

## Healthy Happenings

**August 30, 2007** *Heat Wave: Langley Summer Institute: Creating a Healthy School-One School's Perspective, Location: LangleySBO, 11:00-1:00pm*  
To register:  
[www.thinklanglev.com](http://www.thinklanglev.com)

**October, 2007** *Healthy Schools Network 2007-2008 In-service. Location: TBA*

**October, 2007** *Network of Performance Based Schools Meetings, for details view:*  
[www.npbs.ca/Calendar.htm](http://www.npbs.ca/Calendar.htm)

**October 2, 2007** *Lunch Box Olympics Workshop*  
Location: Langley SBO, 4:00-5:00pm. To register:  
[www.thinklanglev.com](http://www.thinklanglev.com)

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BC Healthy Schools Network  
<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/hsnetwork/>

## Celebration of Success

Presentations, conversation, laughter, applause and the enjoyment of light refreshments are all a part of the Network of Performance Based Schools year-end celebrations. Healthy Schools Network (HSN) members actively participated in five of these events around the province. In Nanaimo, Victoria, Castlegar, Kelowna and Langley, 30 schools were sharing the successes and challenges of addressing their questions of inquiry on a wide variety of health issues. Our lone member in Burns Lake, unable to attend a formal network celebration, was undaunted and created an opportunity to share with the parent community.

## Outcomes of Year One

- A school in the Kootenays was able to observe a definite improvement in the quality of student lunches as a result of older students teaching younger students about healthy choices.
- A Langley school, through a wide variety of health initiatives has built sufficient staff and parent support to embed a school health goal into their 2007/08 Plan for School Growth.
- Targeting health literacy, a middle school in the Okanagan demonstrated significant student growth (60%) with its focus on understanding food labels.
- A Powell River school increased the number of students walking to school by 53% in one week, with its Walking Wednesday program. Even more impressive, they were able to maintain an increase in participation over their baseline throughout the seven week program, in spite of weather conditions.
- A questionnaire has been developed by a network member in Victoria which has allowed them to establish baseline data on their grade 3-5 students for daily intake of fruits and vegetables and daily physical activity. This will allow them to measure the impact of a new instructional program in

2007/08 and assist their students in meeting the Canada Food Guidelines.

The excitement and energy that was displayed at every celebration reflected the enthusiasm which schools had about their individual projects. Given the nature of this action research, it is inevitable that not every inquiry will produce immediate spectacular success, however, the commitment to address health issues which impede student success is reflected in the open and honest discussions which encourage staff to persist.

“We were skeptical at first but I think that after last night’s celebration, we can totally feel encouraged and up for the challenge next year.”



## Stats of Success:

- ✓ 29 of this year’s 30 HSN members have chosen to remain in the network...a 97% retention rate!
- ✓ Since the Deputy Minister’s announcement of June 4, to expand the network, 142 schools have indicated an interest in participating...a greater than 40% increase over last year!
- ✓ Approximately 30-40 new schools will be selected over the summer and the successful applicants will be informed in September 2007.

## Thank You:

☼ To the 2006-2007 Healthy Schools Network members for their outstanding and innovative work to improve the learning environment of students and maximize their potential for academic success!

☼ To the Directorate of Agencies for School Health (DASH) for their generous support and effective partnership with this successful initiative!

With approximately 40 new schools joining the Healthy Schools Network in 2007/08, we look forward to many new challenges and successes at next year's celebrations while watching this year's cohort move forward with their exciting initiatives. Healthy students will achieve greater success!

## Resource of the Month

All the final reports from this year's Healthy Schools Network will be published in the 2006/07 Network of Performance Based Schools Case Study Booklet. Additionally, all HSN reports will be posted on the Ministry of Education's Healthy Schools Network website this summer.



