



## Content Highlights

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### Special Reports From

British Columbia  
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and Labrador  
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## Message from the Executive Director

Active kids not only enjoy improved physical, mental and social health, they are establishing important lifestyle patterns to be active adults. A future generation of active, healthy adults holds the promise of a significant reduction in the burden on Canada's health care system and more productive citizens.

Increasingly, schools are being looked to as a primary provider of opportunities for physical activity for children and there are a number of exciting developments in this regard happening across the country. These include the introduction of daily physical activity and physical education school policies in many jurisdictions and the re-launch of the highly successful *ParticipACTION* program.

The comprehensive school health model recognizes the importance of cross-sector partnerships in improving student health, and many nationally focused agencies have physical activity strategies which extend to the school setting, such as the *Green Communities Active and Safe Routes to Schools* program and the Coalition for Active Living's *Pan-Canadian Physical Activity Strategy*.

Keeping track of all of the emerging activity presents a significant challenge. However, this is an area where the Joint Consortium for School Health offers value to its stakeholders. We are currently completing a comprehensive evidence document on physical activity to be released this summer. In addition to summarizing what is happening across Canada in terms of physical activity for children in the school setting, the report will identify both evidence-based and promising practices.

This special edition newsletter provides a "sneak preview" of the evidence report by presenting an overview of government-led initiatives underway within our member jurisdictions. We encourage you to share this publication widely – with your colleagues in other departments and with your counterparts in other sectors – to spark lively dialogue and encourage further cross-sector partnerships for the promotion of physically active kids in Canada.

–Claire Avison

## Federal/Provincial/Territorial Exchange

### British Columbia

**Daily Physical Activity:** On September 4, 2007, Minister Bond announced a new Daily Physical Activity (DPA) initiative. By September 2008, DPA will be fully implemented in every public and independent school. K–9 students will do a minimum of 30 minutes each day and grades 10–12 students will do a minimum of 150 minutes each week. During the 2007–08 school year, a number of early leader schools

across BC have been testing this process in advance of DPA's full implementation. The purpose of the leader schools is to develop DPA models for the system to enhance schools' capacity to fully implement DPA in September 2008.

**Action Schools! BC:** Action Schools! BC is a best practices model designed to assist schools in creating individualized action plans to promote healthy living. The program

provides a framework for action, building on best practices and existing resources within the school community, targeting six Action Zones. Action Schools! BC promotes the creation of inclusive and diverse physical activity and healthy eating opportunities throughout the school day, and supports school initiatives to make healthy choices the easy choices for children. To date, 100 percent of BC school districts (60) now participate in ASI BC. <http://www.actionschoolsbc.ca/content/home.asp>

**Physical Education:** In BC, Physical Education is a required area of study from Kindergarten to grade 10, and is an elective subject area in grades 11 and 12. All grades from Kindergarten to grade 12 have provincially produced Prescribed Learning Outcomes (PLOs) contained in curriculum documents called Integrated Resource Packages (IRPs). The Physical Education K–7 IRP was recently revised and is now available. The Physical Education 8–10 IRP is currently being revised and is expected to be available for optional implementation in the 2008/2009 school year. [http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/irp\\_pe.htm](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/irp_pe.htm)

#### **Healthy Living Family Guides:**

Released in April 2007, four guides give age-appropriate tips and ideas on how to help children and youth be physically active and eat nutritiously. Three different booklets are aimed at parents of students in grades K–3, 4–7 and 8–9. A fourth guide is aimed at students in grades 10–12



to help them make their own healthy choices. <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/healthylivingbooklets.htm>

#### **Healthy Eating and Physical Activity**

**Learning Resource(s):** These new learning resources support teachers to build student skills and knowledge in making lifelong healthy choices in relation to physical activity and healthy eating. The resources are aligned with the Ministry of Education Health and Career Education (HCE) curricula for grades K–9 and Planning 10. The grade 8–10 resource has been field tested with teachers and students and is currently available. The Kindergarten to grade 7 resources will be field tested in early 2008 and fully implemented in fall 2008. [http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/health\\_publications.htm](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/health_publications.htm)

