

HEALTHY SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER

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Healthy Schools News

Building Healthy Partnerships

Forming "healthy" mutually beneficial partnerships is an integral part of implementing a Comprehensive School Health (CSH) approach. Partnerships and Services may just be one of the four pillars of CSH but forming and nurturing strong working relationships can be seen as the foundation of the entire CSH approach. Partnerships maximizes the benefits of a healthy school initiative as all members of the school community work together to make the school the best possible place to learn, work and play.

For a moment, let's look at the analogy of building a house. If we look at some of the steps involved, laying a strong and solid foundation could be argued as one of the most important steps in the process. With a strong foundation, building the remainder of the house becomes not only possible, but easier.

This analogy can also be applied to building a healthy school – when schools build strong relationships with the local health region and/or community, they are able to implement and execute activities in the other three pillars with greater ease due to increased resources and enhanced support.

Last school year, a number of Healthy Schools Network schools acknowledged that their healthy schools work included a partnership with

their local health authority and said that was key for them developing a successful healthy schools initiative. Below are comments from two separate schools' year end reports:

"We strongly believe partnerships are cornerstone in overall school health. This includes strong healthy relationships with parents, community partners [and] agencies."

"Having a broad Healthy Schools team... will only enrich our school atmosphere and model to our students and staff how to develop positive, respectful relationships with others."

Educators have the capacity to build the skills and knowledge of their students to develop healthy behaviours that will lead to positive health outcomes throughout their lives. Health professionals can support educators by providing health information and resources for health promotion and perhaps most importantly, health workers support educators by providing compelling reasons for focusing on health promotion activities so students are supported to realize their full potential as learners.

Ultimately, effective, sustainable progress in CSH depends on a common vision, shared responsibilities and harmonized actions among health, education and the community. The goal is to coordinate these efforts so that partners can pool resources and develop action plans together with, and in support of, schools.



DASH BC Update

Submit Your School's HSN Inquiry Question



The Healthy Schools Network is eager to hear your school's Inquiry Question! The submission deadline is December 23rd, 2011. The Inquiry Question submission form is

available by logging in to your school account on the HSN website (www.healthyschoolsnetwork.org). This form allows you to start working on your submission, save it, and continue to work on it at a later date. The HSN website also has several tools and resources available to support the development of your school's Inquiry Question, including helpful tips on collaborating with colleagues, using a school health assessment tool, and healthy school planning. Additionally, the Healthy Living Performance Standards are a supportive resource to help you connect your Inquiry Question to student health and learning. If you are interested in viewing past HSN Inquiry Questions, click [here](#). If you have any questions about the HSN, contact us at hsn@dashbc.org.

Healthy Eating Student Leadership

Healthy Eating Student Leadership training (new in the 2011-2012 school year) offers a group of 10-12 student leaders the opportunity to learn how to lead tasting stations, healthy eating dances, a fruit and veggie sorting activity, and other healthy eating activities for younger students. This workshop and accompanying resources are complimentary and is a great complement to the BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program. For more information, or to register your school, contact the Action Schools! BC Support Team at info@actionschoolsbc.ca or at 1-800-565-7727.

Action Schools! BC is a best practices model designed to assist schools in creating individualized action plans to promote healthy living while achieving academic outcomes.



Helpful Resources

The BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation – Christmas Oranges



Some of you may remember the excitement of seeing your Christmas stocking and digging through it to pull out all the treats. Inevitably, right in the toe, you'd find a sweet smelling mandarin orange. The BC School Fruit

and Vegetable Nutritional Program delivers these same wonderful treats to BC schools, just in time for the holiday season. The program delivers many different types of fresh products with the focus being BC grown, but teacher feedback indicates that it's the mandarin orange that the students seem to look forward to the most.

A number of BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program schools, despite being in remote locations, are able to participate in the program because of the assistance of distribution partners. Shearwater School, as an example, is a two hour barge journey north of Port Hardy, and Dease Lake School is a few hours south of the Yukon border. These rural areas don't always get the fresh fruits and vegetables that are more easily available to urban centers, so you can only imagine how excited and supported the schools and students feel when the barge arrives at Shearwater at this time of year with the coveted mandarin oranges! Hope you enjoy the holiday season!



Happy Holidays!

***From everyone at
DASH BC, we wish
you all the happiness
of the season, and
peace, prosperity and
good health in 2012!***

Watch Out for Sugary Drinks This Holiday Season!



Your students might like to know that:

- hot chocolate is rarely prepared with milk and is considered a sugary drink that contains 6 sugar cubes per cup!
- 500 ml of their favourite flavoured latte

contains 12 sugar cubes*!

- a cup of eggnog contains up to 9 sugar cubes*!

Use the Sip Smart! BC backgrounder "[Want to know what's in your favourite holiday drink?](#)" to raise your students' awareness about sugary drinks this holiday season.

Sip Smart! BC is an initiative of the BC Pediatric Society and the Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC & Yukon. Sip Smart! BC's resources are also some of the best practices used by Action Schools! BC.