Copies will be available at no cost and distributed at the first NPBS meeting in the fall. The 2005/06 version is currently available online at: <http://www.npbs.ca/tools>

## Healthy Schools Network Resources

*Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (BEST)* has developed some "idle-free" teacher resources: [www.best.bc.ca/programsAndServices/Idlefree/Schools](http://www.best.bc.ca/programsAndServices/Idlefree/Schools)

*Let's Get Active*, an online physical activity guide for youth aged 10-14 years: [www.phacaspc.gc.ca/pauuap/paguide/child\\_youth/pdf/youth\\_magazine\\_e.pdf](http://www.phacaspc.gc.ca/pauuap/paguide/child_youth/pdf/youth_magazine_e.pdf)

*Healthy Eating is in Store for You* is a great site with a *Virtual Grocery Store* game that will teach students how to use the nutrition information on the label of packaged foods: [www.healthyeatingisinstore.ca](http://www.healthyeatingisinstore.ca)

## Success Stories

### 1. Move over Jamie Oliver

During a school wide focus on nutrition at W.A. Fraser Middle over the last few weeks, teachers have seen a tremendous change in their students. Grade 8 students are leading the way, providing "health rappers" who sing "Fruit-a-licious" over morning announcements and creating school wide contests to encourage kids to really

think about what they are eating; the "Health Patrol" hand out citations for "junk food" and *compliments* for healthy choices. WAFMS has witnessed snacks quickly morph from chips and candy to fresh fruit and trail mix.

Over the last few weeks of learning about nutrition, teachers have been shocked to hear students saying, "No!" to offers of burgers and pop, and instead request sandwiches and juice. One student who boasted about his daily bag of chips has now won bragging rights with strawberries and grapes. Student preparation for the District Write for Grade 6's, FSA testing for Grade 7's, and final exams for Grade 8's have been enhanced by "brain food" being served before tests began. Frozen yogurt and berries, bread and cheese, and trail mix helped kids to feel good and to focus - all provided by Fraser's own Jamie Oliver, Home Economics teacher, Janet Lipsett. Fraser kids have been quick to realize the effects of treating yourself nutritiously!

With daily PE classes, a canteen that makes it easy for kids to make healthy choices (fruit kabobs sell out daily), an eye opening visit from Catherine Atchison (Fraser Health Nutrition Program) and kids having fun while learning about empty calories versus foods that give us energy- Fraser is one middle school in which kids don't just learn about health, they live it!

## Did You Know?

- Improved diets could reduce the cardiovascular disease and stroke mortality by 20% and the cancer and diabetes mortality by 30% (WHO Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, 2002)
- 60% of men and 75% of women do not consume enough fruits and vegetables (BC Nutrition Survey, 1999)
- 42% of adult British Columbians are overweight or obese according to self-reported data (CCHA 2003: Statistics Canada) and the actual rate when height and weight are measured is much higher at 55% (BC Nutrition Survey, 1999)

Don't forget to include staff in your comprehensive school health plans!

## **2. B.C. schools lead the charge on a new lunchtime model**

At Edward Milne Community School in Sooke, B.C., students line up for a lunch that wouldn't look out of place at a 3 star restaurant: Moroccan fish stew, Thai fire salad, home-baked pita stuffed with roasted vegetables, tzatziki and chicken - delicious and a bona fide bargain at \$3.25 a serving.

**Not only is everything organic and locally sourced, but the produce is plucked from the Vancouver Island school's own garden.**

It's a lunchtime model that is now being replicated at other schools. The idea is to provide children with the opportunity to understand where food comes from. They learn to cook and eat the food they have grown and tended from seed.

As more B.C. residents seek out local, sustainable and healthy foods, a groundswell of 'foodies', gardeners and educators has begun clamouring for more school-based projects designed to help children understand the issues behind the food they eat.

Andrea Carlson, chef de cuisine at the award-winning Raincity Grill and at the forefront of the campaign to support regional produce, is currently working in classes at Champlain Heights Elementary.

"I'm passionate about bringing gardening into the inner city," she says. "We start with seeds at the beginning of the term, and then harvest and cook the vegetables at the end."

