Healthy Schools Guide
Introduction

This Healthy Schools Guide has been developed to assist schools in using a six-step process to implement the Healthy Schools approach within a school community. The guide provides links to resources and templates that will assist at each step of the process. In addition to this guide, consultation and support is available from the Healthy Schools Team at Region of Waterloo Public Health and Emergency Services.

A Healthy School is one that constantly strengthens its capacity as a healthy setting for living, learning and working. (World Health Organization)

What is Healthy Schools?

Healthy Schools is an internationally recognized and evidence-based approach for building healthy school communities. This approach involves the whole school community joining together to share ideas, plan and take action to help children lead healthy, active lives. The term ‘school community’ refers to all administrators, staff, and students at the school as well as each student’s parents/caregivers and family, and individuals from the community surrounding the school. This can include neighbourhood associations, community centres, health care facilities, religious centres, community agencies, local businesses and any other individuals or agencies who have an interest in promoting health and well-being.

Why follow the Healthy Schools approach?

1. Aligns with the key components of Ontario’s Well-Being Strategy for Education that includes fostering and promoting the following:
   - Positive Mental Health
   - Safe and Accepting Schools
   - Healthy Schools
   - Equity and Inclusive Education

2. Helps meet the School Board’s strategic priorities and supports school improvement plans.

3. Following the Healthy Schools approach leads to:
   - improved physical, social and emotional well-being for students and staff
   - enhanced physical, mental, social and spiritual health for the whole school community
   - improved academic achievement for students
What are the benefits to using the Healthy Schools approach?

Using the Healthy Schools approach helps influence and promote well-being within and beyond the classroom. These benefits extend to students, staff, parents and the community at large. Good health supports successful learning and in turn, successful learning supports good health.

Through implementing the Healthy Schools approach and creating a healthy school community, students will:
- acquire the skills necessary to support healthy choices
- gain greater confidence, motivation and self-esteem
- improve their concentration and learning in class
- improve their academic achievement
- be more effective in their interaction with peers
- achieve better school attendance

parents will:
- experience greater opportunities for school involvement
- have the ability to influence decisions and activities in the school
- increase their knowledge of and ability to make healthy choices

the school community will:
- have increased opportunities for collaboration and connection
- experience enhanced physical, mental, social and spiritual health

Healthy Students = Healthy Learners = Brighter Futures!

How is the Healthy Schools approach implemented?

The Healthy Schools approach is implemented using a six-step process (see diagram). This process has been successfully used in schools in Waterloo Region, provincially and nationally.

Public Health has developed a Planning Tool that will help Healthy Schools Committees follow the six-step process. Additionally, Public Health Nurses provide tailored support to each school throughout the six-step process based on each school’s unique assets and needs.

Those who have been involved in the Ophea Healthy Schools Certification will notice that this six-step process aligns with the Ophea process. Following the Healthy Schools approach may help in achieving Ophea Healthy Schools Certification!
Ministry of Education’s Foundations for a Healthy School

The aim of the Ministry of Education’s Foundations for a Healthy School is to help contribute to a learning environment that promotes and supports child and student well-being. The model includes five interconnected areas that go beyond a sole focus on academic success to also consider the cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development of the child and student. A comprehensive school health approach involves implementing activities in each of the five areas and engages students, school staff, parents, and the broader school community, resulting in a strong commitment to building a healthy school.

The planning tool developed by Public Health supports schools to identify actions under each of the five areas, detailed below, that contribute to a Healthy School.

The Five Interconnected Areas for a Healthy School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>How the area is connected to a healthy school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum, Teaching and Learning</td>
<td>“Curriculum, teaching and learning is an area that offers a wide range of opportunities for students to learn, practise and promote positive and healthy behaviours, and to practise how to lead healthy, active lives.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School and Classroom Leadership</td>
<td>“School and classroom leadership focuses on creating a positive classroom and school environment by identifying shared goals and priorities that are responsive to the needs of the school community.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Engagement</td>
<td>“Student engagement refers to the extent to which students identify with and value their learning; feel a sense of belonging at school; and are informed about, engaged with and empowered to participate in and lead academic and non-academic activities.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and Physical Environments</td>
<td>“Healthy, safe and caring social and physical environments support learning and contribute to the positive cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development of students.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home, School, and Community Partnerships</td>
<td>“Home, school and community partnerships engage parents (guardians and caregivers) extended family, school staff, child care and family support programs and community groups in a mutually beneficial way to support, enhance and promote opportunities for learning and well-being.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample Healthy Schools Six-Step Planning Tool:

