

# HIGH SCHOOL HEALTH MATTERS



2009  
Newsletter for  
Secondary Schools

• with our partners in education

## School Public Health Nurse Consultants

### Brockville Area:



Tawnya Boileau  
613-345-5685

### Kemptville/Prescott Area:



Joanne Desormeaux  
613-345-5685

### Gananoque/Rideau/Athens Area:



Carrie Kasurak  
613-382-4231

### Smiths Falls Area:



Melanie Miedema  
613-283-2740

### Almonte/Carleton Place Area:



Danielle Shewfelt  
613-283-2740

### Perth/Westport Area:



Kelly Munroe  
613-283-2740

## Influenza

We are expecting an unusual influenza season.

This year there will be an influenza vaccine designed to protect the community from Pandemic (H1N1) 2009, that has been circulating around the world. This vaccine is expected to be available later in the Fall. Details about the clinics for the Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 immunization will be posted on the Health Unit website as soon as we confirm delivery dates from the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care.

## OSAID and your school

(Ontario Students Against Impaired Driving)

Several local high schools have active OSAID chapters. Does your school?



OSAID groups are part of a movement across Ontario speaking out against impaired driving. The groups hold creative events and activities that 'drive home' the message that drinking and driving is very dangerous. Some of our local chapters were new last year while others have been actively involved in spreading the message for more than a decade. Community members, including the local Health Unit, Police, Fire, and Ambulance services, support their efforts. Students or faculty members interested in being involved can contact the Health Unit.

## Message for your students:

**If your teeth hurt, and you have no dental coverage, we can help.**

**Free urgent dental care.**

If you have **tooth pain, bleeding gums, cavities or a mouth injury**, the Children in Need of Treatment Program can help.

The program provides **FREE** dental services to teens, age 17 and under, kids and babies who urgently need care, and includes:

- Fillings, extractions and sedation
- Preventive dental care, including cleaning and fluoride
- Dental health support and information

Call the Health Unit today to see if you are eligible at 1-800-660-5853 or 613-345-5685.



# ..... **STAYING INFORMED MATTERS** .....

## The **Go Girls!** Program

Teen girls struggle with body image and self esteem issues and often sacrifice a healthy lifestyle because of some external

or internal pressure related to their self image. The Go Girls! program was designed to increase physical activity and balanced eating, and to build skills to improve self image.



The program is 7-10 weeks, 1.5-2.5 hrs once a week. These sessions involve a small group of grade 7&8 girls with a trained mentor who is slightly older than them (high school or college/ university aged).

The program is interactive and builds relationships and skills in all the topic areas mentioned. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Lanark and of Leeds and Grenville have been working with the Health Unit and the schools to try to expand this program, as our resources allow.

Mentors are the key to implementing this program. If you feel your school has some girls that would be great mentors, and would like to take on this fun and enriching opportunity, please contact Big Brothers Big Sisters directly (Leeds and Grenville: 613-345-0281; Lanark: 613-283-0570) or contact your PHN consultant, as indicated on the front of this newsletter.

## Value Every Kid ... start with their assets!

Developmental Assets represent the relationships, opportunities, and personal qualities that young people need in order to avoid risks. The more assets young people have, the less likely they are to engage in a wide range of high-risk behaviours and the more likely they are to succeed. Parents, schools and the community play an important role in building assets.

### Here are some ways to put the developmental assets into action :

- Be a positive role model in a young person's life.
- Focus on what young people do right instead of what they do wrong.
- Let youth know you are proud of their talents, capabilities and discoveries.
- Encourage youth to take leadership roles in their community.
- Teach young people to be responsible for all of their thoughts, words and actions.
- Help youth practice coping skills when difficult situations arise.

*Search Institute. "Search Institute" www.search-institute.org (May 14, 2009).*

## Working Towards a Healthy School

A "Healthy School" promotes the physical, mental, social and spiritual health of the whole school community and constantly strengthens its capacity as a healthy setting for living, learning and working.

Every school in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark Counties has an assigned Public Health Nurse (PHN) Consultant who will support and assist each school in becoming a "Healthy School". The Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health Promotion created "Foundations for a Healthy School" framework to guide the "Healthy School" process. This framework encourages all stakeholders to ensure that students have high-quality instruction and programs, a healthy physical environment, a supportive social environment and access to health and other needed resources and services through community partnerships.

