

HEALTHY SCHOOLS COMMITTEE TOOLKIT



Welcome to your Healthy Schools Committee Member Toolkit

The purpose of this resource is to support schools in creating a healthy school environment by providing strategies, tips and tools that focus on a comprehensive approach to school health. The Healthy Schools Committee Member Toolkit will guide you through the four-step process to help you along your Healthy Schools journey. Schools may choose to use all, or any part of this toolkit to support their Healthy School Committee.



Look for this symbol throughout this toolkit to see which tool(s) can support the suggested activities.

A complete [List of Available Tools](#) can be found at the end of this toolkit.

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Healthy Schools Committee Overview

The Benefits of Creating an Active, Healthy Schools Community

Research and experience have shown that students, staff and the entire school community benefit from being a Healthy School.

Students will...

- Be able to experience improved concentration and learning in class because their basic nutrition, physical activity, mental and emotional well-being needs are met
- Develop greater confidence, motivation, self-esteem and have the commitment and capacity to make important life and health choices
- Have access to community services
- Be more likely to achieve greater academic success
- Have strategies to interact effectively with peers to build positive relationships
- Attend school more regularly
- Get involved in leadership opportunities, decision-making and problem solving

Staff will...

- Feel healthier, more engaged, enthusiastic and productive
- Experience reduced stress and absenteeism
- Model positive and healthy behaviour through daily interactions with students
- Develop positive professional relationships and staff-student connectedness

Families will...

- Have opportunities to become involved in the school community
- Participate in their child's health and learning
- Learn about keeping their children and their families healthy at home

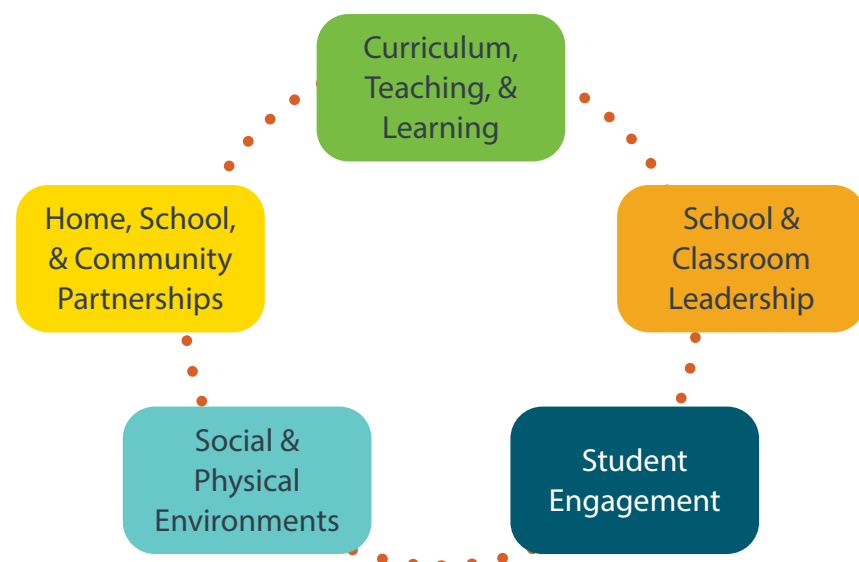
The school community will...

- Provide a place to identify, prioritize and raise awareness about health issues
- Give students, parents/caregivers and school staff an opportunity to work together and impact health and well-being
- Provide more opportunities for student leadership and engagement
- Facilitate better access to community resources



The Five Foundations for a Healthy School

The Ministry of Education recommends the Foundations for a Healthy School Framework to promote and support student well-being in a comprehensive way. This framework incorporates five key areas identified below.



1. **Curriculum Teaching and Learning**
Offering a wide range of opportunities for students to learn, practise and promote positive and healthy behaviours, and to practise how to lead healthy, active lives.
2. **School and Classroom Leadership**
Creating a positive classroom and school environment by identifying shared goals and priorities that are responsive to the needs of the school community.
3. **Student Engagement**
Students feel a sense of belonging at school and are informed, engaged and empowered to participate in and lead academic and non-academic activities.
4. **Social and Physical Environments**
Includes school-led initiatives that support learning and contribute to the positive cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development of students.
5. **Home, School and Community Partnerships**
Engages parents/caregivers, school staff, organizations such as public health, social services, parks and recreation, and local businesses and community groups to help address the school's specific health topic(s).

