

Getting Students, Staff, and Parents Active: Promising Practices

Who Should Lead?

Identify a Lead Teacher – 1 to 2 people who will be committed to the group, the philosophy, and the development of a wellness team and the implementation of comprehensive school health.

Who Should Be Involved?

The Principal and Vice Principal need to be invested in the group. The rest of the staff, the school nurse, and parents and interested students should also be included so they can support the Wellness Team and its initiatives.

What is the Time Commitment for the Teacher Leader?

- 1 meeting a week with the team
- 2-3 additional hours/week (events, clubs etc)
- 30 minutes/week planning the meeting
- Large events (i.e. health fair) are an additional 2-3 meetings/week.

Assessments:

Assess needs, provide direction and define practices and programs that will positively influence school health.

- Health Assessment Tool for Schools (HATS)
- Joint Consortium For School health too (JCSH)

Identify your School's Existing Strengths

What does your school do well? i.e. an established leadership team, interest in lunch hour sports.

Identify School Needs

Do a needs assessment to identify areas of weakness. i.e. healthier food in the cafeteria, positive social environment

Create an Action Plan

- Set SMART goals (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time oriented)
- Budget
- Identify links to the Curriculum

Starting a Wellness Team

- 1 Adapt an already existing group such as a Student Leadership group to include Health and Wellness
- 2 Have students write a letter or fill out an application
- 3 Have students create a name for their wellness team.

Implement

- Share with the School and Community
- Plan a Launch Day
- Communicate with the group and community about each event
- Track Progress and make necessary changes

Evaluate

- Were the goals met?
- Does anything need to change?
- Are you successfully implementing Comprehensive School Health?
- **Celebrate Achievements!**
- What next? Look back at your action plan



How to Get Teachers Invested

- 1 Focus a PD day on Health and Wellness with sessions on Nutrition, and Managing Stress, and physical activity
- 2 Have Active Staff Meetings – Introduce activities, yoga, or games into the staff meetings and parent council meetings.
- 3 Provide healthy snacks at meetings.
- 4 Have staff sign up as a team for a local 5km run/walk.

School Events & Activities

Clubs

Student Wellness Team-led clubs (with teacher supervision), examples include Yoga, Running, Dance, and Sports.

Hallway Hustle

For 10 minutes at the beginning of the day, play music over the intercom while students dance in the hallways.

Fresh Fruit Friday

Bring in fresh fruit for the students to try. Provide an interesting fact, and some nutritional information. i.e. kiwis, mango, blackberries.

Intramurals

Student organized/lead games in the gym during lunchtime.

Bananas For Brains

Hand out “Bananas for brains” to all students. Banana’s are nutritious and help you learn.

Run/Walk Challenge

Challenge students to see how many times they can run/walk around the school field in the 30 minutes before class starts. Hand out popsicle sticks for each lap. Hold the competition for 1 week. The homeroom with the most popsicle sticks at the end wins a prize (i.e. sports equipment, a party).

FIT Fridays

First thing Friday Mornings, wellness team members go around to the homerooms and lead an activity while music plays over the intercom. i.e. dancing, limbo, YMCA, hot potato...

Girl Power

Girls group to focus on self-esteem, resilience, and body image.

School Events & Activities Continued

SPARK by John J. Ratey

- 30 minutes of individual activity at the start of class
- Based on the positive connection between exercise and academic performance
- Benefits behavior, grades, attention span and physical health of students

SPARK Gala

- Student's host an evening to showcase Spark to their parents
- 3, 10-minute presentations on Health (i.e. sugar, daily activity, healthy snacks)
- 3, 10-minute exercise sessions

Tip of the Week

Members of the student wellness team announce a Health Tip of the Week every Monday over the intercom. These tips can be about physical activity, healthy snacks, positive affirmations etc....

Anti Bullying

Have the students make anti-bullying posters to put up on the classroom doors. Include information about cyber bullying.

Fresh Challenge Friday

On Fridays, challenge students to bring fresh fruits and vegetables in their lunch. Have members from the student wellness teams go to each classroom to tally up how many pieces of fresh fruit and vegetables were brought. The homeroom with the most points wins a piece of sporting equipment for the classroom.

Walk or Wheel Wednesday

One day a month or a week, encourage families to walk or wheel to school. Walking School Buses can be arranged with two or more families walking the same route to school. Help break the habit of driving, make the school grounds and surrounding area safer, all while getting the whole family active. [www.saferoutestoschool.ca]

Student Created DPA Activities

Split students into small groups and give each group a piece of equipment (i.e.

Top Reasons Not to do a Health Fair

Health Fairs have become very trendy. Many schools are spending their time and money on these one-day events. While they may be effective in exposing the students to health and wellness, Health Fairs are not the answer for long-term change. At Be Fit For Life we want to focus on bringing in **Sustainable Change**.

The Cost of Health Fairs

Health Fairs can cost schools a lot of time and money. They are not always an effective use of resources, especially if your resources are limited

MONEY

- Health Fairs can be costly.
- Keynote speakers can be expensive.
- Presenters for sessions can cost hundreds of dollars

Additional costs include:

- Lunch and Gifts for speakers and presenters.
- Printing of programs, registration, posters.

TIME

- Additional Meetings with Student Wellness Team.
- Additional daytime, evenings and weekends.
- Preparation of program, scheduling presenters, organizing registration process.
- Sorting Registration and making attendance sheets.
- A day away from regular curriculum.



Instead of a Health Fair

- 1 Spread your resources throughout the year.
- 2 Empower students: Have them decide on events, initiatives and lead activities
- 3 Implement Promising Practices

Time Comparison

Three 30 minute meetings a week for 1 month leading up to a health fair
= **360 minutes in planning**

5 minute energizers, 72 times a year
= **360 minutes**