

Featuring: Annual Report from the School Health Knowledge Network

Apologies for our absence in the last month, we were very busy with our national conference and related international events. This is the last report for this school year. The list will resume in September.

SECTION 1: WHAT'S NEW?

The **Alberta Healthy School Community Wellness Fund** will fund projects that promote healthy school communities. There will be two categories of funding including grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$50,000 for larger projects that have the potential to be continued for up to three years and grants for up to \$10,000 for smaller school community projects and specific components of larger projects.

Federal Health Minister Meets with Cancer Partnership. The Canadian Partnership Against Cancer brings together key players to benefit from work they are carrying out in primary prevention; screening/early detection; surveillance; diagnostic and treatment standards; clinical practice guidelines; research; health human resources; and patient-centred care.

Inuit Health Plan. The federal Health Minister, Tony Clement and Mary Simon, President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) agreed to a joint workplan developed by a newly formed Health Canada /ITK Task Group that aims to improve Inuit health. The Task Group will explore and develop approaches in areas of mutual interest for improving Inuit health.

The joint work plan will focus on four key areas: implementation of an Office of Inuit Health at Health Canada to better address Inuit specific health issues; cross-jurisdictional collaboration; quality of and access to health services; and exploring approaches for strengthening Inuit data sharing and infrastructure, information and research through partnerships at the regional and national levels. The activities identified in the workplan, including position papers and jointly developed strategies and options, are expected to be completed in the fall 2007. The Task Group, which will report directly to the Minister of Health and the President of ITK, will report on progress and outcomes at

RESEARCH, REPORTS & SCHOOL HEALTH KNOWLEDGE

References on Learning and Health/Social Development

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the end of its mandate in September 2007.

Social and Emotional Health

"Youth Risk Taking Behavior: The Role of Schools." (UCLA Center on Mental Health) covers (1) What Schools Do with Respect to Risk Taking Behavior, (2) Concerns about Current Approaches, (3) What Should Schools do - including recommendations for School Policy and Planning.
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/policyissues/risktaking.pdf>

Social and School Connectedness in Early Secondary School as Predictors of Late Teenage Substance Use, Mental Health, and Academic Outcomes (Bond, L. et al, Journal of Adolescent Health, April 2007).

The ASCD has released a new document called The Learning Compact Redefined: A Call to Action, about the importance of educating "the whole child," preparing children for the world they will enter in adulthood. See www.ascd.org.

Nutrition and Schools

"Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide - First Nations, Inuit and Métis" is a food guide tailored to reflect traditions and food choices of First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and is a complement to the 2007 Canada's Food Guide. It recognizes the importance of traditional and store-bought foods for First Nations, Inuit and Métis today.

Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools: Leading the Way Toward Healthier Youth (April 2007, Institute of Medicine) The IOM report lays out guiding principles to support the creation of healthful eating environments for U.S. school children.

CREATE supports South Australian schools to plan, implement and review healthy eating activities, particularly in relation to increasing healthy food choices in their school. A whole school approach to healthy eating addresses the curriculum, the wider school environment and strengthening links with families and local agencies. Several key elements include: a selection of healthier products for food service in schools; school food service surveys; and more.

New resource for primary schools: 'TV food ads: Educate and Advocate' produced by the Centre for Health Promotion, Children Youth and Women's Health Service, Adelaide, in collaboration with teachers and the Coalition

Educational, Planning, Policy and Assessment Resources
School Shootings: Excerpt from the email list of Center for Mental Health in Schools, UCLA Dept. of Psychology, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1563

Clearly, the tragedy at Virginia Tech is raising many issues. All the media, personal, and professional discussions are causing many to reflect and hopefully plan for the future. One immediate focus naturally is on the grief of those who lost friends and relatives. For addressing these concerns, you can access a great deal through our website (<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>). Here are some examples.