#### **Manitoba**

##### **Healthy Living Challenge 2008**

*Healthy Living Challenge* (HLC) is a “game” that covers a range of health topics and encourages families to adopt healthier lifestyles. There are two main components of HLC including an in-school kit for classroom teachers and a take home calendar for families. HLC is distributed to all grade 3 and 4 students in Manitoba. <http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthyschools/hlc/index.html>

##### **Healthy Schools in motion**

The provincial government introduced *Manitoba in motion* in fall 2005. This promotional program is intended to inspire Manitobans to get active. As part of this program *Healthy Schools in motion* was introduced. Currently over 460 (55%) Manitoba schools have registered with *in motion*. By registering for *Healthy Schools in motion*, schools are making a commitment to 30 minutes of physical activity everyday for every student. Manitoba schools that register to participate in *Healthy School in motion* receive:

- A Resource Manual to get schools started
- An Activity Bin full of equipment
- The Weight of the World DVD
- The **in motion** Snackivities (K–8)

- An Energy Blast DVD (K–6)
- The new *Getting “in motion” at School* resource

For more information visit: [www.manitoba.inmotion.ca/schools](http://www.manitoba.inmotion.ca/schools)

### I Love to Run Month

*I Love to Run* month (October) is an annual tradition for Manitoba *in motion*. *I Love to Run* month is designed to help teachers and families promote moderate and vigorous physical activity. The goal is to have students in grades 5 and 6 create their own physical activity challenges by logging their moderate and vigorous activities for one month. Upon completion, when students meet their goals, they receive a certificate of participation signed by the Ministers of Healthy Living and Education, Citizenship and Youth acknowledging their success.

### Monthly Food Intake and Activity Levels

Students can track their activity levels for up to four weeks using monthly activity and food trackers. These trackers also provide helpful information about staying physically active. These trackers can be downloaded from the Manitoba *in motion* website at [www.manitobainmotion.ca/schools](http://www.manitobainmotion.ca/schools)

### Physical Education/Health Education Curriculum

As recommended by the *Healthy Kids, Healthy Futures Task Force Report* (June 2005) to promote health and well being of our children and youth, time allotments for teaching the K–10 Physical Education/Health Education curriculum (PE/HE) was mandated effective September 2007. The grades 11 and 12 PE/HE curriculum is under development and system wide implementation is planned for September 2008. The vision of the curriculum is “*physically active and healthy lifestyles for all students*”.

## New Brunswick

### NB Student Wellness Surveys

Surveys were conducted in grades 6–12 (Anglophone and Francophone districts) in 2006–2007. Approximately 40,000 students (89% of schools) participated

in the voluntary survey which will be repeated every three years. Survey topics encompass the Provincial Wellness Strategy pillars: physical activity; healthy eating; mental fitness; and tobacco-free living. Schools and districts receive individual profiles reflecting survey results for that year, which provide suggestions and strategies for improving students’ wellness in partnership with community. Quick turnaround allows schools to take timely action on issues identified. Surveys are currently being developed for a provincial sample of elementary students and their parents and include direct measures.

### School Communities in ACTION

This program assists schools to adopt, implement and maintain a variety of physical activity opportunities. It is intended to support Physical Education classes and can be a family and community priority which extends beyond schools. Grant dollars are provided to individual schools that show commitment to getting their school populations physically active.

### The School Pedometer Challenge

Five New Brunswick schools are participating in a pilot program using pedometers and comprehensive resources to increase the levels of physical activity of staff and students. Support materials are provided to encourage schools to increase activity in four common environments: curriculum; school clubs; challenges; and the greater school community. A broad based evaluation will assess the potential for offering this to all schools in the province in future.

### Community Mobilization – Active Communities Grant Program

Supporting the increase in physical activity for school populations through community is the Active Communities Grant Program, which provides funds for initiatives that **raise awareness** of the importance and enjoyment of physical activity and provide **new or expanded opportunities** for New Brunswickers to be active. Not-for-profit organizations and





municipalities can apply with schools as partners and/or utilize school facilities as venues for physical activity opportunities. Developing partnerships for optimum capacity- building and sustainability are core to the success of this program.

### **Go NB – Sport Participation for Children and Youth**

This grant program provides funding to support partnerships among sports and recreation organizations, schools and communities. The keys to this program centre around: increasing participation for children and youth in sport activities; training more leaders for learn-to programs; forming more sports clubs; improving the availability of equipment; and reducing barriers to participation for under-represented populations.

