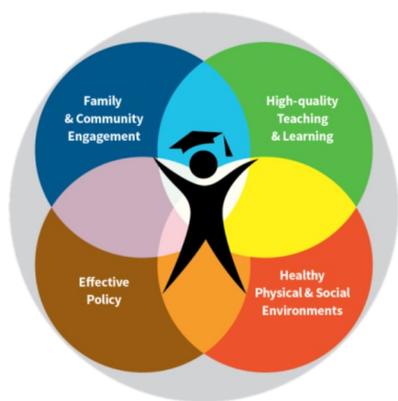


Comprehensive School Community Health

Better Health = Better Learners

Spring 2021



In Saskatchewan, the ministries of Education and Health are committed to using a Comprehensive School Community Health (CSCH) approach to help guide and coordinate government actions and encourage strong family, school and community partnerships to improve student success and well-being.

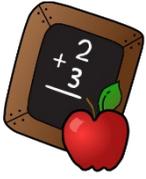
Aligning with Saskatchewan's priorities, the CSCH approach promotes collaborative action for the enhancement of student learning, skill development, academic achievement and reduced absenteeism. CSCH contributes to better population health by supporting children and youth to become physically, mentally, spiritually and emotionally healthy.

This approach focuses on creating opportunities for children and youth to experience healthy, supportive and equitable learning environments where all students feel safe, cared for and respected.

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Food Security, Healthy Eating and Comprehensive School Community Health



Good nutrition enhances academic performance and contributes to lifelong health and well-being. It is recognized that healthy students are better learners.

Food insecurity is the inability to acquire or consume an adequate diet quality or sufficient quantity of food in socially acceptable ways, or the uncertainty that one will be able to do so.

Food security is when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their needs for an active and healthy life (Committee on World Food Security, 2012).

Although schools cannot directly address the issues of food insecurity for families, they can play a role in supporting students who are affected by food insecurity. A whole school approach supports the well-being of students and helps them thrive academically. The four integrated components of CSCH provide a framework for families, students and communities to work together to support students' full potential as learners and become responsible and healthy community members.



Healthy physical and social environments support student nutrition

Households that are not able to acquire adequate amounts of healthy food may benefit from foods in their communities that are nutritious, affordable, accessible and culturally acceptable. Foods served and promoted in schools provide an opportunity for children and youth to meet their nutritional needs for the day in a way that is inclusive for students who are experiencing food insecurity. This includes foods served in school meal and snack programs, canteens, vending machines and fundraising efforts. When children are provided with healthy foods within a positive school climate, it supports their eating habits and food preferences now and into their future. When unhealthy foods are promoted, or when children are rewarded with unhealthy foods, it can increase their preference for these foods.

High quality teaching and learning - what are considerations?

It is important to consider that some students may not be able to control the types or amounts of foods that are available to them due to barriers such as limited income, transportation or lack of grocery stores within close proximity. Foods available and accessible to families in the neighbourhood, or in the community they live in, impacts students' food choices. Some families may rely on food sources such as convenience stores or food banks, which may not provide an adequate selection of nutritious foods.

Inquiry-based approaches in the classroom can include experiential learning opportunities about gardening, marketing of foods, food systems and examining the foods available in the school community. This can take the focus away from a student's own access to healthy foods if they are living in a food insecure home.

Family and community engagement - immediate food relief and support for families

Building partnerships between community-based organizations and families ensures that students get the range of health supports and services they need. Ongoing collaborative partnerships ensure open-lines of communication and supports organizations, families and students to work together.

Family and community partners can be engaged to support meal or snack programs in the school; such programs provide immediate food relief for families who struggle to provide their children with a sufficient quality or quantity of food at home. Although food banks and meal programs may provide immediate relief, they are interim supports and they may not provide long-term solutions addressing underlying issues of food insecurity.

What is the role of effective policy?

Effective policy and administrative procedures will consider and address all aspects of CSCH for a whole school approach. *Nourishing Minds: Eat Well - Learn - Well - Live Well (2019)* uses a CSCH approach to support schools and school divisions to develop and/or renew policy and administrative procedures related to child and youth nutrition.

CSCH in Saskatchewan Schools

Grow With Us - The Phoenix Academy Tower Garden Project: Moose Jaw

Phoenix Academy, an alternative school in Moose Jaw, has been providing healthy lunches for its students for 20 years. Principal Jeff Lynnes realized early on that healthy food helped support healthy minds; and a well-developed nutrition plan was created. Lunches have always included healthy choices for students with salads, vegetables and fruits.

Grow With Us - The Phoenix Academy Tower Garden Project began the journey towards staff and students growing their own produce. Students at Phoenix Academy will not only be learning about the science of nutrition, but the actual process of growing plants from seeds, how to care for them and finally the joy of the harvest.



The project will have students make informed decisions regarding personal healthy eating practices based on connections to wellness. This hands-on practice will give students a more fully developed education that they can use for the rest of their lives. It is the hope that this on-going project will not only help today's students, but that the knowledge gained will effectively be shared with future generations to allow for healthy choices within their own families.

Do you want to share your CSCH success story?

Are you involved in a CSCH related project that you would like to share across the province? Would you like to highlight a positive collaboration between health and education that is supporting your school community? Click the CSCH icon on the right, fill out the form and send it to one of our Saskatchewan School Health Coordinators to share your story. Help build a CSCH knowledge network throughout our province!



Want to share your successes across the country? Scroll down and check out the Joint Consortium for School Health Stories Map.

