



HEALTHY | **BC**
SCHOOLS

Action Guide

www.healthyschoolsbc.ca

Healthy Eating Action Guide



HealthyFamiliesBC 



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The Healthy Schools BC Action Guides share evidence-based practices and promising innovations that are showing results in creating healthy schools in BC. The guides are organized into four topic areas:

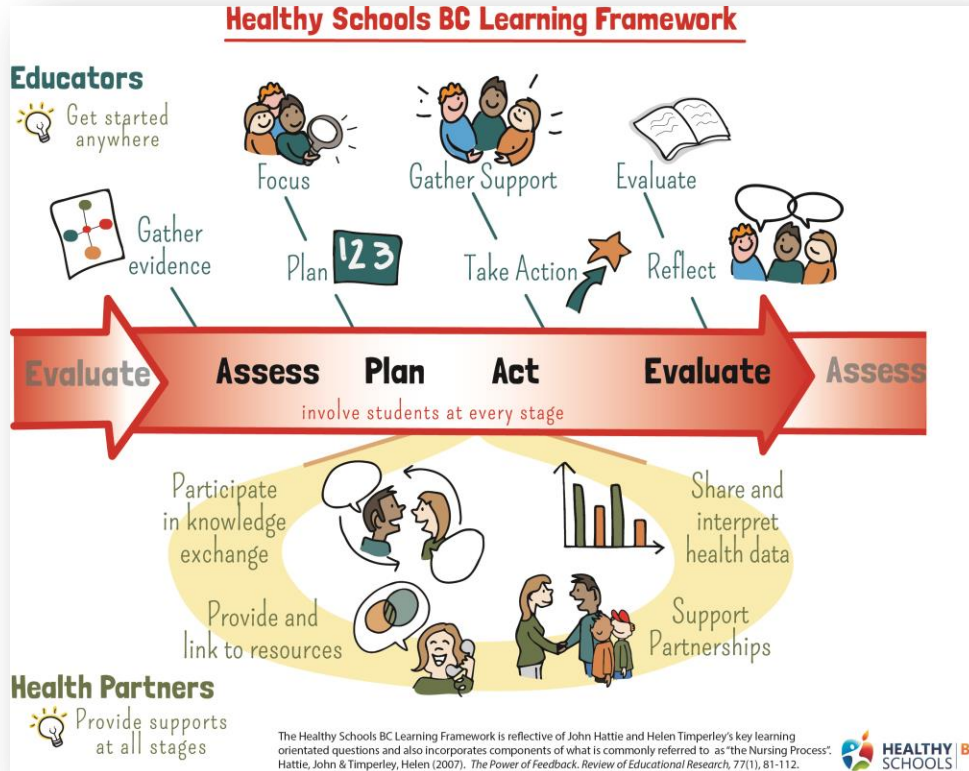
1. School connectedness
2. Healthy eating
3. Physical activity
4. Injury prevention

Some of the actions in these guides take little effort, while others may take a bit more. Select actions that meet the needs of your students and the capacity of your school or district.

The greatest impact on student health and learning is achieved when action is taken across the entire school, broken down into four key areas: teaching and learning, relationships and environments, our school policies, and community partnerships. Consider planning activities your school or district can initiate or build upon in these four key areas. (JCSH, 2013)

In addition to the actions suggested here, you can find other programs and supports that are available by visiting the Healthy Schools BC [website](#). You can also learn about healthy schools activities taking place around the province by visiting the [healthy schools stories map](#).

The healthy schools process supports school communities and partners to work together through four main steps: Assess → Plan → Act → Evaluate. This guide can support you in the planning step of this process. If you have not yet completed a healthy school assessment, the [Healthy Schools BC assessment tools](#) can help you get started.



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Healthy eating provides nutrients and energy through diverse and balanced food choices. To eat healthy, students need the knowledge, skills and attitudes to choose, grow, prepare and enjoy healthy food. Promoting healthy eating can involve healthy eating education, food skills development, greater access to healthy food while at school, and school policies that support healthy eating. Students with healthy eating habits are more likely report satisfaction with their learning¹.

Actions



Teaching and Learning

- Support student led-inquiry initiatives to promote healthy eating by encouraging students to join the [BC Student Healthy Living Network](#), participating in the [Healthy Schools Network](#), and/or using the [Resource Guide for Teaching and Learning](#).
- Support nutrition education with [Canada's Food Guide](#).
- Provide learning opportunities for students to develop cooking and food preparation skills.
- Support students to research and learn about indigenous plants.
- Create an [outdoor classroom](#) to learn about food security, healthy food choices, and urban agriculture.
- Have each student bring in their favorite vegetable or fruit for *Show and Tell*. Cut them up and eat after! Be mindful that not all students are able to bring in food. Plan accordingly to ensure all students feel included.
- Support curriculum delivery by integrating resources such as: [Action Schools! BC Healthy Eating Action Resource](#), [Sip Smart! BC](#), [Hi5Living](#), [Spuds in Tubs](#), and [others](#).

Relationships and Environments



- Promote eating fruits and vegetables by:
 - Participating in the [School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program](#) to receive local vegetables, fruit and milk.
 - Connecting students to farms by serving farm fresh food and raising awareness about food and local food systems with [Farm to School](#).
 - Participating in [Fresh to You](#), a healthy fundraiser for BC schools. Raise funds for your school by selling healthy BC fruits and vegetables.

¹ Ministry of Education (2013/2014). *Research brief: association between achievement and diet*.

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Actions

- Start a school composting system.
- Start a [school food garden](#). Involve families and local community members.
- Provide students with at least 20 minutes for meals. Create [pleasant areas](#) for students to gather and eat.
- Work with [local vendors](#) to provide healthier options at school.
- Have nutritious snacks available on sports days and sporting events.
- Set up a hot breakfast program for students with grant funding from [Breakfast Clubs of Canada](#) or [Breakfast for Learning](#).
- Promote healthy eating among staff by implementing the healthy eating module of [WellnessFits](#). [Role model](#) healthy eating behaviour.



Our School Policies

- Support implementation of the [Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in BC Schools](#) with:
 - Healthy recipes for [bake sales](#) and [meals](#).
 - The [Healthy Fundraising for Schools](#) guide for healthy fundraising ideas.
- Encourage healthier food options at [school celebrations](#) to support nutrition lessons.
- Shift from using food as a reward to providing [healthier rewards](#).
- Consider changing the schedule of lunch with the [Play First Lunch Toolkit](#). Students play first and then eat lunch.
- Develop your own healthy eating school or classroom [policy](#).



Community Partnerships

- Partner with healthy eating organizations, such as [Action Schools! BC](#), [BC Dairy Association](#), [BC Cancer Agency Prevention Programs](#), or the [Heart and Stroke Foundation](#) for healthy eating resources or workshops.
- Partner with parents and the school parent advisory committee for additional support to implement healthy eating initiatives.
- Connect with a neighbouring school to facilitate peer-to-peer learning opportunities, such as nutrition education, [Farm to School](#) or garden work.

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- Partner with Aboriginal Elders to provide learning opportunities for students about cultural meanings around traditional Aboriginal foods/diets.
- Check in with your local supermarket to see if they have a Registered Dietitian to provide a nutrition tour of the store
- Visit your local farm or greenhouse for a tour to learn about where food comes from and how it's grown. Or take a field trip to a local farmers market.
- Apply for [Evergreen grants](#) and access educational resources to support school gardens.