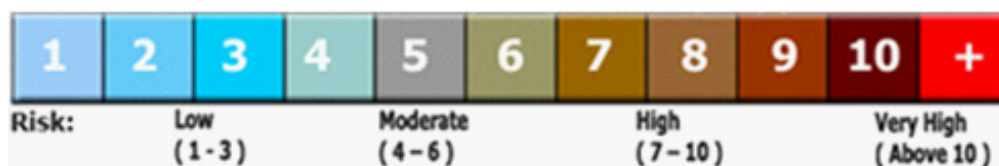
Air pollution has a measurable impact on the health of Canadians. Everyone reacts differently to air pollution – even healthy individuals may experience symptoms when working or exercising outdoors.

Infants and children are especially susceptible to developing health effects from air pollution. Their bodies are still growing and their lungs are developing. Children also have greater exposure to air pollution because they breathe in more air per kilogram of body weight and they spend more time being active outdoors. Children with asthma or other respiratory conditions are more likely to be affected.

Air pollution can trigger asthma attacks and cause respiratory symptoms like coughing and throat irritation even in healthy children. Whether or not a person will experience adverse health effects from air pollution depends on a variety of factors including the length of exposure, a person's health status and genetic background, as well as the types and concentration of pollutants in the air. It is important to note that as air pollution worsens, negative health effects increase.

What is the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI)?

- The AQHI is a scale to help us understand what effect the local air pollution levels may have on our health.
- The AQHI incorporates ground-level ozone, particulate matter and nitrogen dioxide since these three common air pollutants have been identified as being the best indicators of the effects of air pollution on health.
- The AQHI is calculated hourly based on three-hour average pollutant concentrations. The result of the calculations is then converted to an easily readable 10-point scale shown below:



How does the AQHI work?

Health messaging is used to communicate each level of risk shown on the scale for two distinct categories as shown in the following table:

Using the Air Quality Health Index to Protect Your Students

- Check the AQHI on a daily basis as well as forecasts for the next day at www.airhealth.ca.
- Use the AQHI to plan appropriate outdoor activities that will minimize exposure to air pollutants.
- Keep children's outdoor activities as far as possible from busy roadways and other sources of pollution.
- Ensure that children with asthma have their inhalers with them at all times.

Health Risks	Air Quality Health Index	Health Messages	
		At Risk Population*	General Population
Low Risk	1 – 3	Enjoy your usual outdoor activities.	Ideal air quality for outdoor activities
Moderate Risk	4 – 6	Consider reducing or rescheduling strenuous activities outdoors if you are experiencing symptoms.	No need to modify your usual outdoor activities unless you experience symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation.
High Risk	7 – 10	Reduce or reschedule strenuous activities outdoors. Children and the elderly should also take it easy.	Consider reducing or rescheduling strenuous activities outdoors if you experience symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation.
Very High Risk	Above 10	Avoid strenuous activities outdoors. Children and the elderly should also avoid outdoor physical exertion.	Reduce or reschedule strenuous activities outdoors, especially if you experience symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation.

Adapted with permission from Government of Canada.
The New AIR QUALITY HEALTH INDEX: How Air Pollution Affects Your Health Fact Sheet.

Ontario Farm to School Challenge

Many local schools through their breakfast and snack programs are taking part in the Ontario Farm to School Challenge. Food For Kids Peterborough and County is a regional partner. For more information about increasing the use of local food in schools, visit www.ontariofresh.ca/farmtoschool.



Windowsill Sprout Farming for Classrooms

Creating pop bottle planters is a wonderful activity to engage students in growing and eating different foods. Classroom windowsills become delightfully adorned with arrangements of edible sprouts in shades of bright green, yellow and red. Even the most cautious children will be tempted to try sprouts that they grow themselves!

Sprouts germinate between 4-10 days and can be reseeded a few times before the soil needs to be changed. Students casually tend to their planters during free time, discovering new tastes and varieties. Curriculum links can be made through all grades and ability levels. Learning about life cycles, plant parts, soil content, local food, biodiversity, and design engages all subjects from language, science, and math, to history and social studies.

Contact the Peterborough Community Garden Network at 705-745-3238, ext. 219 if you would like to book your class for a 90-minute pop bottle garden demonstration, or to learn how to start a garden program at your school.

The Great Big Crunch invites students and teachers to learn about healthy eating and local and global food systems while following the journey from the apple seed, to the harvest to the market, to the core! This year's Great Big Crunch will be on March 7, 2013 or hold a school event at anytime. For more information including curriculum resources, visit www.foodshare.net/great-big-crunch.

