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**ML** MIDDLESEX-LONDON  
HEALTH UNIT

# Physical Activity and Health Promotion In Secondary Schools



**HEALTHY  
SCHOOLS  
MATTER**  
GET INVOLVED



In Ontario, Public Health's Mandate is to work with local school boards, and school communities to assist in the development of healthy children and youth through a comprehensive approach. Similarly, the Ministry of Education has developed a healthy schools initiative using the Foundations for a Healthy School Document.

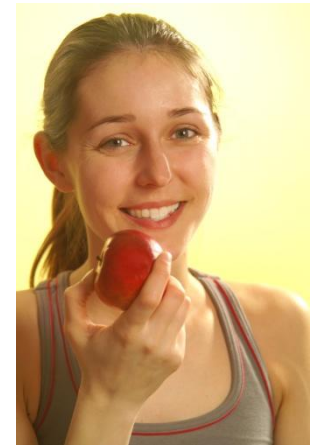
School based interventions to promote healthy eating and physical activity, to prevent injuries and to promote mental health were most likely to be effective. Those aiming to prevent substance misuse or to promote safe sex or oral hygiene were the least effective.

Interventions that involved families were more likely to be successful than those that did not.

(WHO, Health Evidence Network, March 2006)

Most healthy eating and physical activity programmes were effective with greater benefits being observed in girls and older students.

Peer-led interventions were very effective for young women, especially in terms of healthy eating.



(WHO, Health Evidence Network, March 2006)

The odds of feeling disconnected from one's school were higher in female students who engaged in no physical activity.

It is likely that efforts to promote physical activity in the school setting should do so in a manner that simultaneously attempts to enhance students' connections to school.

In conclusion, increasing school connectedness should be a consideration for health promotion activities.

(School Disconnectedness: Identifying Adolescents at Risk in Ontario, Canada. Journal of School Health, July 2009)

## Foundations for a Healthy School - Framework used by MLHU School Teams.

### **High-Quality Instructions and Programs:**

- Provide resources to Physical Education teachers
- Teach classes on Nutrition and Physical activity upon request
- Engage students in Physical Activity through the use of pedometers.
- Promote Walking Trails
- Geocaching ([www.geocaching.com](http://www.geocaching.com))

## A Healthy Physical Environment:

- Assist with purchasing Wii Systems for Developmental Classes.
- Assist in promotion of intramurals at lunch. (Dodge ball, Ping Pong, Obstacle Courses)
- Provide alternative physical activities during lunch hours – Dance Dance Revolution, Hula Hoop Contests, Table Top Tennis, Mini Put, Stacking Cups.
- Health Walls on Nutrition and Physical Activity
- Assess foods and menus in School Cafeterias
- Support Breakfast Programs



## A Supportive Social Environment:

- Food in our Schools Nutrition Policy for LDCSB and Independent Procedure for TVDSB
- Policy development around not using the removal of students from physical education classes or recess as a form of punishment
- Student-led activities - students run intramurals.
- Healthy School Committees involved in health promotion in school.
- Cancer Campaigns
- Healthy Lifestyle and Nutrition counselling



## Community Partnerships:

- Invite yoga, Nia instructors to school.
- Advocate for subsidies with YMCA and City of London.
- Promote Community events involving Physical Activity to school population
- Use pool vouchers and free gym passes as prizes in events.
- New Era Girls program at Mother Teresa for Grade 9 girls (addresses body image, commitment to physical fitness, social skills development, self-confidence)

