

LIVING HEALTHY

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APRIL, 2009

WESTERN SCHOOL DISTRICT

ACTIVE SCHOOL PLAYGROUNDS

Over the past two years, there has been a huge effort aimed at reversing the alarming rise in serious health concerns among the children of Newfoundland and Labrador. Schools have made great strides in establishing environments that encourage healthy, active living. To continue with the promotion of student wellness, Western Health, Labrador-Grenfell Health, and the Western School District have partnered to offer a new initiative to K – 6 schools, *Active School Playgrounds*. An active school playground will help students:

- Become physically active every day
- Return to classes ready to learn
- Become independent and creative in directing their own play activity
- Cooperate better with their peers
- Demonstrate less aggressive behavior on the playground
- Develop leadership skills
- Have fun and participate!

Principals are invited to send an interested individual to a half-day regional training session. This person would need to be a leader in the school who is capable of implementing this initiative upon returning to their school. A physical education teacher would be ideal as much of the training session will be related to playground activities and resources. These activities could be demonstrated to students in the physical education class and then played outside before class, during recess and lunch, and after school. Those schools that choose to get involved must agree to promote and implement an active schools playground in 2009.

Each participating school will receive a \$300 playground kit containing resources that can be used to get students active, i.e. skipping ropes, basketballs, flying discs, soccer balls, bean bags, playground balls, hacky sacs, and more. In addition, playground stencils will be available to schools to spray paint or mark school playgrounds to make them more attractive for active play (i.e. hopscotch, four square, target circles, playground math calculator, and maps of Canada and the world).

Training sessions will be held at several locations throughout the Western School District. Depending on the enrollment of schools, tentative sites and dates include:

E.A. Butler, McKays	Thursday May 7
Pasadena Elementary	Tuesday May 12
Viking Trail, Plum Point	Tuesday May 19
Town Hall, L'Anse au Loup	Thursday May 21

It was hoped initially to be able to cover the costs of travel and substitute teachers for this, but the major application for funding was not accepted this year, so this will not be possible. Schools will have to assume responsibility for travel costs to the regional site. (In most cases, this will only be an hour's drive.) Schools will also need to make its own substitute arrangements for teachers to attend. All available funds are going into supplying the best possible resources for students. If you cannot attend because of this arrangement, please contact me to see if something else can be worked out.

If your school would like to participate, complete the [Registration Form in schools](#) and e-mail or fax to me by **FRIDAY, APRIL 24.** We look forward to seeing you there. Here is draft of the afternoon agenda:

1:00	Active School Playgrounds: A Rationale and Guide to Implementation
1:15	Playground Games and Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Tag and Other Chase Games- Wall Games- Skipping
2:00	Preparing the Playground Area
2:15	Playground Games and Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Asphalt Games- Hopscotch- Field Activities
3:00	Student Leadership
3:15	Field Activities, Winter Games, and Special Equipment Days
4:00	Safety First and Playground Rules
4:15	Playground Equipment Kits

HEALTH PROMOTING SCHOOL AWARD

Western and Labrador-Grenfell Health and the Western School District would like to recognize schools that have made great strides in providing healthier learning environments for their students. Criteria have been established to guide schools in their efforts. The criteria have three components:

- Healthy Learning Environment
- Supportive Social Environment
- Nutritious Environment.

For schools that are successful in meeting the criteria this year, recognition will be given at the principals' meeting in May. To date, three schools have submitted their forms for this award: St. James Elementary, Lourdes Elementary, and Holy Cross All Grade. If you would like your school to be recognized for its efforts, please print the criteria [The Health Promoting Schools Award](#) and give to your Living Healthy School Team or Safe and Caring School Committee. **Submit this form by April 30** to Bill Allan at the Western School District Office. Good luck with your efforts!

STEPPING OUT

Our Stepping Out activity for February was Jump Rope for Heart. Students could skip before school, at recess, or at lunch. For March, the activity was Dance 'Til Your Heart's Content. **If your school participated in either of these Stepping Out activities, email me by April 8** at bill.allan@wnlsd.ca to let me know so I can put your name in the hat for the monthly draws for February and March.

The Stepping Out activity for April is the **Walk Across Newfoundland Challenge**. Students will be challenged to walk from St. John's to Port Basques, a distance of 9090 km. (Smaller schools may select a shorter distance. Larger schools may increase their distance and go across Canada or to the moon.) A teacher needs to determine a one-kilometer distance in the gym or near school that students can walk safely. Some Physical Education teachers have begun their classes with a 5 - 7 minute run, totaled up the number of laps run, and converted the laps into kilometers per class. Other schools have had their students go for a walk before class in the morning. Track their progress on a map.

SMOKERS' HELPLINE CARE PROGRAM

The Smokers' Helpline is a free, confidential telephone-based service right here in Newfoundland and Labrador. CARE stands for Community Action and Referral Effort and is a proactive way to help smokers quit. How does CARE work?

1. ASK if the student would like the Smokers' Helpline to contact them to help them quit smoking.
2. ADVISE the student to complete the brief CARE referral form.
3. REFER the form to the SHL secure fax line at 709-726-2550. Clients will be contacted by a counselor within 72 hours of the Helpline receiving the fax.

If your school has not received the full CARE kit and referral pad, please call the Smokers' Helpline to receive one free of charge at 1-800-363-5864 or check the web site at <http://www.smokershelpline.ca> This is a great way to help those students who are struggling with the smoking addiction – a simple referral to help them quit.

FRUIT AND VEGGIE CHALLENGE

The Heart and Stroke Foundation and the Janeway Lifestyle Program have joined forces to offer a challenge to all Grade 4 students and parents/ guardians in the province to eat their recommended servings of fruits and vegetables (based on the Canada Food Guide). Students are asked to choose one day before April 29 to track their servings of fruits and vegetables. To be eligible for prizes, students must complete the forms that were sent to schools previously and forward to the Heart and Stroke Foundation by May 6. Good luck with the challenge!

If you need help with the Healthy Students Healthy Schools initiative, please contact:

Bill Allan

School Health Promotion Consultant

P.O. Box 368, Corner Brook, NL

Tel: (709) 637-4021

E-mail: bill.allan@wnlsd.ca