### **Active Kids Toolkit**

The Active Kids Toolkit is a resource and workshop opportunity for all who work with and/or care for young children age 0 to 5 years. Operating in all regions of the province via partnerships with Family Resource Centers, Sport and Recreation staff, Early Interventionists and a multitude of regional and community organizations, this program teaches adults to be active themselves and how to provide safe, developmentally appropriate physical activity for young children using a toolkit of recommended materials.

addition to the recent \$3.2 million invested in physical education equipment, is the latest action taken to support the two mandatory credits of the Newfoundland and Labrador senior high school physical education curriculum.

*Active for Life: Physical Education in Newfoundland and Labrador* is a comprehensive physical education resource for students. Its content has been shaped by the new physical education curriculum and matches the physical education outcomes to assist teachers in the meeting of these outcomes.

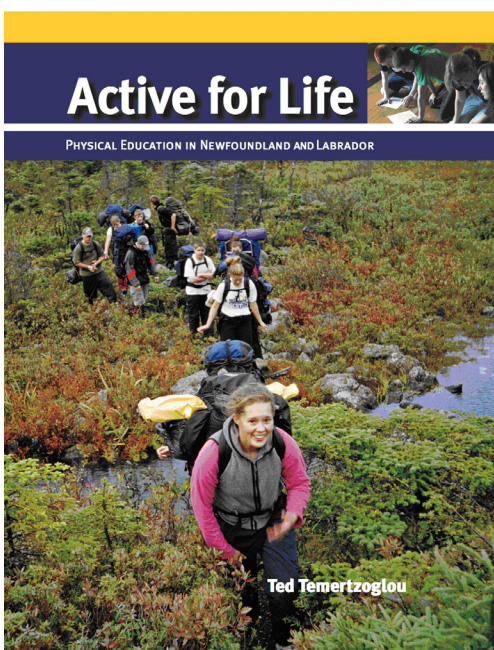


Included among the benefits of Physical Education classes are:

- helping students learn and develop new activity skills
- supporting students' physical, mental, social and spiritual health
- giving students regular opportunities to be active and preparing them to lead
- supporting students in Physical Education to be leaders as well as participants

Every student will have their own copy of the student resource for use during the school term. Through it, students will learn not only that they should be active, but why they should be active and how they can become active.

- The *Active for Life* student resource captures the knowledge associated with physical education theory and principles. It is not enough simply to direct students



### **Newfoundland and Labrador**

#### **Active for Life: Physical Education in Newfoundland and Labrador**

Teachers, students and former students came together to create the "made in Newfoundland and Labrador" student resource entitled *Active for Life: Physical Education in Newfoundland and Labrador*. This resource is designed to set students on a clear path to achieving their fitness and health goals.

The creation of *Active for Life: Physical Education in Newfoundland and Labrador*, in

to be active; they need also to grasp the principles underlying physical activity.

- The **Active for Life** student resource was designed by teachers across the province, with students across the province, for students across the province. It reflects the experiences of teachers and students in Newfoundland and Labrador today.
- The **Active for Life** student resource is designed to be used while engaged in a variety of fitness and individual activities. Moreover, students will be led through an assessment of their current fitness, a setting of goals for maintenance or improvements to fitness and the planning of how to achieve those goals.

## Northwest Territories

### Support for School-based Physical Activity

With support offered on a variety of “fronts” NWT is working to increase levels of physical activity for northern students through educators’ access to professional development.

Teaming up with Nunavut, the two territories brought Nova Scotia yoga instructor Kerry Lawson, who specializes in delivery of programs to children and youth, to spend a week in NWT schools, and three weeks in Nunavut schools in November, 2007. Twenty-two teachers from both territories then gathered in Yellowknife for

a two-day workshop that prepared them to continue delivery of yoga in their classes. The workshop, entitled “Building Resiliency in Youth Through Yoga”, focused on the use of yoga to help children/ youth to develop strategies for calming and ‘centering’ themselves, and to stay focused on a task even if being distracted or provoked.

