



FOCUS ON HEALTHY SCHOOLS

Helping Students Learn, Grow and Succeed



Welcome to the Fourth Edition of *Focus on Healthy Schools*

Welcome to the fourth edition of *Focus on Healthy Schools*, the Ministry of Education's Healthy Schools e-bulletin.

In this edition, we are pleased to introduce the CODE and COMOH partnership, and update you on our policies and programs regarding concussions, healthy eating and physical activity.

We invite you to read about the progress of mental health leads in schools and learn about a promising initiative of in-school Paediatric Health Clinics.

Thank you for your ongoing work in promoting the health and well-being of Ontario students.

We hope you find this e-bulletin informative.

Spring 2013-14:

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CODE and COMOH Partnering for Student Health and Well-Being



Public health units and school boards throughout the province have a long-standing history of collaborating and cooperating to help support the healthy growth and development of Ontario's students. In November 2013, the Executive Director of the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE) and the Chair of the Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health (COMOH) introduced an exciting project to further support public health units and school boards in

developing and fostering these mutually beneficial partnerships.

This new collaboration has brought together a group of seven directors of education and seven medical officers of health from across the province. They will explore opportunities to build upon and enhance current agreements and practices between public health units and school boards. A key goal of the project is to identify opportunities to better support the delivery of services for students and families.

Education and health share the mandate to support the well-being of students. It is widely accepted that strong partnerships focused on strategic priorities can improve health outcomes for students and positively affect their achievement.

The Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care look forward to the results of the CODE-COMOH partnership. Stay tuned for more information from this group.



Policy News

Policy and Program Memorandum (PPM) 158: School Board Policies on Concussion

On March 19, 2014, the Ministry of Education released PPM 158: School Board Policies on Concussion. PPM 158 offers school boards direction on developing and implementing policies on concussion awareness, prevention, identification and management in Ontario's publicly funded schools.

Medical Conditions in Schools

The Ministry of Education is exploring a comprehensive strategy for the management of prevalent medical conditions, rather than pursuing separate solutions for single medical conditions — including asthma, diabetes and anaphylaxis.

As a first step, the Ministry has supported Ophea with funding to conduct research to gain a greater understanding of current policies and practices, and medical conditions school boards currently address, as well as available resources, partnerships and implementation support. This data will be critical to making evidence-based and informed decisions in planning the next steps to improving the safety of students with medical conditions.

Mental Health Leaders in School Boards

Open Minds, Healthy Minds – Ontario's Comprehensive Mental Health Strategy is a comprehensive approach to transforming the mental health system. The strategy takes a long-term view, but in the initial three years the focus will be on children and youth. Therefore, in 2013, all district school boards received ongoing dedicated funding for a Mental Health Leader.

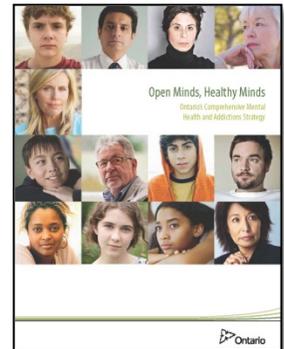
Mental Health Leaders are professionals responsible for providing full-time leadership to the board through the development and implementation of a comprehensive school board strategy to address student mental health and addictions needs.

As the program rolls out, Mental Health Leaders are developing close and effective working relationships within their boards and communities with other professionals and educators whose role is to support student success and well-being.

They have also been engaging in numerous activities in their boards and communities that support Healthy Schools.

One such example is an equity and inclusion youth engagement forum, that two coterminous boards co-hosted and their Mental Health Leaders led.

This year's theme was resiliency and over the last two years the forum has been supporting mental health and well-being. This year's forum, which took place in the late fall, saw 450 youth representatives participating.



Other ongoing work across the province includes capacity-building for educators, creating a guide for school administrators on leading mentally healthy schools, suicide prevention and postvention, and the establishment of board and community pathways to care for students who may be struggling with mental health issues and addictions.

To learn more, visit <http://smh-assist.ca/> or read the [article](#) featured in Professionally Speaking (December 2013).

Over \$4 Million in Grants Awarded to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity in Secondary Schools

Ontario educators and community partners are enthusiastic about helping high school students create a healthy eating culture and increase participation in physical activities in their schools. In January, the Ministry announced two new grants that invest over \$4 million in the health and well-being of students. Over 550 applications were received for both grants.

The Healthy Eating in Secondary Schools Grants invited high schools, school boards, postsecondary institutions and non-profit organizations to apply for one-time funding for innovative projects that change the food culture in schools. Ninety projects were awarded one-time grants of up to \$50,000 for diverse ideas including school gardens, student ambassador programs, student-run snack shops, and renovation of eating spaces.

The Physical Activity in Secondary Schools Grants were introduced to increase the number of secondary students participating in physical activities outside of instructional time. Seventy

one-time grants of up to \$20,000 were awarded to high schools and school boards to implement innovative sustainable activities that address identified needs.

The evaluation team at the Ministry was impressed by the quality and range of proposals it received. The dedication and effort of educators and partners to improve the health and well-being of students in Ontario is remarkable.

We are looking forward to learning from the innovative projects that were funded and are optimistic that they will inspire future initiatives by school boards and community partners. Stay tuned for updates.

Fresh from the Farm Expanded for 2014

Developed in partnership with the Dietitians of Canada, Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the Ministry of Education, the program establishes a cost-sustainable fundraising program for schools. Fresh from the Farm provides schools and students with a healthy fundraising alternative while supporting local farmers and the economy.