Last year, Merri Schwartz, former pastry chef at C Restaurant, launched the Growing Chefs program in Vancouver to pair local chefs with elementary schools. Students in grades 1 to 3 plant and harvest an indoor vegetable garden as part of the program.

Growing their own vegetables prompts children to try new foods, Ms. Schwartz says. "More children than you would imagine really love peas."

**At Edward Milne, the three-year-old garden has been successfully integrated into the wider school curriculum.**

"We use the garden in science, math and culinary arts," says teacher Mike Bobbitt, "The construction class built the shed and greenhouse, and the special-needs students are in charge of the herb garden."

The garden at Edward Milne was started with a \$15,000 grant from the FarmFolk/CityFolk Society, raised with proceeds from the society's annual Feast of Field fundraiser.

Parent Anne Boquist is certain the edible schoolyard had a positive impact on her recently graduated daughter, whose environmental science course used the garden extensively.

"She has continued to garden and develop a very deep interest in edible native plants and heritage varieties," says Ms. Boquist, who is looking forward to her son entering the same program in the fall. Now, the School Garden Network, a group spearheaded by Vancouver slow-food activist Christina Beaudoins, is looking to bring programs into Vancouver high schools.

Slow food, or Terra Madre, is an international movement dedicated to the promotion of local, sustainable food; each chapter is asked to help create and support a slow-food school project in its area.

The School Garden Network hopes to become a resource for schools, offering garden design and help with the logistics of operating throughout the year. Funding will be sought through the Evergreen Learning Grounds initiative.

"The hope is that eventually the gardens would be sustainable," says Ms. Beaudoins. "Students might bring their produce to farmers' markets, for example, or eventually become employed in agriculture. There is huge potential here."

Another slow-food activist, TV producer Nick Versteeg, recently offered every school in British Columbia a free copy of *The Edible Schoolyard*, a 25-minute DVD he produced that shows how Vancouver Island's Sunrise Waldorf School constructed its garden and also includes a segment on Edward Milne.

Mr. Versteeg, whose programs include *The Next Great Chef*, is looking to produce a series of DVDs and lesson plans for schools. Local celebrity chefs are backing his efforts.

"This has to be done," Mr. Versteeg says. "We have to show that we care enough about the next generation to educate them properly about food."

### 3. Burnaby School Hosts Taiwanese Delegation

On June 7, 2007, a delegation of Taiwanese Government officials had the opportunity to visit Morley Elementary School in Burnaby. The delegates were in Vancouver to participate in the International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE) Conference.

A light lunch was provided for all while the school principal and staff gave a brief overview of school health initiatives, including their Action Schools BC implementation model and the Healthy Schools Network. A welcome was provided by the students in both Mandarin and English. Students gave a gift to each international guest and a Canadian flag was given to the delegation.

Following the welcome session, the delegates and guests toured the school and watched the students participate in the school Action Time which includes a series of physical activity sessions through which the students rotate for an hour each week. Activities include balancing exercises, basketball lead-up skills, juggling, yoga, skipping and cooperative games.

Delegates were impressed with the maturity of student leadership in this weekly program and were able to take many good ideas back to their colleagues in Taiwan. A special thanks to Morley Elementary Principal Steve Cairns and his team Liz Cramb and Stephanie Miller!

### 4. 'Happy Healthy You Week' in the Kootenays

Rosemont Elementary in Nelson partnered with a community initiative to create a *Happy Healthy You Week* for students. Get Out, Get Active (GOGA) is a community project initiated by the Health Authority and inclusive of a number of key community partners. By pairing with GOGA, the school was able to introduce the Rosemont *Happy Healthy You Calendar* on which students checked off activities they completed either at home or at school. The week began with a school-wide assembly featuring a performance by the grade 4 students entitled "A Recipe for a Healthy You". Swim passes were awarded to students who turned in their calendars at the end of the week.

Have a wonderful summer!

We look forward to working with those of you returning to the Network in September 2007.