CSCH Related Media, Tools, Resources and Articles

Article: Food Insecurity and COVID-19

In May 2020, Statistics Canada conducted a web-survey assessing the levels of food insecurity experienced by Canadians. Households, particularly those with children, have been negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Almost one in seven (14.6 per cent) Canadians indicated that they lived in a household where there was food insecurity in the past 30 days. This is based on a scale of six food experiences, ranging from food not lasting before there was money to buy more to going hungry because there was not enough money for food.

2021 Mosaic School Nutrition Challenge

The Mosaic Challenge encourages grassroots initiatives to promote student nutrition and healthier school environments through nutrition-related activities and programming. Cash awards of \$10,000 each will be awarded to 10 successful applicants.

Deadline for submissions is March 31, 2021. For more information about the Mosaic School Nutrition Challenge, please contact: challenge@sasktel.net.

School Garden, Composting and Outdoor Education Resource List

This list, developed by the Saskatchewan Health Authority, provides resource links, videos and how-to-guides for several topics including school gardening, local healthy food fundraisers, composting, food preservation and more.

Serving Healthy School Food During COVID-19: A Guide

This guide is meant to encourage and inspire school food providers to use creative solutions to serve fresh, whole and nutritious food to students in ways that are COVID-safe. The information and suggestions presented are not meant to be prescriptive and should only be considered in the context of individual program guidelines informed by your school, school division and current [Government of Saskatchewan COVID-19](#) guidelines.

211 Saskatchewan

This is a free, confidential, 24/7 service that connects individuals to human services in the province by telephone, text or web chat. It also includes a searchable website with over 5,000 listings of social, community, non-clinical health and government services across the province. Over 175 languages, including 17 Indigenous languages, are available over the phone.

Cultural Practices and Foods and First Nations and Métis Traditional Practices and Foods

Incorporating traditional and culturally relevant foods as part of learning, food experiences and food offerings reinforces a positive cultural identity within the school setting. It also increases students' exposure to many different foods and can improve diet quality. These Ministry of Education resources celebrate diversity and inclusion.

Canada's Food Guide

Canada's Food Guide is a web-based resource that continues to be updated with new resources. You can receive regular updates by subscribing to [Canada Food Guide Updates](#). You can even send Health Canada ideas for future topics. The food guide snap shot is available in many languages. You can view or order copies [here](#).



Teaching Nutrition in Saskatchewan: Grades 1-3, Grades 4-5, Grade 6, Grade 7, Grade 8, Health Science 20, and Physical Education 20 and 30

These curriculum support documents for educators were developed by Public Health Nutritionists with the Saskatchewan Health Authority. They provide credible, Canadian-based nutrition information and resources.

Raising our Healthy Kids - School Aged Children (Video)

A series of 60-90 second videos with up-to-date nutrition information for school teachers, child educators, parents and health professionals working with children and youth.

Cost of Healthy Meals and Snacks for Children and Youth in Saskatchewan 2018

This resource shows the average cost of healthy meals and snacks for children and youth in northern and southern Saskatchewan. Schools, childcare facilities and community organizations can use this tool to budget for child nutrition programs.

The Cost of Healthy Eating in Saskatchewan 2018

This report provides a benchmark for the cost of healthy eating for various age and gender groups. It also notes variances in cost in different geographic locations within the province. The information helps to inform health, nutrition and social policies and it can also help individuals, families and organizations to budget for nutritious food. This food costing study is conducted every three years in randomly selected grocery stores throughout Saskatchewan.

Museum at Home - Royal Saskatchewan Museum



During a time when we are forced to come up with creative ways to continue to teach and learn we have to look outside the box. The Royal Saskatchewan Museum is now offering new interactive online classroom programs, “Museum at Home” webinars and online learning resources on the Royal Saskatchewan Museum website. The online classroom programs are available in English only and run weekly on Tuesday’s and Thursday’s with the opportunity to meet with one of the museum educators through Microsoft Teams. These one-hour programs include:

- **Winter Animals** (Grades 1-4) gives an opportunity to learn how animals adapt to winter here in Saskatchewan and their strategies for survival.
- **Discovering Fossils** (Grades 1-3) teaches the students how fossils form, exploring the different types of fossils and learning how Royal Saskatchewan Museum paleontologists study fossils to learn about Saskatchewan’s past.
- **Slice of Life: Saskatchewan Environments Past and Present** (Grades 4-8) is a chance to explore how our province has changed over time and the differences in climate, landforms and biodiversity in the present ecozones of Saskatchewan.

Booking requests for these programs can be done through the Royal Saskatchewan Museum website here: <https://royalsaskmuseum.ca/rsm/education/school-programs-online/booking-a-program>.



Share: Joint Consortium for School Health (JCSH) Stories Map

Looking for a way to share the amazing work happening in your school and community with the rest of Canada? Want to learn about other success stories that are happening around the country? [Click here](#) to check out the JCSH School Health Stories. Once there, click on the “Submit Your Story” button to share your story or click the location pins for information on other stories and links from across the country.

This e-newsletter has been prepared by the Saskatchewan School Health Coordinators. The information included and articles selected may be of interest to individuals working to support CSCH. We will provide you with email updates and encourage you to share this information with your colleagues as you feel is appropriate.

Please advise if you would like to be removed from this distribution list.

If you have items that you would like to share via this e-newsletter, please contact one of the School Health Coordinators listed below.

**Best wishes,
Saskatchewan School Health Coordinators:**

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