What Does a Healthy Schools Committee Do?

A Healthy Schools Committee can play an important role in strengthening the health and well-being of your school community.

A Healthy Schools Committee

- Creates a vision and goal(s) for student well-being
- Assesses the strengths and identifies areas for improving the health of the school community
- Oversees the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of health-related activities
- Connects with other school committees as needed to collaborate on school activities (e.g. school improvement teams, Eco-Schools)
- Organizes recognition and celebration events in relation to wellness achievements

The committee should include representation from the whole school community: school staff and administrators, a variety of students, parents/caregivers and community members. It can be a new committee, or an existing committee such as a Safe, Caring and Inclusive Committee, Eco-Schools, wellness committee, etc.



Roles and Responsibilities of the Healthy Schools Committee

A Healthy Schools Champion/Leader

- Is enthusiastic about improving the health of the school community
- Is a role model for healthy behaviour
- Is someone who is in the school regularly such as a teacher, parent/caregiver, administrator, child and youth worker, or a community coordinator
- Is committed to the Healthy Schools approach and process
- Advocates for a Healthy Schools environment
- Is the contact person for all Healthy Schools related events, issues and inquiries
- Will be supported by a Public Health Nurse from the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit

A Healthy Schools Committee Member

- Is enthusiastic about improving the health of the school community
- Is a role model for healthy behaviour
- Is a member of the school community such as a school staff, parent/caregiver, administrator or student
- Attends regular meetings and planned Healthy Schools activities
- Works as part of a team to plan and carry out a Healthy Schools initiatives

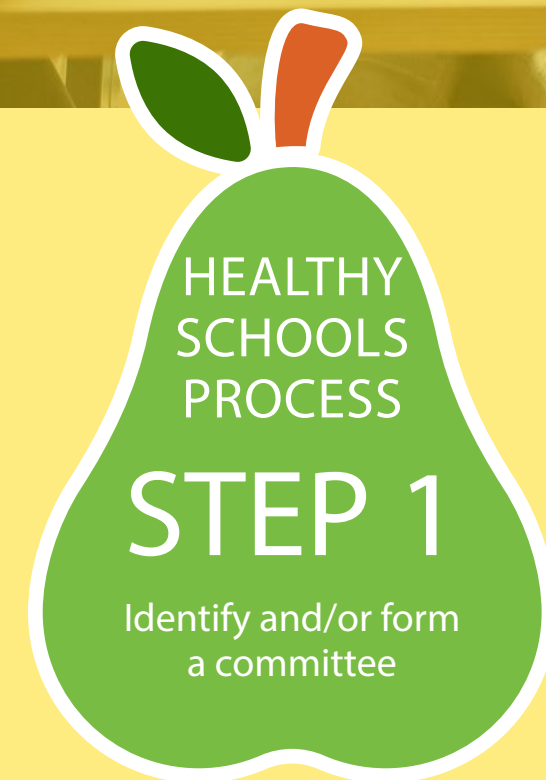
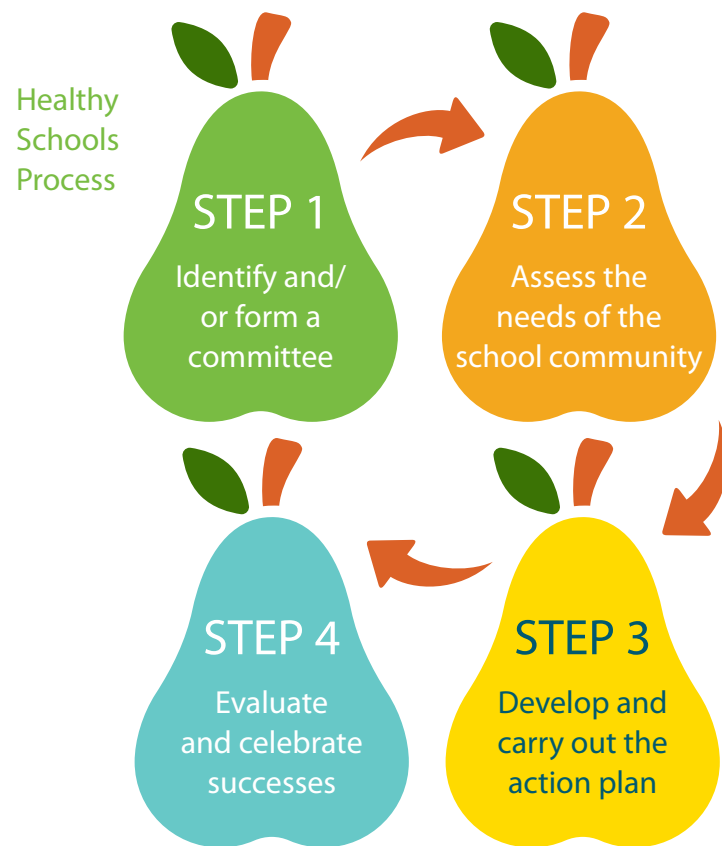
A Healthy School Public Health Nurse

