Healthy school communities promote a culture of wellness among all members: students, staff, administration, parents, and community partners. Together, the school community implements plans to create an environment that supports healthy choices among its members.

What can **you** do?

**Champion a School Health Team!** Get informed! See websites below, including a detailed paper about healthy school communities. Talk to provincial and national organizations to generate support for healthy school community activities.

What can **your school** do?

Use a **Whole School Approach** involving staff, teachers, community partners, parents, and students. Communicate with all stakeholders.

What can **your school community** do?

**Assess** the school community’s needs and create a **Plan** for **Sustainability!** Share success stories and **Learn** what works!

For more information, please contact:
info@phecana.ca or visit www.phecana.ca

To read a full concept paper regarding healthy school communities visit:
www.phecana.ca/programs/health-promoting-schools/concept-paper
www.propel.uwaterloo.ca/hsc/

**Supporting National Organizations:**
Physical & Health Education Canada – www.phecana.ca
Pan-Canadian Joint Consortium for School Health – www.jcsh-cces.ca
Canadian Association of Principals – www.cdnprincipals.org

Thank you to The Lawson Foundation for the generous support of this work.
A MODEL FOR HEALTHY SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

The inner circles represent the 5 core components of a Healthy School Community. The outer blue ring represents the essential principles of a Healthy School Community approach.

**Assess, Plan, Learn**
Does your school community need to focus on a particular area (e.g., physical activity, nutrition, tobacco control)? Or building the basic foundations for a healthy school? Assess needs and plan accordingly. Test what works for your school community and learn to adapt.

**Champion and Team**
Identify a champion and form a healthy school community team. It’s best to include teaching and non-teaching staff, students, parents, and community partners. Use expertise of stakeholder groups like public health.

**Sustainability**
Focus on the long term health of your school community. Plan and implement policies and projects that will lead to lasting changes.

**Whole School Approach**
Whole school approaches use multiple strategies to promote health and well-being. They focus on the five core components of a healthy school community illustrated in the grey circles of the model: teaching and learning, the physical and social environment, policy, partnerships with the community, and evidence. They consider “HOW” you do something as much as “WHAT” you do and target the whole school community.

**Health and Education Synergy**
Look for synergy where advancing health can also advance education goals. Engage joint planning and coordinate resources (e.g., funding, time).

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Top 5 Benefits of Building Healthy School Communities

1. **Greater overall achievement**
   Students in healthy school communities learn better and score higher on standardized tests and report cards.

2. **Well-rounded students**
   Healthy school communities positively impact self-esteem and social well-being. Healthy students have an increased capacity to learn and develop the values, attitudes and skills necessary to be competent, effective and resilient adults.

3. **Decreased discipline problems and improved attendance**
   Healthier school communities experience fewer student behaviour problems and better attendance.

4. **Improved lifelong health**
   Healthy kids become healthy adults. Many healthy (or unhealthy) behaviours and habits we develop in school stick with us into adulthood.

5. **Reduced disparities**
   Approaches to creating healthy school communities can reduce both health and education disparities.