

# Healthy Schools



Healthy Kids  
Healthy Schools  
Healthy Communities

# Healthy Schools

[www.manitoba.ca/healthyschools](http://www.manitoba.ca/healthyschools)





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# HEALTHY SCHOOLS



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.

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



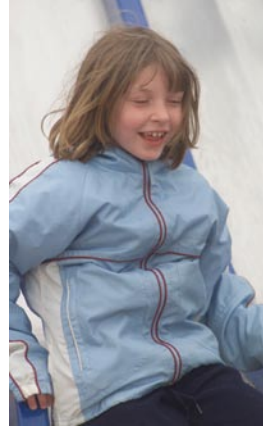
## History

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,” to better reflect the needs of school communities throughout Manitoba.

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 a partnership involving Manitoba Health/Healthy Living, Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth 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 many different factors affect student health and 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, and
- incorporating the principles of best practice and evidence.

## Healthy Schools Model

The Healthy Schools model is rooted in and connected to the community. It also recognizes that communities have varying levels of capacity.

Key elements of the Healthy Schools model include:

- **Access to health and social supports**

Schools can play a key role by referring families to health and social services in the community.

- **Integrated teaching strategies**

It is important to integrate what students learn at school within the community.

- **Healthy physical and social environments**

Physical and social environments are factors in promoting good health.

- **Community partnerships**

These partnerships include everyone who contributes to student health.

- **Promotion of healthy lifestyle choices**

Schools can empower students and their families by providing knowledge, skills and behaviours to promote healthy lifestyle choices. This can be accomplished through education, policy development and role modeling.

All Healthy Schools activities are based on research and ongoing evaluation.





## Priority Health Topics



A healthy school promotes the physical, emotional and social health of students, their families, school staff and the school community.

Good health is essential to learning. Healthy Schools focuses on six priority health topics within the context of the school community:

- Physical Activity**
- Healthy Eating**
- Safety and Injury Prevention**
- Sexual and Reproductive Health**
- Mental Health Promotion**
- Substance Use and Addictions**

## Healthy Schools Activities

The Healthy Schools framework includes three main components:

- promoting community-based activities;
- promoting targeted provincial campaigns in response to issues affecting the health and wellness of the school community; and
- developing resources for province-wide use.

## Community-based Activities

Over the past few years, funding has been made available to Manitoba's regional health authorities (RHAs) and school divisions to support Healthy Schools plans. The funding has created an opportunity for organizations to work as partners in developing plans and implementing activities consistent with the Healthy Schools Framework.

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, and
- support the sharing of knowledge and expertise across the province.

## Targeted Provincial Campaigns

Through Healthy Schools, targeted provincial campaigns on specific health topics have been introduced to address issues affecting school community health and wellness. With each initiative, schools highlight the importance and increase awareness of the benefits that flow from the specified health topic.

Up to twice a year, schools are offered \$100 to undertake an activity related to a specific health theme. Previous campaigns have focused on health topics that include:

- Safety/injury prevention
- Physical activity
- Healthy eating
- Mental health promotion
- Active living

These campaigns have demonstrated that local schools can do great things to support their larger school community with modest funding.





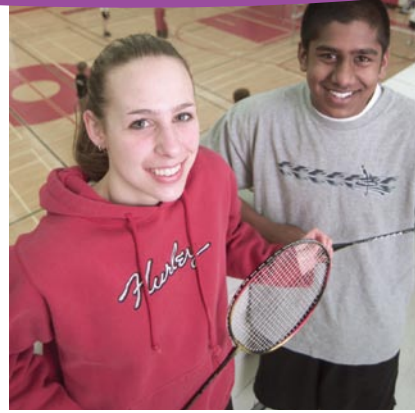
# Provincial Resources

## Website

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

Visit the site at:

[www.manitoba.ca/healthyschools](http://www.manitoba.ca/healthyschools)



## Resource Directory

Work is underway to produce a resource directory, based on priority health topics. The directory will feature specific information for key stakeholder groups (ex: school staff, parents, youth and children). It will enable easy information access to assist school communities in developing and maintaining a “healthy school” environment.

The directory will be accessible through the Healthy Schools website, as well as in print form on request.

## Contact Directory

Healthy Schools is working with CONTACT Community Information (a program of the Volunteer Centre of Manitoba) to develop a customized Healthy Schools services and organizations directory. CONTACT houses Manitoba’s most comprehensive listing of province-wide community resources.



## Related Activities

### Healthy Kids, Healthy Futures

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 is working closely with several provincial government departments to develop plans and guide the implementation of the task force recommendations. For more information about *Healthy Kids, Healthy Futures*, visit [www.manitoba.ca/healthykids](http://www.manitoba.ca/healthykids)

### Healthy Schools *in motion*

Healthy Schools has partnered with **Manitoba *in motion*** ([www.manitobainmotion.ca](http://www.manitobainmotion.ca)) to implement **Healthy Schools *in motion***. This initiative promotes the benefits of physical activity and ensures that it is an observable priority in daily school life.

Schools can be *in motion* by working to achieve a goal of 30 minutes of physical activity every day for every student. This can be achieved with any combination of physical education, activity breaks, physical activity programs, intramurals and special events.

Schools that register for **Healthy Schools *in motion*** receive a resource manual and activity bin.

For more information, contact:

**Healthy Schools *in motion***

300 Carlton St.

Winnipeg MB R3B 3M9

Phone: (204) 788-6620

Fax: (204) 948-2366

E-mail: [healthyschools@gov.mb.ca](mailto:healthyschools@gov.mb.ca)



## Healthy Living Challenge

The Healthy Schools initiative also supports the **Healthy Living Challenge**. A “game” developed by the Centre de santé Saint-Boniface, the Healthy Living Challenge encourages families to adopt healthier lifestyles. It covers a range of topic areas, including physical, nutritional, mental and emotional health. The challenge consists of two components: an in-school kit for teachers and a take-home activity calendar for students and their families.

## 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**. This consortium brings together health, education and other ministries and federal departments to develop an approach to programs and services related to the health of children and youth across Canada. It provides leadership and facilitates a comprehensive, co-ordinated approach to school health by helping schools and the health system to work together.

The Manitoba government was one of eight provinces/territories participating in the joint consortium. Through opportunities such as this, Manitoba is sharing its Healthy Schools experience with other jurisdictions and learning about related activities occurring in other parts of Canada.

## Healthy Schools Evaluation

Healthy Schools recognizes the importance of ongoing evaluation to maintaining the success of the initiative. To this end, a baseline survey was sent to all Manitoba schools in spring 2005. The survey reports on overall awareness and integration of the Healthy Schools concept, as well as what schools are doing to promote Healthy Schools within their school communities.

Information from the baseline survey also contributes to an understanding of the strengths and challenges for Manitoba schools in supporting student health and well-being.



For more information:

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