- Builds relationships with the school community (staff, students, families and community groups)
- Supports the Healthy Schools Committee in planning out their school initiatives



HOW YOU CAN HELP


- Join your Healthy School Committee and be part of the change
- Take part in regular meetings and share your ideas
- Volunteer to chair a committee meeting, take notes, lead an action plan activity or collect surveys and evaluations
- Recruit other members to join your committee
- Spread the word about your committee and all of the great things you are doing

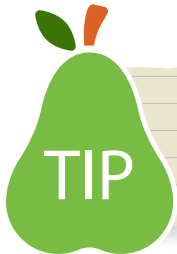


GOALS

- Raise awareness of the benefits of becoming a Healthy School
- Motivate the school community to support Healthy Schools
- Recruit school community members for the Healthy Schools Committee

Part A: Determine the Level of Interest and Commitment

- Consult with your principal to discuss Healthy Schools and determine if the timing is right
- Contact your Public Health Nurse for support
- Develop a plan to inform and educate the school community about Healthy Schools 
- Mobilize and empower students by explaining how they can have a voice in school decisions













Gaining support from school administration is key to achieving a school-wide commitment.

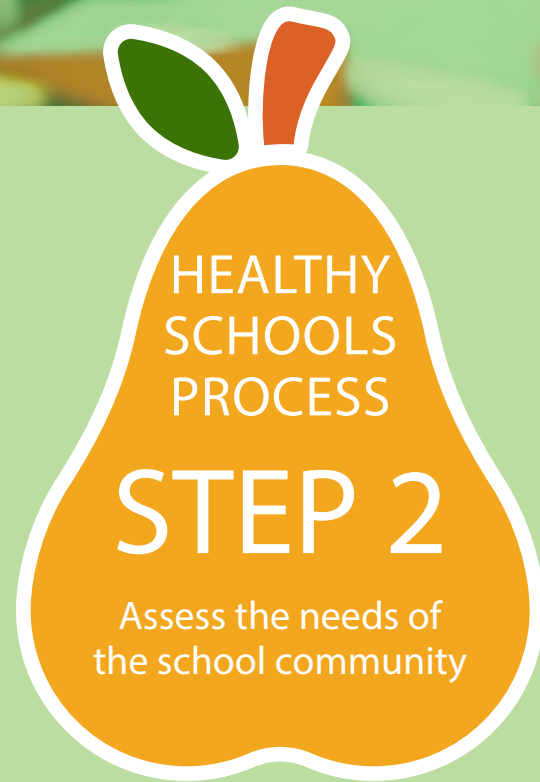
✓ Checklist for STEP 1

- Educate the school community about the Healthy Schools approach
- Communicate with key school community members about Healthy Schools
- Form a diverse Healthy Schools Committee representing the whole school community
- Conduct the first Healthy Schools Committee meeting
- Establish a general vision of what a Healthy School looks like
- Determine readiness to move to **STEP 2**



Part B: Form a Healthy Schools Committee

- Promote the committee and invite interested school members to get involved   
- Your Healthy Schools Committee may be a sub-committee of the School Council or of another existing committee
- Recruit a diverse group that includes staff, students, parents/caregivers, administrators and community members 
- Organize the first Healthy Schools Committee meeting   
- Discuss and decide on roles and responsibilities of committee members and how to work together   
- Decide on a name for your committee such as Healthy Champs, Snack Attack, Health Squad. Consider having a contest to decide on a name or logo for you committee
- Discuss the general vision of a Healthy School

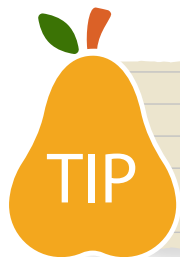


GOALS

- Identify the strengths, needs, interests and health of the school community by providing a survey for staff, students and parents/caregivers
- Review and discuss the results and identify priority areas for action

