



Calendar Highlights

see inside for details

**April 30 to
May 2, 2009**

Banff Alberta

**Moving Mountains:
Physical and
Health Education
Conference**

Co-hosted by Physical and Health Education Canada and the Health & Physical Education Council of Alberta.

Contact the JCSH:
Tel. 250 356-6057
www.jcsh-cces.ca

Message from the Executive Director

Imagine what your life would be like if you couldn't read this newsletter – or anything more complicated than street signs or slogans. How would you make your way in the world? How would you make a living? And how would you get information about your own, and your family's health?

These are just a few of the questions we, as professionals, may wish to consider in our ongoing efforts to improve the health of children and youth – especially in light of research showing literacy is a major determinant of health.

According to the Public Health Agency of Canada, "However health is defined or measured, people with limited literacy skills are worse off" than their more literate counterparts. The impacts can be direct, such as the inability to understand directions for taking medication, or indirect, such as the link between low levels of literacy and poverty.

Some practitioners have long acknowledged this link, but there is a need to raise the issue's profile at all levels. That is why October has been declared Health Literacy Month. It underlines the inter-related nature of health and education. It also presents new opportunities to build on partnerships between the health and education sectors.

We will have another key opportunity to strengthen partnerships later this fall at the McGill Health Challenge Think Tank conference. The November event will bring together health, education and social-

science professionals, along with thinkers and decision makers with expertise in business, design, architecture and urban planning.

The conference is focused on active living and childhood obesity – recognizing that, in the words of Think Tank Chair Laurette Dube, "Only by integrating the work of the world's best minds and leading organizations from ALL sectors can we articulate and embrace a bolder notion of childhood obesity prevention." I am proud to say that the Consortium will be participating as a partner in the conference.

With this issue of the newsletter, I am also pleased to report that the Consortium's 2008 Annual Report has been tabled with Canada's ministers of education and health and is now being distributed across the country. The report is also available online at www.jcsh-cces.ca/

I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who contributed to our progress in the past year. I look forward to working with you in the months ahead to build on our achievements and further advance the partnerships that are so essential to ensuring the health of Canada's children and youth.

–Claire Avison

Manitoba

Effective September 2008, the grade 11 Active Healthy Lifestyles credit is a required credit for graduation. The design of the new course will allow for schools and students/parents/guardians to determine how the learning outcomes of the curriculum will be achieved. This may be accomplished through a teacher-directed delivery model during IN-class time and a student directed model of OUT-of-class time. Students must complete a physical activity practicum that addresses health-related fitness components and which includes a minimum of 55 hours of moderate to vigorous physical activity. For more information visit www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/physhlth/frame_found_gr11/index.html

The Department has developed general guidelines for managing risk in OUT-of-class activities as well as selected safety checklists for safe participation in many common physical activities. This information is available in the OUT-of-Class Safety Handbook: A Resource for Grades 9–12 Physical Education/Health Education. Please visit www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/physhlth/out_of_class/index.html

Effective September 2008, the Grade 12 Active Healthy Lifestyles credit is a required credit for graduation. The Grade 12 Active Healthy Lifestyles curriculum is currently under development. Its design is similar to that of the grade 11 curriculum. To assist parents to understand the new graduation requirements and the nature of the grade 11 and 12 curriculums, a parent's guide has been produced. To view the guide visit www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/parents/pehe/gr11_12.html



New Brunswick

School Vegetable and Fruit Grants

New Brunswick implemented this grant program as part of the healthy eating pillar of the Wellness Strategy for New Brunswick. This grant program provides support for school-based activities that raise awareness of the importance of eating vegetables and fruits for good health and provide opportunities for the consumption of vegetables and fruits.

The objectives of the grant program are to:

- Increase awareness of the benefits and enjoyment of eating vegetables and fruit;
- Encourage increased consumption of vegetables and fruit among New Brunswick youth by increasing opportunities for them to enjoy vegetables and fruit as part of their everyday school life;
- Address barriers to eating vegetables and fruit that are commonly found within the school setting;
- Promote locally grown produce within the school environment; and
- Support implementation of Department of Education Policy 711 – Healthier Foods and Nutrition in New Brunswick Schools.

Tobacco-free Schools

The purpose of this grant-to-schools program is to facilitate high school actions to reduce tobacco use amongst students and support a successful transition to a 100% tobacco-free school, by supporting implementation of comprehensive and co-ordinated prevention, awareness, protection and cessation activities with students, parents and teachers. It is an initiative of the New Brunswick Department of Wellness, Culture and



Sport (Wellness Strategy). It is intended to contribute to efforts being made by the Tobacco-Free Schools group of the NB Anti-Tobacco Coalition and to support school efforts to comply with the Smoke-free Places Act.