## Step 1: Establish Your Healthy Schools Committee

### Wanted: A Healthy Schools Committee

**Instructions:** Add everyone’s roles and contact information in the chart below. **Things to consider:** Could you combine existing committees to align with Healthy Schools? If so, insert role of committee member(s) beside their name. Be sure to identify a chair, note taker, and backup. Identify a lead if you are planning to apply for Ophea certification. What role will each person play?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee Member Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Role (see Terms of Reference template)</th>
<th>Contact information (Preferred way to communicate)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>Chair/Co-chair</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS Champion</td>
<td>Insert roles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insert Title</td>
<td>Note Taker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insert Title</td>
<td>Note Taker (back-up)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher/Champion</td>
<td>E.g. Eco Schools representative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher/Champion</td>
<td>OPHEA Certification Lead</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Representatives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent/Guardian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent/Guardian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Member</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Resources:

- Healthy Schools Foundations Framework  
  [http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/F4HSdiagram.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/F4HSdiagram.pdf)
- Ministry of Education’s Foundations for a Healthy School  
  [http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/resourcef4hs.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/resourcef4hs.pdf)

If your school is interested in using the Healthy Schools Planning Tool, contact [healthyschools@regionofwaterloo.ca](mailto:healthyschools@regionofwaterloo.ca) for a copy and to receive consultation and support from a Public Health Nurse.
Step 1 – Establish a Healthy Schools Committee

In order to gain school-wide commitment to making a healthy school environment, it is important to first gain support from a school administrator such as a Principal or Vice Principal. If your school does not yet have a Healthy Schools Champion, ask the school administrator to suggest someone who is actively involved in the school and who may be interested in taking on the role.

Once commitment is secured from school administration, the Healthy Schools Champion can build interest and recruit members for the Healthy Schools Committee by sharing information with staff, students, parents, and the school community. By forming a committee that includes representation from the whole school community, a strong collaborative team can be established that will help ensure efforts are comprehensive and sustained over time.

Schools may not need to create a brand new or separate Healthy Schools Committee if there is an existing committee that has the capacity to take on implementing the Healthy Schools approach. Assess what other committees exist in your school and consider the possibility of combining efforts so that one committee focuses on more than one mandate, especially if there is a combined goal of creating a culture of well-being within the school community (e.g. Eco Team; Safe, Caring and Inclusive Committee; School Climate Team; School Improvement Committee).

What is the role of the Healthy Schools Champion?

A Healthy Schools Champion is someone who is in the school regularly such as a teacher, parent/guardian, administrator, child and youth worker, or an early childhood educator.

The Healthy Schools Champion:

- models healthy behaviours
- demonstrates enthusiasm and keen interest in student well-being
- communicates regularly with school administration about the Healthy Schools approach
- establishes the initial committee and is the main contact for group members, community partners and media
- promotes the Healthy Schools approach and recruits committee members
- encourages all members of the school community to be involved in Healthy Schools initiatives
- may help organize committee meetings
- assists with facilitating and overseeing the planning, implementation, and evaluation of Healthy Schools initiatives
- leads or assists another committee member with completing the application process for Ophea Healthy Schools certification (for those schools who register)
What is the role of the Healthy Schools Committee?
- seeks input and involvement from the whole school community throughout the six-step process to:
  - identify a priority topic for Healthy Schools activities based on data from multiple sources
  - articulate a goal and success indicators for well-being at the school
  - identify, brainstorm, and discuss strategies to address the chosen priority topic
  - plan, implement and evaluate activities
- maintains a record of all Healthy Schools activities and decisions
- continually looks for ways to involve the whole school community
- provides leadership and direction for promoting health in the school
- keeps the school community informed about all things related to Healthy Schools

When everyone is working together, the impact on school health can be huge!