Part A: Survey your School Community

- Review your School Climate survey data
- Develop a survey or adapt an existing one for students, staff, parents/caregivers to identify the current health status of your school
- Inform the school community that the committee will be conducting a survey and encourage their participation
- Create a Healthy Schools suggestion box, place the box in a central location and encourage the school community to voice concerns and ideas throughout the school year
- Survey your school community every two years



There are different ways to do surveys. Consider paper, hands-up, email, focus groups and electronic tools like [surveymonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com)

Part B: Share your Results and Establish your School's Vision and Prioritize Health Topic(s)

- Examine the results of the survey and determine the current strengths, needs and challenges
- Communicate results of the survey to your school
- Based on your vision in STEP 1 and survey results, prioritize the most important health goals your school can realistically commit to over the school year; it is okay to start small as many small changes can add up to big successes!



✓ Checklist for STEP 2

- Complete surveys for:
 - Parents/caregivers
 - Staff
 - Students
- Review and discuss the results of your surveys and any school data
- Establish priority areas for your school
- Communicate the results and priority areas with the school community
- Determine if your committee is ready to move to **STEP 3**

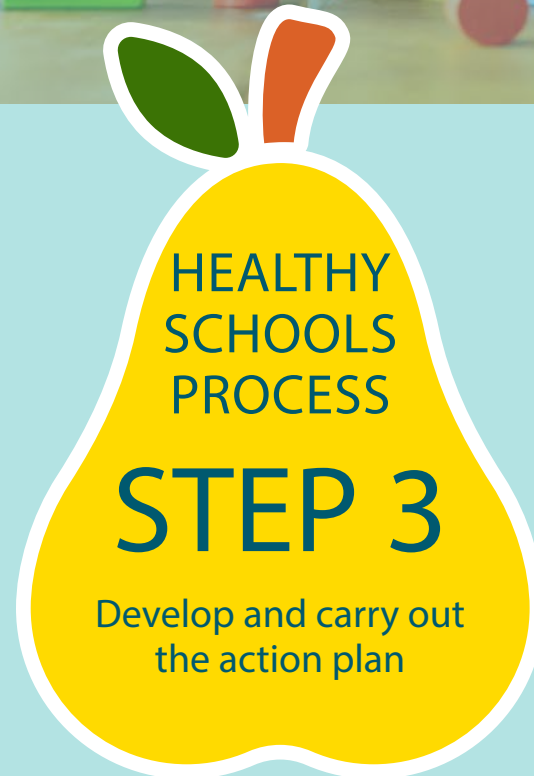


Keep a record of all the suggestions that you are not using this year for the next year.



By identifying your school health goals, your committee will be able to consider:

- Activities the school will enjoy participating in
- The vision of staff, students, parents/caregivers
- The most important health priorities in your school



GOALS

- Develop an action plan to direct actions and activities of the Healthy Schools Committee based on the health priorities identified
- Carry out your Healthy Schools action plan activities in the school

Part A: Develop the Action Plan

- Brainstorm and choose activities for your priority areas – start small and plan easy to accomplish activities:
 - What do we hope to achieve?
 - Who is the activity intended for?
 - What resources are needed?
 - When will the activity be carried out?
 - Who is responsible for planning and carrying out the activity? (Assign tasks).
- Address all Five Foundations for a Healthy Schools:
 - Curriculum Teaching and Learning
 - School and Classroom Leadership
 - Student Engagement
 - Social and Physical Environments
 - Home, School and Community Partnerships
- Develop goals for the chosen activities 
- Transfer your goals and activities to the action plan
- Ask yourself: How will we know if we have met our goals?
- Speak with others in your school community before you begin to carry out activities to ensure there will be adequate support to complete them
- Work with your Healthy School Student Committee to develop and promote activities related to your action plan

✓ Checklist for STEP 3


- Develop goals for health topic(s) and select appropriate activities
- Develop an action plan addressing all Five Foundations for a Healthy School
- Communicate and promote the action plan with school community members
- Start working on the activities according to the action plan
- Review action plan progress and revise as needed
- Carry out the Healthy Schools action plan and activities
- Determine if the committee is ready to move to **STEP 4**