The grant is not intended to replace current efforts of high schools or community support they have obtained, nor is it intended to be the sole support for tobacco reduction initiatives. Rather it is intended to add to existing efforts and help fill in gaps that have been identified in the planning or implementation process.

For additional information on these two programs, please visit www.gnb.ca/0131/.

Nova Scotia

Health Promoting School Showcase

The province's first Health Promoting Schools (HPS) Showcase took place in May, and highlighted the work being done right across Nova Scotia to help schools incorporate healthy, active living into everyday school life.

The Provincial Health Promoting School Showcase provided an opportunity for school health stakeholders in Nova Scotia to come together and share some of their many school health successes. The day highlighted the schools, students and regional HPS teams who presenting their active and healthy living achievements to an enthusiastic audience of more than 175.

Nature walks guided by native elders, climbing walls built on the side of a school building and measures to encourage more

girls to play sports were among the great activities school boards have been using in Nova Scotia to improve student health in Nova Scotia.

The showcase marked an important celebration of what the Health Promoting Schools Program has achieved in just a little more than two years.

The program addresses healthy eating, physical activity, youth sexual health, tobacco reduction, addiction and injury prevention, as well as a range of other health issues within the school setting.

The Health Promoting Schools Program brings together boards, district health authorities, community members and other health and education partners to ensure key school health programs are available to students.



Nova Scotia School Health Coordinator, Dwayne Provo gives the opening address for the province's first Health Promoting Schools Showcase.

Research Briefs

Health Literacy and Schools

In a 2001 article published in *Health Promotion International*, Dr. Lawrence St Leger of the Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences at Deakin University in Australia explores the potential for schools to meet their educational goals while at the same time meeting public health objectives by assisting students to reach high levels of health literacy. Read the article in full at <http://heapro.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/full/16/2/197>.



United Nations Literacy Decade: Progress Report for Canada 2004–2006

This report, issued by the Council of Ministers of Education (CMEC), looks at the literacy activities of the provincial, territorial and federal governments under the six themes outlined by UNESCO, the lead UN agency on literacy, for the United Nations Literacy Decade (2003–2012) biennial progress report for Canada.

www.cmec.ca/international/unesco/Literacy-Decade-CanadaReport2007.en.pdf

Acquiring Literacy Skills: A Comparison of Provincial and International Results from PISA and IALSS Final Report (June 6, 2008)

This report provides education policy makers with comparative literacy data across provinces and territories as well as comparisons with results in other countries. www.cmec.ca/stats/cesc/literacy-skills-comparison-2008.en.pdf

Resources/Related News

Canadian Public Health Association Health Literacy Portal

The Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) is a national not-for-profit association of health professionals from across the country. The association works in partnership with federal and provincial government departments and international agencies, non-governmental organizations and the private sector in conducting research and health services programs. The Health Literacy Portal provides access to resources, strategies, plain language services, etc. <http://www.cpha.ca/en/portals/h-l.aspx>

Health Literacy in Canada

For an overview of the status of health literacy in Canada, visit the Public Health Agency of Canada's website to view the article entitled *How Does Literacy Affect the Health of Canadians?*

www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ph-sp/literacy-alphabetisme/literacy2-eng.php?

The Centre for Literacy's Health Literacy Resources (Quebec)

Resources provided on this website offer an introduction to the concept of health literacy and represent the best efforts of various non-profit, government and educational agencies to raise awareness of the issue and promote best practices in Canada as well as other jurisdictions. www.centreforliteracy.qc.ca/health/HLinks.html

Banff Alberta

April 30 to May 2, 2009

Moving Mountains, Physical and Health Education Conference

The call for presentations deadline is October 31 for the Moving Mountains Conference. Co-hosted by Physical and Health Education Canada (formerly Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance - CAHPERD) and the Health & Physical Education Council of Alberta (HPEC), this event will provide an opportunity for participants to attend several professional development sessions focused on the implementation of physical education and health curricula; athletic and intramural programs; and the development of healthy schools. Visit

www.phecanada.ca/Banff09/index.htm



This newsletter is distributed six times per year to members of the Joint Consortium for School Health (JCSH), a network of provincial, territorial and federal governments focused on strengthening school health promotion across Canada through cooperative initiatives and information sharing. Contact the JCSH Secretariat at PO Box 9161 Stn. Prov Govt, Victoria, BC, V8W 9H3. Telephone: 250 356-6057 * www.jcsh-cces.ca