



Healthy Schools NEWSLETTER

ideas and information for a healthier school community

WINTER 2010

York Region Community and Health Services Elementary School Program is pleased to present the winter edition of the Healthy Schools Newsletter. This issue contains updates on exciting local Healthy School activities and valuable information and tips on improving the health of your school. We wish you a healthy and happy winter season!

What's your story?

St. Justin Martyr plants a tree

Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti
joins students from
St. Justin Martyr Catholic Elementary School
as they plant the tree they won in last year's
Sun Smart Poster Contest.



Sun Smart Poster Contest 2010: Win a tree for your school!

Who?

Grade One students in York Region

How?

Create posters which demonstrate and communicate sun safe behaviour

- All participants will receive a prize package
- Class winners will receive a tree to plant at their school or local park
- Winning artwork will be used for a Sun Smart poster and bookmark

Why?

Schools play an important role in promoting sun safety because children are at school during the highest risk period of the day, 11 am to 4 pm.

Students spend a significant amount of this time outdoors for recess, lunch, physical education class and extra-curricular activities.

Teaching children to be sun smart and protecting them from exposure to the sun's UV radiation can significantly lessen their lifetime risk of developing skin cancer.

When? Contest deadline: **March 5, 2010**

For contest details and entry forms visit www.york.ca/healthyschools

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What's your story?

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**Get rid of those winter
blahs and try a
winter walk to school.**



**Wednesday, February 10, 2010
is Ontario's Winter Walk Day.**

Register today!



www.saferoutestoschool.ca

Winter Walk Day is part of Green Communities Canada's Active & Safe Routes to School program.



Bring A Little Respect with you to the ski hill this winter

It's exciting to hit the slopes with your class, but every year thousands of people are hospitalized with skiing and snowboarding injuries. What starts out as a fun and exciting school trip can quickly turn into a devastating, life-altering event.

The Canadian Institute for Health Information has reported a 46 per cent increase in the number of hospitalizations for severe head injuries (2000-2001 and 2003-2004). The good news is that most injuries are preventable and injury prevention programs are beginning to work.



A Little Respect... ThinkFirst!

(Observe, relax, respecte: Pensez d'abord!) is an engaging and informative DVD aimed at young skiers and snowboarders. It covers topics such as environmental hazards, technique, attitudes and helmet safety. It also includes tips from professional skiers. Whether you are a snowboarder or a skier, this DVD can help you recognize and manage the risks on the slopes in order to prevent serious injuries.

This program, developed by skiing/boarding educators and experts, is required viewing by the Ontario Ski Resorts Association for all group trips to OSRA-member ski hills. To order your copy or watch the video online, please visit thinkfirst.ca or call **1-800-335-6076**.

WEAR IT RIGHT EVERY TIME

The Do's and Don'ts of Ski and Snowboard Helmets

ThinkFirst...Be Safe!



- Check to ensure your helmet is CSA approved.
- No decorating helmets with paint or stickers.
- No cracks, dents or damage.

Student attitudes about drinking

You may be hesitant about bringing up a tough subject such as under-age drinking, however, students develop attitudes about drinking long before they are legally able to drink.

One way to get the conversation going is to openly talk about choices and influences. An ideal time to start talking about this is in Grades 4 to 8.

The average Canadian student encounters 100,000 alcohol ads by the time they are 18.

There are messages about alcohol everywhere: on the web, television, radio, signs, branded clothes and at sports events. With media education, students may learn to ask questions about alcohol and critically think about answers:

What is the ad trying to tell me?

- “Buy this brand of beer”
- “Don’t drink and drive”
- “Have fun and let loose”
- “Know your limits”

Who is behind this message?

- A corporation?
- A marketing company?
- A parent?
- A friend?
- A teacher?
- Public service/government?

How is the ad trying to convince me to listen?

- By telling me the benefits and the risks?
- By making it look like fun?
- By trying to relate to me?

Is this message believable?

- Where is the information from?
- Should this message have a say in what I do?
- Can I depend on this message to help me make choices?

Why am I getting this message?

- Why am I being targeted?
- What is the motivation?
- Are they looking out for my best interests?



For more information on media awareness and skills (including lesson plans for teachers and tips for parents) go to www.media-awareness.ca

Call **Health Connection** to talk to a Public Health Nurse about other creative ideas for substance misuse prevention in your school community.