After every school shooting, we are asked about how schools should assess students who may be a threat. For a brief info resource on ASSESSING WHETHER A STUDENT MIGHT COMMIT A VIOLENT ACT - see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/shootings.pdf>

Also see these resources from the UCLA Center:

- Crisis Prevention and Response – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/p2107_01.htm
- Depression – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/depression.htm>
- Grief and Bereavement – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/p3003_01.htm
- Post-traumatic Stress – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/ptsd.htm>
- Prevention for Students at Risk – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/prevention.html>
- Safe Schools and Violence Prevention – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/p2108_03.htm
- Threat Assessment: Resources and Cautions – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/threatassessment.html>
Web: <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>

The American Public Health Association has these items related to emergency preparedness: Preparedness and Public Health Threats (Fact Sheet) and How Prepared Are You (Checklist).

The Center for Health and Health care in Schools (CHHCS) has published a guide for schools on Emergency Preparedness: A Quick Guide for School Staff

- Practical Information on Crisis Planning: A Guide for Schools and Communities, was produced by the U.S. Department of Education and the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools to help schools, school districts and communities plan for natural and manmade disasters. The guide includes information to help identify when an event is a crisis, a checklist for preparing and managing a crisis and school planning guides.

on Food Advertising to Children.

The document is available at
<http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/emergencyplan/crisisplanning.pdf>

FEATURE ARTICLE

Canadian School Health Knowledge Network Annual Report and Plan for 2007-08

Introduction

The Canadian School Health (CSH) Knowledge Network brings together school districts, health authorities and other local agencies with national organizations representing practitioners, researchers and government officials to exchange information and knowledge about school-based and school-linked health promotion and social development. The essential mission of the network is to connect staff in local agencies with an array of Canadian and international knowledge resources.

The Canadian Association for School Health is pleased to act as facilitator for the CSH Knowledge Network and gratefully acknowledges the support we receive from the Canadian Council of Learning, through its Knowledge Centre on Health & Learning based at the University of Victoria. Other sources of funding include Health Canada, the Public Health Agency of Canada, Canadian Population Health Initiative, Canadian Institutes for Health Research, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, other federal departments and foundations.

Accomplishments in 2006-07

We are pleased to report on progress in several fronts, including:

- Over 45 national organizations concerned with school health have revised the 1990 Consensus Statement on Comprehensive School Health that has defined and described a comprehensive approach to school health promotion. Over 30 of these organizations have formally endorsed the 2007 CSH statement thus far and we expect the process of ratification to be completed by the remaining groups by December 2007.
- The statement will frame the collective efforts of these 45 national organizations that have met several times in 2006-07 through the Canadian School Health NGO Network. Cooperative work this year included the development of the statement, a forum on dissemination strategies and a joint news release.
- The 33 researchers who have formed the School Health Research Network have confirmed the SH research agenda developed last year in an international seminar, completed eight literature reviews on different aspects of school health, held four webinars on research projects, cooperated in three applications for research funding (two of which were successful) and begun a wiki-bibliography in the evidence in school health promotion.
- Work has begun on a position paper on school health indicators. This paper will be the subject of broadly-based consultations in 2007-08 as well as several international webinars. Other papers next year will include a report card on school health in Canada and a framework for reporting on health literacy in school-age children.
- The library of over 7000 documents has been retrieved and updating and digitization of these resources has started at the Canadian School Health Centre at the University of Victoria. Next year, we will be publishing analyses and syntheses of these materials and will seek funding

for listings of evaluated programs.

