

# The JCSH Healthy School Planner:

## Learning how to assess the health of your school

Pan-Canadian Joint Consortium for School Health  
and Propel Centre at the University of Waterloo

**H**ealthier students are better learners. We know this intuitively but research also backs it up. We know that schools are a key environment where students attain the knowledge and skills they need for lifelong health and wellbeing. Unfortunately, principals can't wave a magic wand to create a healthy school environment. That's where the Healthy School Planner can help.

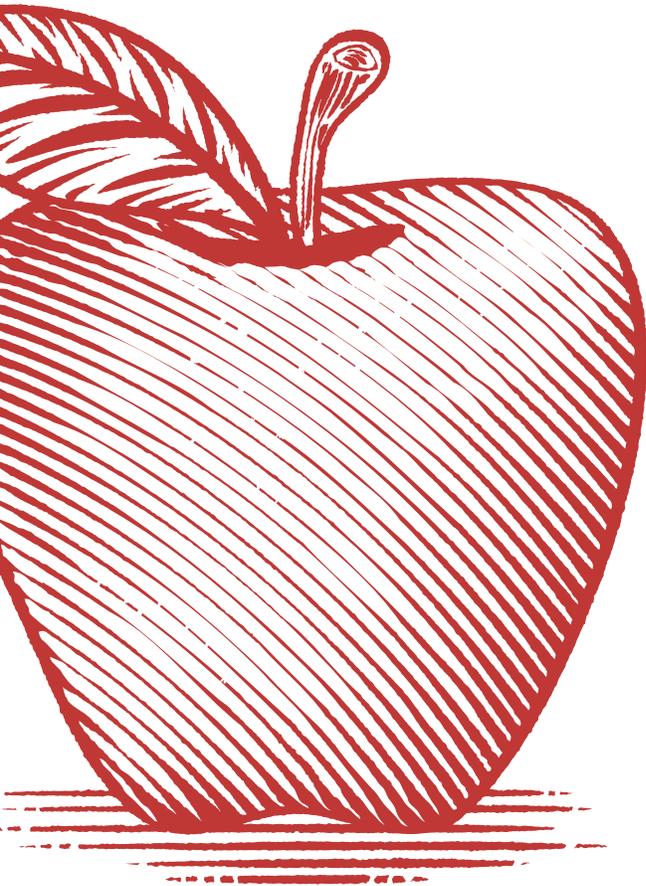
### Improving the Health of your School with the Healthy School Planner (HSP)

The HSP was developed to assist schools in assessing the health of their schools and in making plans for improvements where necessary. Schools receive results specific to their responses, tailored recommendations based on their results, and a list of resources that will help them take action for improvement. Schools can then share their results and achievements with staff, students, parents, and the broader community. Using the HSP allows you to assess the health of your school using the four pillars of the internationally recognized **Comprehensive School Health** framework.

### Who can use the Healthy School Planner and what will it offer your school?

Any school in Canada, whether public, private or charter, can use the HSP at no cost. The HSP, which can be accessed online at any time, guides schools through a step-by-step process that includes:

- ▶ a series of questions to determine the school's current health status
- ▶ a rubric of the school's results
- ▶ recommendations for taking action
- ▶ a planning template to help develop goals and an action plan for making improvements
- ▶ links to resources to help develop and implement the action plan.



### Why should you trust the Healthy School Planner?

The HSP is an initiative of the Pan-Canadian Joint Consortium for School Health (JCSH). Established in 2005, the JCSH is a partnership of federal, provincial, and territorial ministries of education and health from across Canada working together to promote the health of children and youth in the school setting.

The HSP was developed for the JCSH by the Propel Centre for Population Health Impact (Propel) at the University of Waterloo, under the guidance of an Advisory Committee formed by the Pan-Canadian JCSH.

### Choosing the Tool that Works for your School

Choosing the tools your school uses to build a solid foundation for your school's health is not a decision to be taken lightly. Here's a quick, three-question checklist that will provide you with information about the evidence that supports the HSP.

- ▶ *Is it scientifically grounded?* The HSP is based on principles of CSH and research that supports the importance of each question posed in the Planner.
- ▶ *How practical is it?* The Pan-Canadian JCSH and Propel has relied on the input of principals and other educators from five provinces to develop, test and refine the HSP.
- ▶ *Is it valid and reliable?* The HSP has demonstrated validity (meaning that the questions measure what they intend to) and reliability (over time, the answers are consistent).

### Getting Started with 7 Easy Steps

Using the HSP is simple. Follow these steps and your school community will be equipped to understand its current health and begin planning for improvements.

#### 1. Form a team.

Bring together a representative team to assess and plan for the health of your school. A team approach is critical to achieving

success. It will make the assessment and planning more meaningful, more widely accepted, and much easier to implement.

#### 2. Designate a team leader.

The team will need a strong leader to guide team members through the process and keep the momentum alive at the school.