Creating a healthier workplace at school: Make sure your goal setting is S.M.A.R.T

Have you ever wondered how an individual or an organization made a few simple changes and transformed their health and wellness on a larger scale?

It isn't always the larger steps we take that ultimately lead to success. Some of the most progressive steps are those that lay the foundation for future achievement.

Although starting down a path of wellness sounds simple, the stress and uncertainty of our current times can make these steps seem larger than they actually are.

Once a need for wellness is identified, one of the most effective ways to gain success is to set clear goals. Research has shown that the more clear and concise your vision and goals are, the higher the rate of success in achieving the outcomes you desire.

S.M.A.R.T. goal setting is one way to frame your goal statements.

A **S.M.A.R.T.** goal is:

S – Specific enough for you to clearly define it

M – Measurable so you are able to tell when you have achieved the goal

A – Action oriented with very specific activities tied to it

R – Realistic for you and your current situation

T – Time specific with deadlines outlined in the plan

Goal setting for an organizational wellness program should employ the same principles.



Our Workplace Wellness Team can guide you through a step-by-step process with free tools and resources in order to develop a wellness program.

Call **Health Connection** to speak to a Public Health Nurse about setting S.M.A.R.T. goals for your school.

Upcoming health promotion events...

February

Heart Month

www.heartandstroke.ca

Feb 1-7: Eating Disorder

Awareness Week www.nedic.ca

Feb 10: Winter Walk Day

www.saferoutestoschool.ca

Feb 12: Sexual and

Reproductive Health Awareness

Day www.cfsh.ca

March

National Nutrition Month

www.dietitians.ca

Mar 14 to 20: National Farm
Safety Week

www.safety-council.org

Mar. 22 - World Water Day

www.worldwaterday.org/

April

Dental Health Month

www.cda-adc.ca

Apr 20 to May 1: Immunization
Awareness Week

www.immunize.cpha.ca

Apr 7: World Health Day

www.who.int

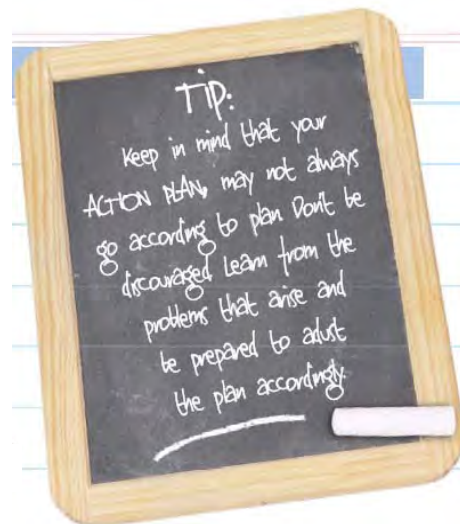
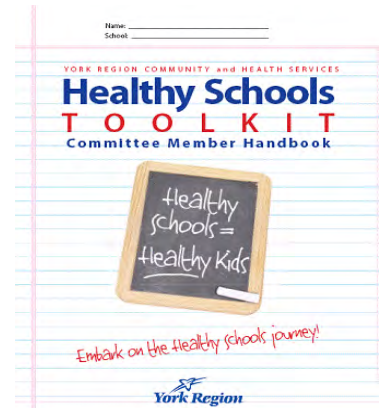
Apr. 22 - Earth Day

www.earthday.ca

Healthy Schools Toolkit: Implementing your action plan

The Healthy Schools Toolkit Committee Member Handbook has lots of suggestions and tips on how to carry out your action plan.

- Share and promote action plan activities with the school community. For example:
 - Post your Healthy Schools challenge pledge or mission statement where everyone in the school can see it
 - Send a letter to parents and community partners to keep them informed of the Healthy School action plan and provide regular updates
- Invite students to be actively involved in planning and carrying out Healthy School activities – the more you engage others, the greater support and motivation you will receive
- Ensure school staff, students, parents and community partners are equipped to implement the activities effectively
- Review progress by discussing problems with certain activities, revision of timelines, communication issues or new resources
- Prepare a participant evaluation to conduct after each activity
- Update the action plan after each activity



Speak to your Public Health Nurse to receive a copy of the Toolkit and CD

For information contact
Health Connection
1-800-361-5653
or visit www.york.ca/healthyschools

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