- A national teachers magazine, Health & Learning, published by the Canadian Teachers Federation and regular insert in the journal of the Canadian Public Health Association has brought regular, print-based communications to all schools and most public health programs working with schools.
- We have used email to publish 10 issues of the School Health Report that provides links to new research and resources as well as providing mini-scans of materials on school health topics. We are also experimenting with a school health blog that can provide a vehicle for contributions from several authors and contributors.
- Pilot-testing with webinars has confirmed our excitement about this new form of knowledge exchange. CASH has secured funding for an extensive program of webinars with funding from several sources for next year. We are currently consulting provincial/territorial and national organizations to offer them an opportunity to participate. We look forward to a continuing partnership with the associations representing school superintendents across the country.
- The collaborative web site www.safehealthyschools.org is becoming part of a ring of over 25 web sites that are publishing school health materials. This web site is one of the largest SH web sites in the world with many resources including lesson plans, webquests, links to planning and evaluation guides and more.
- We have also received funding for a full-time program assistant to respond to inquiries from the school health contacts now named in all school boards and most health authorities. This person will work out of the Canadian School Health Centre at the University of Victoria. We are in the midst of consulting those local contacts about their information needs.
- We have initiated an informal network of safe schools coordinators employed by provincial/territorial education ministries and connected them with federal officials working on crime prevention, substance abuse, police youth services, racism, mental health and other social problems.
- We have begun to take a facilitative role in helping national organizations, federal departments and research organizations to work together on specific health and social problems. These include projects and multi-organization round tables on topics such as these:
 - a comprehensive project on better practices in substance abuse prevention will enable us to summarize the research evidence, collect sample policies, support a national round table and other activities in cooperation with the provincial-territorial coordinators and the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse
 - a large scale project to gather the experience of local practitioners in promoting safe schools and publish an inventory, matrix of better practices and compendium of better practices
 - several activities led by several organizations will be linked through our efforts in the area of sexual health
 - we have sponsored a meeting with the newly established mental health commission led by Senator Kirby and hold high hopes for specific activities in this area
- We have established a partnership with The Globe & Mail to report on the status of school health policies and programs across Canada. This reporting to the public will be based on a national survey of ministries, local agencies and local schools.
- The third annual school health conference has brought together almost 200 Canadian and international participants on the themes of social development and mental health. Four wiki-

based inventories/work books will be published and distributed as part of this event.

- School-based health promotion was part of an exciting symposium and ongoing initiative to strengthen settings-based health promotion and learning. This activity is in partnership with the Health & Learning Knowledge Centre of the Canadian Council on Learning, the International Union for Health Promotion and Education and several other organizations.

Program for 2007-08

The following priorities and activities will be undertaken in 2007-08:

- Support the work of the national networks of researchers, NGO's, government officials in safe and healthy schools through specific actions and activities listed above.
- Strengthen provincial/territorial school health coalitions in each province or territory through webinars and other activities.
- Provide direct support to school health contacts in local school districts, health authorities and local with the CTF magazine, CPHA journal, webinars, email newsletter, blog and more.
- Use national project funding to create and maintain national roundtables and national "mini-strategies" on specific health and social issues that can be addressed through effective SH promotion programs.
- Redevelop the collaborative web site (www.safehealthyschools.org) to update the information, add interactivity and strengthen existing partnerships with web site partners.
- Organize the fourth annual school health conference in Ottawa in April 2008.
- Publish position papers on school health indicators and health literacy and advocate for their adoption as policy at the federal and provincial/territorial level.
- Publish national reports on the status of school health programs and policies in Canada.
- Collaborate with other organizations to focus attention on the value and effectiveness of settings-based approaches to health and learning.

Knowledge Network Staff and Consultants

We are pleased to identify the several members of our growing team of staff and consultants

- Mary Shannon – Webmaster, Administration
- Erin McCall – Communications and Web Design
 - Maryanne Doherty – Research
 - Dawn Benson – Webinars
 - Gary Roberts – Lead Substance Abuse
 - Roselle Paulsen – Lead Sexual Health
 - Sandra Dean – Lead Crime Prevention & Social Cohesion
 - Cindy Andrew – Partnerships and Projects
 - Douglas McCall - Strategic Direction and Management

*Another person will be engaged to provide direct support to local school health contacts in school boards, health authorities and other local agencies.

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