#### 3. Register your school.

To register your school with the HSP, go to the Pan-Canadian JCSH website at [www.jcsh-cces.ca](http://www.jcsh-cces.ca) and click on the "Healthy School Planner" icon.

#### 4. Complete an assessment.

Schools first complete the foundational module. The foundational asks a series of questions intended to introduce schools to the four pillars of the Comprehensive School Health (CSH) framework, and the process to be used in healthy school planning (e.g., involving a team for assessment, considering all four pillars of CSH, celebrating successes, regular re-assessment). This module reinforces the importance of, and process behind, a CSH approach, and is not specific to any one topic area.

Schools can then choose from one of four topic specific *express modules*. These modules are intended to be a quick overview of key components of each topic area. Schools can select the topic area that interests them most or can complete them all.

For schools wanting to dig deeper into a particular topic area, the HSP also offers *detailed modules*. These modules build on the express modules, but provide a more thorough, in-depth assessment of the school's health status with respect to the topic in question.

Even though the HSP is composed of different modules, each one focuses on a different topic area with each assessment structured around the four pillars of CSH.

Some questions may have a straightforward answer, while other questions may take some discussion and further investigation before the team arrives at the best response for your school. Blank copies of the questionnaire can be printed out and distributed to team members for review. A member of your team can record the best responses and submit them online.

### What are schools saying about the Healthy School Planner?

"Great questionnaire – easy to follow." –NB

"The report was a great summary and I thought it was a starting point for discussions and to have a professional dialogue about what goes on at our school. I could see our teachers or our administration taking the report back to a staff meeting and talking about our results and how we could do better or what we are doing right." –NB

"It made me aware of policies I was unsure of, as well as made me realize that we do more to promote a healthy school environment than I thought!" –NL

"I found it to be worthwhile - something that would benefit the whole school." –AB

"Collaboration is always beneficial to get the best snap shot of our school. Our team honours truthful feedback and discussion. We feel it is the best way to grow and move forward." –AB

"It was encouraging to think through some of the processes that we use to create a healthy school environment." –AB

"Completing the HSP went well and made me think about what we are doing in our school." –SK

**Comprehensive School Health** is not just about what happens in the classroom. Rather, it encompasses the whole school environment with actions addressing the following four distinct but inter-related pillars that provide a strong foundation:

- ▶ social and physical environment;
- ▶ teaching and learning;
- ▶ healthy school policy;
- ▶ partnerships and services.

When actions in all four pillars are harmonized, students are supported to realize their full potential as learners – and as healthy, productive members of society.

### How long will it take to complete the Healthy School Planner?

The time commitment involved in completing the HSP encompasses several factors. While entering the responses into the online questionnaire will only take about 20 minutes, the overall time commitment will depend on several factors which may include:

- ▶ Whether you have a team already in place.
- ▶ How familiar you are with the tool.
- ▶ The number of modules you choose to complete.
- ▶ The time involved in researching, discussing, and arriving at consensus on responses. Responses to some questions may need investigating, especially if team membership is limited.
- ▶ The time to enter the responses online.
- ▶ Team meeting time to review the results, set goals and determine how to best take action to improve.

### 5. Review your results.

Once the responses have been entered online, schools immediately receive the results of each assessment indicator on a 4-point rubric.

### 6. Plan your actions.

Once the key areas have been identified, your team will need to begin setting goals for what your school can do to improve and how it can take action to achieve these goals. Try to be realistic about what your school can accomplish and only choose one or two issues to start. All team members must agree on the priority areas to ensure commitment to taking action. The HSP provides an action planning template that your school can use to set goals and actions.

### 7. Celebrate and re-assess.

Celebrating the success of your healthy school initiatives, both big and small, is important to keep momentum! Stakeholders will be able to see the progress your school is making and the school community will be re-energized to make further improvements. The HSP is intended to be a tool that you use over and over again to assess the health of your school, and to monitor and evaluate progress. Returning to the HSP will also allow your school to assess different topic areas and really explore the areas where your school can make significant changes.

Find the Healthy School Planner at: [www.jcsh-cces.ca](http://www.jcsh-cces.ca) Click on “The Healthy School Planner” icon. 

#### CORRESPONDING AUTHORS

Katherine Eberl Kelly: [kakelly@gov.pe.ca](mailto:kakelly@gov.pe.ca);  
 Tricia Smith: [triciasmith@gov.pe.ca](mailto:triciasmith@gov.pe.ca);  
 Steve Manske: [manske@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:manske@uwaterloo.ca)



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Election simulation kit



**CHOISSISONS NOTRE MASCOTTE**  
Trousse d'élection simulée

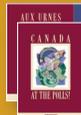


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Learning activities toolkit



**MON PAYS, MA DÉMOCRATIE**  
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#### Elementary (Grades 5–6) / Secondary Primaire (5<sup>e</sup>–6<sup>e</sup> années) / Secondaire



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**I CAN VOTE!**  
ESL and low literacy guide



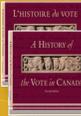
**JE PEUX VOTER!**  
Guide pour étudiants ayant un faible niveau de littératie



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