Stories To Build Children's Resilience

Visit the Reaching In, Reaching Out website at www.reachinginreachingout.com/resources-booksKids.htm for book lists of children's stories that promote resilience. The annotated lists are coded by seven resiliency abilities illustrated in the stories including:

- emotional regulation;
- impulse control;
- analyzing cause of a problem;
- self-efficacy;
- empathy;
- optimism; and
- reaching out.

New Interactive Resources

The website www.teachnutrition.org, created by the Registered Dietitians at Dairy Farmers of Canada (Ontario) is a "must bookmark" website for all elementary teachers. The website offers healthy eating background information, home connections, newsletter inserts, tools and resources. Free teacher workshops for the popular Power to Play (K-Gr. 3) and Power to Explore (Gr. 4-6) programs can also be booked here. New interactive resources to check out are:

- **Grade 5: Know Your Onions** - www.knowyouronionsgame.ca is a free online game where grade 5 students learn about nutrition labels in a fun and engaging way. This easy-to-use unit meets several curriculum expectations as students learn to identify and choose nutrient-rich foods and beverages. You can also track student progress and download classroom lessons to compliment the game.
- **Grade 7 and 8: Titanium Chef** - www.titaniumchef.ca is a web-based game designed to engage grade 7 and 8 students in learning how to make healthy food choices. Students will explore Canada's Food Guide to learn more about classification and Food Guide serving sizes. They can also progress to developing knowledge and skills about menu planning and food preparation as they explore the Titanium Chef world.

Educating Today's Students – Tomorrow's Consumers

Ontario Agri-Food Education Inc. provides a wide variety of resource material and information that enhances the ability of teachers and learners to understand the value and importance of an agri-food system. All resources link agri-food concepts to Ontario curriculum expectations. Visit www.oafe.org for more information.

Brain Awareness Week – March 11-17, 2013

Free resources to use in your classroom!

- Click on <http://parachutecanada.org/programs/item/brain-day> to order a FREE Brain Awareness Kit. Help students discover the science and wonders of the human brain, how it works, and how injuries can permanently affect the body.
- Click on Neuroscience for Kids at <http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/chgames.html> to download smart board friendly brain experiments and puzzles for K-Gr. 8 students.
- Click on Your Brain and Nervous System at <http://kidshealth.org/kid/htbw/brain.html> for a tour of parts of the brain and information on everything from ice cream headache brain freeze to concussions.
- Exercise your students' brains with smart board friendly puzzles to download from <http://dana.org/brainweek/resources/downloads>.
- Call the Health Unit at 705-743-1000 to borrow our Helmet Safety Kit. The kit includes a jello brain mould and instructions, helmet and fitting instructions, and large format book on the brain and helmet use.

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.

Let's Talk About Pot

Dr. John Vlasschaert, Respiriologist

Tuesday, March 26, 2013

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

Is pot safer than tobacco?

Join Dr. Vlasschaert to update your knowledge as he presents the latest information on the lung health impacts of marijuana and tobacco.

FREE

Peterborough Public Library, Auditorium
345 Aylmer Street, North
Peterborough



Social Skills for Children and Youth with Special Needs

Shelly Lamain and Michelle Montague,
Autism Consultants with Kinark Child and Family Services

Tuesday, April 2, 2013

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

Peterborough Public Library, Auditorium
345 Aylmer Street, North
Peterborough

For more information call:
705-742-3803 or 1-800-386-6561

FREE



Triple P Positive Parenting Program

Helps you meet challenges and improve parent-child relationships

2013



Seminar Series for parents of children 2-12 years

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

Lakefield • March 28, April 4, April 18; 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. - Lakefield Hub, Lakefield Intermediate School

Peterborough • Call for dates and times



Every Parent's Survival Guide for parents of children 2-12 years

Explore the causes of child misbehaviour and learn to make positive changes

Call for dates and times

Triple P Parenting Plans

Call to schedule an appointment



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

Call for dates and times



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

Peterborough • Managing Fighting and Aggression, March 19 - Prince of Wales School

Norwood • Hassle-free Shopping with Children, February 12 - Norwood Family Hub

Havelock • Developing Good Bedtime Routines, March 5 - Havelock-Belmont Public School

To register, call Peterborough Family Resource Centre 705-748-9144

Parenting Groups for parents of children under 12 years or 12-16 years

Learn strategies to manage children's/teen's challenging behaviours

For intake process, contact Kinark 1-888-454-6275 (Toll free)

Triple P is offered free of charge to all parents and delivered by accredited practitioners



From Mood Swings to Depression and Bipolar Disorder: Understanding Mood Problems in Children and Adolescents

Dr. Kevin Nugent

Tuesday, May 7, 2013

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

Peterborough Public Library, Auditorium
345 Aylmer Street, North
Peterborough

For more information call:
705-742-3803 or 1-800-386-6561

FREE