As part of the "Healthy School" process, PHN Consultants are encouraging schools to develop a "Healthy School Team", which includes the involvement of students, parents, education staff, and community partners, to address health issues such as:

- healthy eating
- physical activity
- bullying prevention
- personal safety and injury prevention
- substance use and abuse
- healthy growth and development
- mental health

To find out who your School PHN Consultant is, please refer to the list on the front page.



## Role Modeling Healthy Behaviours for Your Students

As a teacher, you may have a great influence on a student's health. What you do and say, as well as, how you teach can influence your students positively or negatively.



Here are some tips on how to best address the following topics:

### Modeling a Healthy Body Image and Self-Esteem

- Make positive comments about your accomplishments such as improvements in your strength, endurance, or trying a new food or activity.
- Compliment people on their good qualities and personality traits rather than focusing on physical appearance.

### Modeling Healthy Eating/ Physical Activity

- While teaching, drink milk or water. Eat breakfast, lunch, and nutritious snacks while at school.
- Let students see you being active at school and enjoying it (e.g. walking, running, biking).
- Show that people of all ages and body types can participate in physical activity that is part of a fun, healthy lifestyle. Celebrate what your body can do rather than what you look like.

### Teaching and Role Modeling Healthy Weights

- Teach that there is no ONE body type healthier than another body type. Many factors affect our body shape, including heredity, which we cannot change.
- Role model that weight is not important by not discussing it.

### Teaching about Media Literacy

- Teach students to critique the messages they receive in the media. (e.g. pictures of flawless models are edited to remove wrinkles, blemishes, etc.)
- Address fad diets and their negative impacts on health. (e.g. lack of important nutrients which can cause fatigue and poor growth).

- Have the students bring in magazines. Ask them to rip out the advertisements that suggest ways to change your appearance including: diets, make-up, clothing, body altering, hair, teeth etc. Then discuss how much of the magazine is left and how they feel about their investment.

### Teaching about Eating Disorders

- Avoid teaching about eating disorders and symptoms, as students may glamorize disturbed eating behaviours.

**Note:**

*The Health Unit can provide you with information about resources in the community that students and families can access if there is a suspected eating disorder.*





# YOUR HEALTH MATTERS TOO.....

## Healthy Stress Management

Autumn can be a busy time of year, often accompanied by changes and rising stress levels. Healthy levels of stress are what provide us with the motivation and energy to go about our daily lives; however, too much stress can impact our health negatively. There are many healthy ways to manage stress that help us to feel better and reduce the negative impact of stress on our health.

### Lifestyle Tips for Healthy Stress Management

#### Take some steam off with physical activity

- Physical activity is a great way to relieve stress! Do something you enjoy to get started and keep going.

#### Reduce tension with relaxation techniques

- Try yoga, meditation, progressive muscle relaxation, visualization, deep breathing exercises, or massage.

#### Eat nutritious foods

- Eating healthy foods will make you feel more energized, giving you an extra energy boost!

#### Sleep

- Aim to get enough sleep to feel rested and increase your sense of resiliency.

#### Take your mind off of the stress

- Read a book, watch a movie, listen to music, or take a vacation.

#### Talk to someone you trust

- Find support among friends, relatives, professional counselors, or support groups.

#### Have fun

- Take time regularly to have fun and enjoy life!

For more information, please call the Health Action Line at 1-800-660-5853, or visit Health Canada's website at: <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/iyh-vsv/life-vie/stress-eng.php>



## Evaluate your work-life balance

Take the Health is Cool! Zone Evaluator Test to assess your work-life balance. This test assesses how effectively you balance your work, family, personal, and financial obligations.

Work-life balance is not easy. In fact, the Health is Cool! survey reports that:

- 83% of Canadians have gone to work exhausted or sick on average six (6) times in the last year
- 85% of Canadians say that the work environment is increasingly stressful

To evaluate your work-balance, go to: <http://www.cmha.ca/bins/index.asp> Look for *Work-Life Balance: Make It Your Business, Are you in Balance?* section, and then complete the "Try Our Evaluator" questionnaire for your life balance assessment.

So, take the test! Evaluate your work-life balance! Make changes in your life at work and at home to ease your stress, and improve your health.

If you need further information or assistance, please call the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) at 1-613-345-0950, or go to their website at: <http://www.cmha.ca>

Canadian Mental Health Association and Desjardins Financial Security. "Evaluate your balance." <http://www.cmha.ca/bins/index.asp> (16 March 2009).

