



HALDIMAND-NORFOLK HEALTH UNIT

SPRING 2018

HEALTHY SCHOOLS

Health is Happening at Teeterville Public

Teeterville may be a small, rural community in the northern end of Norfolk County, but the local elementary school is making big waves when it comes to school health.

Since the 2015-16 school year, Teeterville Public School has brought together administration, teachers, students, parents and public health for their Healthy School Committee. Following a quick assessment of the current strengths and interests of the school community when it comes to health, the group has been implementing a number of programs and initiatives to boost the health of the approximately 200 students and staff.

As a first step, many teachers received training on MindUP, a social-emotional learning program that helps students better understand how their brain works and how to manage their emotions and behaviours. Several classrooms have now incorporated mindful breathing into their regular classroom routines to help students calm their brain and ready themselves to learn.

Last year, the school started the Playground Activity Leaders in Schools (PALS) program. Student volunteers in grades five through seven

received training to become leaders at recess time. These leaders run organized games for other students of all ages to keep them engaged and physically active. Students also participate in weekly, school-wide 'Fitness Fridays' where various physical activities are led in the gym. Finally, for the third year in a row, the school year will end with an all-day Fit-a-Thon!

Healthy School Committee members have tapped into the support in their community to coordinate a local "Fresh from the Farm" fundraiser, utilizing fruits and vegetables from nearby farmers as a healthy way to earn funds for the school. They found it to be a big success.

The school also signed a 'Water Does Wonders' pledge to take steps to promote water as the beverage of choice in their building. Students attended a session on sugar-sweetened beverages and acted as "drink detectives" to learn just how much sugar is in their favourite beverages. Student-made signs were posted throughout the school to encourage drinking more water during the day, and classes created life size cut-

outs of the human body that highlighted why water works.

Teeterville is now implementing You're the Chef, a cooking program designed to help youth develop the skills and confidence necessary to prepare healthy and tasty recipes.

The commitment of Teeterville Public's Healthy School Committee, and the support of the broader school community, are all laying a foundation for greater student success and making the school a healthier place to live, learn and work. Great work Teeterville!



Committee members (l-r): Sabine Murphy (public health nurse), Jennifer Dahl (health promoter), Alex Ryan (Gr. 8 student), Gwen McFarland (Gr. 8 student), Julie Lumax (principal) Absent: Melanie Lambert (parent volunteer)



Have your school featured in our next newsletter!

We'd love to hear about (and share!) the great work happening at your school to promote healthy choices and healthy behaviours among students and staff.

Send highlights and photos of your school's healthy initiatives to josh.daley@hnhu.org before June 28, 2018 and you may see yourself featured in our fall newsletter, sent to all Haldimand and Norfolk elementary schools!

The ABCs of Family Meals

Getting dinner on the table after a day of work or school can be a challenge, but that time spent as a family is valuable. Sharing family meals is a great way to connect, share traditions and learn from each other. Follow the ABCs to make your next family meal a success.

Avoid Distractions - Meals and snacks should be served free from distractions like toys, television, iPads, cell phones and computers. Try a “no phones/electronics at the table” policy so you can focus on each other’s company and enjoy what you’re eating. Use mealtime as an opportunity to catch up on how everyone’s day went.

At the table, try to ask questions that require more than a “yes” or “no” answer. Instead of “Did you have a good day?” try “Tell me something interesting that happened at school today.”

Be a role model - One of the most important things you can do to help your child develop healthy eating and activity habits is to role model those behaviours. If you eat a variety of healthy foods and stay active chances are your child will too.

Choose your words wisely - What you say and how you say it is very important when it comes to talking about healthy eating with your child. Avoid talk about dieting and steer clear of labelling foods as ‘good’ or ‘bad’. Focus the conversation on how healthy living makes us feel good.

If you have concerns about your child’s weight, eating and/or activity habits, speak with your health care provider and/or a dietitian.



Everyone benefits when you eat in the company of others!

Children who eat with their family perform better in school, have a lower risk for being overweight and less risk of developing eating disorders. Children who eat with others also tend to have a decreased intake of sugar-sweetened beverages and increased intake of fruits and vegetables.



Follow Healthy Schools on Twitter!

The Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit’s School Health Team is now on Twitter! Parents, teachers, students and others are encouraged to follow @HNSchoolHealth for the latest news and photos of exciting things happening in local schools, and ideas about ways to make your school community a healthy place to learn and grow.



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