From September to November 2013, 70 schools from 10 southwestern and northern Ontario school boards successfully piloted *Fresh from the Farm: Healthy Fundraising for Ontario Schools*. They collectively distributed over 54,000 kilograms of fresh, local fruit and vegetables to Ontario families, and raised more than \$50,000 for school initiatives. As well, an additional \$61,000 was returned to Ontario farmers.



Building on last year's success, *Fresh from the Farm* has expanded to include nine additional school boards in southwestern Ontario, as well as boards within the City of Toronto. This expansion will help double the number of schools eligible to participate to 937.

This year's program will run from September to November 2014. To find out if your school is eligible, visit www.freshfromfarm.ca Also, check out facebook.com/freshfromfarmON and twitter.com/freshfromfarmON

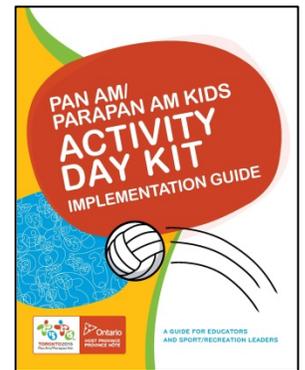
Pan Am/Parapan Am Kids

In anticipation of the 2015 Pan Am/Parapan Am Games taking place in Toronto, the Ministry of Education, in partnership with the TORONTO 2015 Pan Am/Parapan Am Games Organizing Committee (TO2015), has developed bilingual resources to engage schools for the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games. The Pan Am/Parapan Am Kids Program (PPAKids) was developed to inspire children to be active and to learn about themselves and others through a variety of Games-related sports and activities.



PPAKids resources developed for K-12 educators, after-school leaders and recreational staff include:

- Kids 'n Play - A resource of physical, healthy living and cultural activities to connect kids to the excitement of the Games. Developed by TO2015.
- Activity Day Kits - A kit the Ministry of Education developed for elementary schools that includes activity cards related to healthy living and sports in the Games plus a guide to set up an Activity Day.
- PlaySport - An online resource for K-12 educators developed by the Ministry of Education and Ophea to help students build the skills and knowledge they need to lead healthy, active lives.
- My Personal Best – A tool to monitor physical literacy knowledge, set individual goals and engage children to achieve their personal best. Developed by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport and Physical Health Education Canada.



To learn more about PPAKids and to access these resources, visit www.ontario.ca/ppakids.

In Focus: TDSB Model Schools Paediatric Health Initiative: In-School Health Clinics



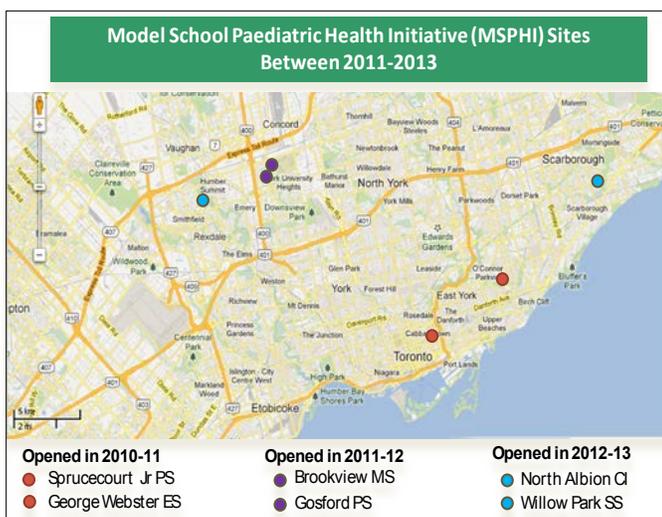
In 2010, the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) launched its Model Schools Paediatric Health Initiative (MSPHI)

as part of the Model Schools for Inner Cities (MSIC) program.

There are more than 150 identified Model Schools in the TDSB. These schools are determined by the Learning Opportunities Index, and are located within the seven identified inner-city neighbourhoods in Toronto where large numbers of students live in poverty. In 2011-12, the MSIC program served over 100 inner-city schools across the city where nearly half the families earned less than \$30,000 per year, and most parents (85%) were born outside Canada.

The MSPHI clinics are an integrated, in-school health initiative that reduces health care barriers for children, so that they can receive needed services in a direct and efficient way. These include assessment, diagnosis, management, and follow-up of multiple health and developmental concerns. As of 2013, there were a total of six clinics (five elementary schools and one secondary school) across Toronto.

Since 2010, student registration across all six MSPHI clinics has increased from 606 students to



Source: Model Schools Paediatric Health Initiative, Phase 2 Report

"It is impressive that we can help children within such a large range of issues; for example, children that are undiagnosed with developmental issues, mental health issues, and childhood anxiety but also acute infections or chronic conditions; like asthma or diabetes."

Paediatrician, MSPHI Clinic

a total of 6,138 registrants in 2012-13. Between 2010 and 2013, as many as 508 students who had either been "unattached" (no primary care physician) or "uninsured" (no OHIP coverage) were connected and served under the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

Including family members, it is estimated that between 1,500 and 2,000 people are now attached to the health system as a result of the MSPHI.



From 2010 to 2013, MSPHI clinics dealt with 2,817 issues: acute and chronic physical illnesses/ injuries (52%); developmental and behavioural mental health issues (27%); and preventative care, such as immunizations and physical examinations (22%).

With equitable access to primary health care, efficient referrals to specialized services, early detection with the involvement of school staff, and the wide spectrum of health care provisions, many health-related obstacles to students' successful school experiences can be mitigated.

More information about the clinics and the research reports can be found at: <http://tfss.ca/our-programs/model-schools-pediatric-health-initiative>.

Do you have a story to share?

If you have an idea for a future *Focus on Healthy Schools* article, please email healthy.schools@ontario.ca.