In another collaborative effort, utilizing facilitators from Alberta’s **Schools Come Alive / Ever Active Schools**, twelve educators, representing seven of the NWT’s eight educational regions, gathered at the end of October for a three day workshop that focused on Physical Education, Physical Activity and Health Promoting Schools. Especially well received was facilitator Doug Gleddie’s presentation on ‘school connectedness’. Modeling this mini-workshop in the grade 7 classroom of a local school offered workshop participants valuable insights into the potential of having students work through the issues of supporting their peers to be more connected to their teachers, classmates and school programming.

To support regular classroom physical activity, NWT has teamed up with a regional health board to develop, assemble and distribute 150 “active living” classroom kits. Kits contain resources such as Alberta’s **Daily Physical Activity Handbook**, juggling scarves, pedometers, Maori rhythm sticks, skipping and exercise DVDs, station cards and Therabands. NWT schools can arrange for kit facilitators to visit their schools and provide educator workshops as well as in-class demonstrations. After the workshop, one teacher enthused, “Once I could see these activities used with my own students, I really became excited about using the kit. There are lots of ideas for using movement as a way to arrive at curriculum outcomes and also just as a way to get a positive energy flowing in the room.”





## Nova Scotia

### Physical Education

Nova Scotia is making Physical Education a mandatory high school credit. Beginning in 2008–2009, students entering grade 10 will be required to earn one physical education credit over three years at high school to meet the new graduation requirement which applies to *all* students wishing to earn the Nova Scotia High School Graduation Diploma in 2011. New courses include Fitness Leadership, Physically Active Living and Physical Education Leadership.

As part of its *Learning for Life II: Brighter Futures Together* (2005) plan, the Department of Education committed to increasing the number of qualified physical educators in grades 3–6. So far the department has invested \$2.6 million in more than 25 additional physical educators towards its goal of 60.



### Active Kids Healthy Kids

The Department of Health Promotion and Protection recently released the updated *Active Kids Healthy Kids Strategy* (AKHK), a comprehensive, innovative, multi-year plan for improving physical activity opportunities and participation rates for children and youth. The renewal of AKHK was informed by two Physical Activity Levels studies, evaluation, shared expertise, partner consultation,

an environmental scan, research and promising practices.

AKHK calls for leadership across a variety of sectors and levels. A set of 13 principles guides the strategy, its initiatives and its evaluation. The principles are based on shared perspectives that guide the partners without imposing rigid criteria on their operational mandate.

AKHK is organized into five major components: leadership and policy; community mobilization; active community environments; public awareness; and research, evaluation and knowledge

transfer. Each has multiple actions led or supported by various partnerships between government and non-government organizations.

The updated AKHK places additional emphasis on engaging adolescents, particularly females; communication with parents/guardians; supporting built environments for active transportation and play; supporting physical activity leaders in municipalities; and developing early childhood programs.

### Sport Animators Program

A bilateral agreement between Sport Canada and the Department of Health Promotion and Protection, which also involves the Department of Education and each of the nine school boards in Nova Scotia, has resulted in Sport Animators being employed in each board.

Sport Animators work with school communities to build capacity to run sustainable physical activity programs outside of school hours. Sport Animators work with local recreation departments to connect school and community resources to support programming. One major factor that has contributed to the success of the program is that Sport Animators are employees of their respective boards and have become integral to the boards' Health Promoting School teams.

## Ontario

### Raise the Bar

Raise the Bar held its first annual intramural student leadership conference on November 16, 2007. The focus of the conference was to educate and motivate student leaders in the area of organizing and implementing intramural programs in their schools. Student leaders are a key component in the development and sustainability of school intramural programs. Their leadership and ownership of programs are essential to the success of programs. Schools were encouraged to send up to four students and one staff member to the day-long event. The response to the conference was

overwhelming as over 400 students and staff were in attendance, representing 87 schools – both elementary and secondary – from 17 school boards from across Ontario. The morning session involved physical activity and ‘hands on’ experience as students and staff took part in a variety of intramural activities. The afternoon included guest speakers and work sessions as students and staff worked to develop plans to implement intramural programs in their schools. Due to the success of the conference, Raise the Bar is planning to hold two conferences in the fall of 2008 – one for elementary schools and one for secondary schools. To learn more about the conference, visit [www.raisethebarintramurals.com](http://www.raisethebarintramurals.com)