The Sip Smart! BC project office wishes you and your students a great holiday season and a good start to the year 2012!

*There is variation between different brands of lattes and eggnog and therefore the numbers listed above are an average of commonly consumed brands.

Conference on Prevention and Management of Childhood and Adolescent Obesity

UBC's Interprofessional Continuing Education presents a conference on prevention and management of childhood and adolescent obesity from October 24-26, 2012 in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Recognizing that the complex nature of obesity requires a complex solution-oriented approach to its prevention and management, the conference aims to examine ways to engage multiple stakeholders in interventions for the prevention and management of childhood and adolescent obesity, highlight policy and solution-oriented approaches, and provide a forum for networking and collaboration. For further information, visit the conference [website](#) or send an [email](#). Abstract submissions are being accepted until March 23, 2012. Click [here](#) for more information.

A Motivational Approach to Helping Students Make Positive Changes



University
of Victoria

Centre for Addictions
Research of BC

Like the rest of us, young people sometimes need

a little support to help them make positive changes, especially when it involves modifying harmful drug use patterns or other problematic behaviours.

For this reason, the Centre for Addictions Research of BC (CARBC) has developed a new resource on Brief Intervention (BI). Grounded in a motivational approach, BI is a way for school professionals to help students assess their current situations, explore things they may want to change and make plans to take action.

The BI resource provides background information and tools to help any caring adult connect with a young person and start "the dance" - the back-and-forth steps in a relationship that build trust and give the youth a chance to identify discrepancies between what they say they want their future to look like and what they are doing to get there.

Using BI, school counsellors and others put into practice the basic steps involved in:

- **Supporting Positive Behavior** (encouraging students to continue using their strengths);
- **Supporting Change** (helping students think things through); and,
- **Solidifying Change** (assisting students to develop skills and supportive networks to continue their healthy behaviours while avoiding lapsing back into old patterns of harmful behaviour).

This new resource complements CARBC's other school-related products, notably iMinds, a health literacy resource for Grade 6-10 classrooms.

For more information about BI, [iMinds](#) or other tools and resources for promoting health and learning, visit www.carbc.ca/HelpingSchools.aspx or contact helpingschools@carbc.ca.

Kathy's Corner

Comprehensive School Health in Action

Recently our team here at DASH had the opportunity to meet with students and ask them about their views about healthy living. I was amazed by their thoughtful comments. As expected, they noted healthy eating and physical activity as being important to their overall health, yet they also pointed to the need to get adequate sleep, learn strategies to decrease stress, have friends that they can count on, and adults they can trust and turn to for support.



This holistic view of health fits with the idea that Kimberly Schonert-Reichl and Shelley Hymel express in [their article, *Educating the Heart as well as the Mind: Social and Emotional Learning for School and Life Success*](#). They assert that there is a "need to extend our focus in school beyond educating just the minds of our children to educating their hearts as well." How can we best cultivate school environments that will foster this holistic view of health?

Glenview Elementary School in Prince George, BC has really taken this issue to heart (pardon the pun!), not only for the students but for the staff as well. During their 2010 – 2011 involvement in the [Healthy Schools Network \(HSN\)](#), Glenview focussed on the following healthy school inquiry: *How will a focus on emotional health, including the use of attitude/gratitude journals, affect how connected students and staff feel towards the school community, as assessed using the Healthy Relationships strand of the Healthy Living Performance Standards?*

This inquiry question was addressing a particular context and need for the Glenview community. Having doubled in size as a result of school closures in their school district, the school was going through significant change. The thoughtful Healthy Schools Team at Glenview wanted to ensure that all school community members felt welcome at the school. As they mentioned in their HSN year-end

report: "Our entire inquiry question this year is based on school connectedness, not only for our students but our staff as well. We value healthy relationships for everyone in the building. We want the students to know that they are cared for and that we care that they are socially, emotionally and physically healthy. We know that the best time to encourage and instill these values is now."

Glenview carried out this school inquiry through a number of interesting strategies, including holding a series of student-led Healthy Schools Assemblies. The first assembly shared ideas around promoting random acts of kindness throughout the school community. Another had students and staff, divided into multi-age groupings, participating in healthy and active living learning stations. The final assembly was attended by two special guests – the parents of Glenview's principal! As the Glenview team noted in their report: "Both were in their 80's and had just recently participated in the local YMCA marathon. They talked to the students and sent the message that it is never too late to become physically active."

What amazing efforts by the Glenview Elementary School community! You can view Glenview's full report [here](#), or other inspiring HSN stories [here](#).

On behalf of all the staff at DASH, best wishes for a healthy, happy and heart-filled holiday season!

Kathy Cassels
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In the Next Issue

- **DASH BC Is Moving!**
- **ICSEI 2012**
- **Other Helpful Resources**



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The Healthy Schools Newsletter is distributed monthly throughout the school year, keeping readers apprised of developments in school health in BC. Please visit www.healthyschoolsnetwork.org for publication dates and submission deadlines for 2011/2012.