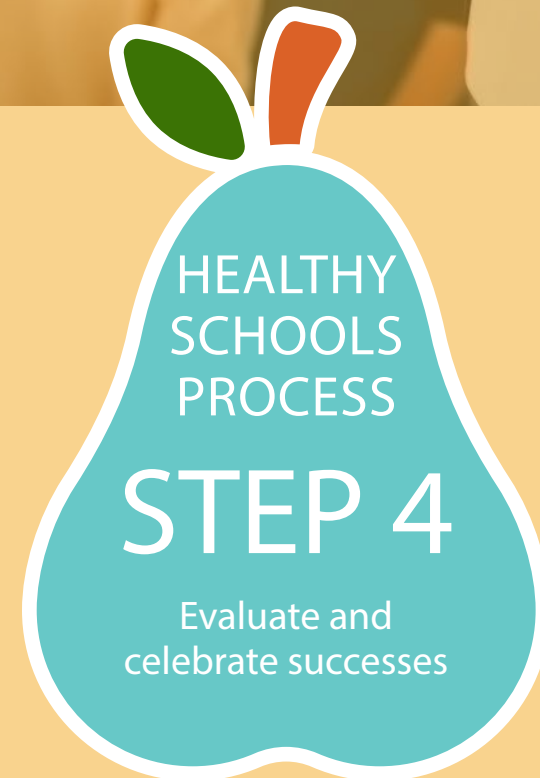


Action plans may not always go as planned. Don't be discouraged. Learn from any challenges that arise and be prepared to adjust your plan.

Part B: Carry out the Action Plan

Share and promote your action plan activities with the school community. For example, you may choose to:

- Post a Healthy Schools challenge pledge or mission statement where everyone in the school can see it
- Send regular updates to parents and community partners to keep them informed of the Healthy Schools activities
- Host a Healthy Schools kick-off assembly for parents and community partners to see what your school will be doing to support health
- Invite students to be actively involved in planning and carrying out the Healthy Schools activities
- Ensure school staff, students, parents/caregivers and community partners are equipped to implement activities effectively
- Review progress by discussing problems with certain activities, revision of timelines, communication issues or new resources
- Prepare a participant evaluation and conduct it immediately after each activity 





GOALS

- Review, evaluate, and celebrate your Healthy Schools activities


Part A: Evaluate

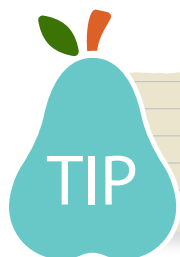
- As you complete each activity of your action plan, evaluate what worked well and what didn't. Add this information to the action plan.
- Evaluation is key for identifying activities that were worthwhile, new ideas, challenges and problems to avoid in the future.

Evaluation Areas to Consider:

- The steps in the Healthy Schools process: Were you able to complete them all? 
- The school community: Did the school enjoy the activities? Is there a difference in the health status of the school?
- The action plan: Have you met your activity goals you planned?
- The Healthy Schools Committee: How effective was the committee? 
- Discuss and reflect on successes and challenges: Identify and reflect on achievements, areas to reconsider and any new or emerging needs
- Look for and record any changes within the school that may be a result of your activities and record them as successes on your committee's Healthy Schools action plan.

Part B: Plan for Next Year

- Discuss any changes that may affect next year's activities
- Set a date and plan the agenda for next year's first meeting
- Discuss next year's Healthy Schools action plan – include activities you did not complete this year and identify new ideas 



TIP

Consider surveys, focus groups and interviews to evaluate your activities.

✓ Checklist for STEP 4




- Determine if you have met your activity goals
- Confirm completion of the steps in the Healthy Schools process
- Complete the Healthy School Committee year-end evaluation
- Gather feedback from:
 - Parents/caregivers
 - Staff
 - Students
- Plan for next year's Healthy School Committee and activities
- Communicate achievements with the school community
- Celebrate with the committee and the entire school community



TIP

Celebrating the hard work of the school community will encourage support for your Healthy Schools Committee in the future and provide a chance to highlight the school's successes.

Part C: Celebrate Successes

- Provide opportunities for the school to hear about completed activities
- Share successes with students and staff through a newsletter or announcement 
- Acknowledge and celebrate the efforts of the Healthy Schools Committee and the whole school community to strengthen school-wide support and commitment 
- Plan a year-end celebration for the committee and for the whole school – check out the tip sheet for healthy celebration ideas 



HEALTHY
SCHOOLS
PROCESS

TOOLS