### **Northern Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Pilot Program integrates physical activity**

Beginning in January 2008, the *Everybody Move! Daily Vigorous Physical Activity* resource will be introduced as a companion piece to the Northern Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Pilot Program. A DVD and 10-page “cheat sheet” guide is being provided to every teacher participating in the pilot, with the potential to reach approximately 12,000 elementary students in Northern Ontario. The Ministry of Health Promotion is excited to incorporate physical activity into the pilot, recognizing that both healthy eating and physical activity are important in the lives of healthy students. An *Everybody Move!* workshop for teachers is being planned for each region to help facilitate implementation. *Everybody Move! Daily Vigorous Physical Activity* was developed by CiraOntario [http://www.mohawkcollege.ca/external/cira/template/everybody\\_move.html](http://www.mohawkcollege.ca/external/cira/template/everybody_move.html).

### **Saskatchewan**

Physical activity promotion and implementation of strategies to increase physical activity levels in children and youth are happening in Saskatchewan through strong partnerships. These partnerships are enabled, in part, by the direction and environments established by government ministries to positively influence the well-being of the province’s children and youth.

Saskatchewan’s Provincial Population Health Promotion Strategy, *Healthier Places to Live, Work, and Play* (<http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/phb-promotion-strategy>), provides Regional Health Authorities with a framework for creating physically active communities. The goals include: increasing opportunities for regular, enjoyable physical activity in communities, schools and workplaces; reducing economic, environmental, social and cultural barriers that limit participation in physical activity; and creating safe environments that encourage/support physical activity. Regional Health Authorities work with local partners, including the school system, to help achieve these goals.

Simultaneously, as part of the Ministry of Education’s Learning Program Renewal, all provincial curricula from Kindergarten to grade 9 are being rewritten. Physical movement, including active living, is being further emphasized in the renewed Physical Education curricula and physical activity suggestions will be integrated into all other core subject areas.

In addition, the new Premier of Saskatchewan, the Honourable Brad Wall, has directed the Minister of Education, the Honourable Ken Krawetz, to “work with school boards towards the goal of ensuring that children and youth engage in moderate to vigorous physical activity daily, while increasing healthy food choices”. This vision includes supporting physical activity levels within instructional time and during recess, noon hours and after school. Effective partnerships will support the attainment of this goal.

Regina Qu’Appelle Health Region’s Playground Leadership Program is one example of how partners are working together to increase physical activity in Saskatchewan. The Regina Qu’Appelle Health Region and the South East Saskatchewan Association for Culture, Recreation and Sport collaborated with seven rural schools to pilot a Playground



Leadership Program during the 2006/07 school year. The program vision is to create safe playground environments that encourage physical activity through the training of youth leaders. School facilitators recruit youth who are trained to run the program in their school during recesses and/or after school. Each school receives a resource kit to support delivery of the program. The program promotes physical activity on the playground, develops creativity in activities, reduces negative playground incidents and provides youth leadership development. Five new schools have adopted the program for the 2007/2008 school year.

Through creative and comprehensive efforts, Saskatchewan is working to increase the physical activity levels of children and youth in the province. Partnerships are a key component of this work and the province will continue to build on our strong history of working in partnerships to develop, implement and continuously improve policies and programs to promote the health and well-being of children and youth.



## Federal Government

### Healthy Communities Division, Public Health Agency of Canada

On September 26, 2007, the Honourable Tony Clement, the federal Minister of Health, announced a federal investment of \$5.4 million over two years for 14 innovative projects across Canada that will promote physical activity, healthy eating and healthy weights. Nine of the fourteen projects focus on children and/or youth. The projects are national in scope and will be delivered by non-government organizations. One of these projects, Green Communities Canada, received funding to create a comprehensive Canadian school travel plan reflective of regional differences. The aim of the project is to help increase the number of children and youth walking and cycling to school, improve personal security and traffic safety and aid in improving air quality. In September, Minister Clement also re-launched Canada's Physical Activity Guides, including Canada's Physical Activity Guides for Children and Youth. Further details about the other thirteen projects or Canada's Physical Activity Guides for Children and Youth can be accessed by visiting:

[http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/media/nr-rp/2007/2007\\_10bk\\_e.html](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/media/nr-rp/2007/2007_10bk_e.html)

[http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide/child\\_youth/index.html](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide/child_youth/index.html)