Steps to getting started:

1.1 Identify a Healthy Schools Champion and gain support
- gain Principal or school administrator support for implementing Healthy Schools
- select a Healthy Schools Champion who will act as the committee leader
- share information about the Healthy Schools approach with the entire school community and promote opportunities to be involved
- contact Region of Waterloo Public Health for support (healthyschools@regionofwaterloo.ca)

1.2 Recruit committee members or merge with an existing committee
- announce the formation of the committee and promote the committee through posters, PA announcements, newsletters, school events, and online
- offer a presentation to staff and parents about the Healthy Schools approach
- recruit a diverse group of members that represent the whole school community by including staff, students, parents, and community members
- aim for five to ten committee members as a manageable number but know this can vary from school to school
- remember if there is a lot of interest from students or parents, they can always be involved in Healthy Schools activities but don’t necessarily need to be part of the committee
- recruiting students is a very important part of engaging the whole school community as they bring energy and creativity and have an important role in representing student needs
- students in grades 4-12 are ideal members as they typically want to make a difference in their school and are often seen as role models
- the presence of parents on the committee is also important to ensure the Healthy Schools approach considers the needs of the family and is connected to the home environment
- parents bring unique knowledge, a variety of skills, community connections, and offer the important perspective of someone who is not in the school all day, each day
- recruit teachers who have an interest in Healthy Schools or who are connect to other school committees where they can share information and resources
it is also important to recruit committee members from the community to bring together individuals with common goals to maximize benefits for your school and to share expertise and resources

1.3 Organize the first Healthy Schools Committee meeting

- create an agenda to help the committee lead discussions in an organized manner
- create a terms of reference to establish roles and responsibilities for members
- determine who will take notes for each meeting to record progress, actions, and decisions reached
- select a chairperson or rotating chairs to set agendas and facilitate meetings
- decide on a convenient meeting schedule
- complete a contact list for all committee members in the Six-Step Planning Tool
- set guidelines for how the committee would like to work as a team, come up with a committee name, and draft a vision for a Healthy School

The Healthy Schools Six-Step Planning Tool will be a guide throughout the year. Review and update it at every meeting!

Public Health Resources for Step 1:

If viewing this guide online, you can click on the links below to be taken to an online PDF document containing handouts that support the completion of this step. If viewing a print version, visit the Healthy Schools webpage (www.regionofwaterloo.ca/supportinghealthyschools) to download the handouts for each step in the process:

- Establishing your Healthy Schools Committee
- Recruiting Healthy Schools Committee Members
- Making your First Healthy Schools Meeting a Success
- Tips for Running Effective Committee Meetings
- Communicating about Healthy Schools: Sample Messages (Step 1 – Establishing a Health Schools Committee)

Contact healthyschools@regionofwaterloo.ca to obtain copies of the following templates:

- Google Docs: Organizing your Healthy Schools Files
- Template – Agenda and Notes
- Template – Healthy Schools Six-Step Planning Tool
- Template – Terms of Reference
Step 1 Progress Checklist

- We have support from our Principal and school administration team.
- We have selected our Healthy Schools Champion.
- We have connected with Region of Waterloo Public Health and Emergency Services for support (Ophea requirement).
- We have explored if other committees in our school address health to avoid duplicating efforts.
- We have formed a diverse committee representing the whole school community (e.g. school administration, teachers, students, parents and other community members).
- We set an agenda for each of our committee meetings.
- We have selected our note taker and a backup person.
- We have viewed and discussed Ophea’s Healthy Schools video: [Ophea's Healthy Schools Youtube Video Link](#)
- We have scheduled meetings at regular intervals (e.g. every four to six weeks).
- We have a communication plan for how our progress and activities will be shared on a regular basis (e.g. with committee members, school-wide and with parents etc.).
- We have completed Step 1 in our Healthy Schools Six-Step Planning Tool.
Step 2 – Assess Strengths and Needs

It is important to take stock of all the activities happening in the school before making any decisions about what the Healthy Schools Committee will focus on this year.

2.1 Complete your Healthy Schools Inventory

The Healthy Schools approach focuses on a school’s strengths and existing assets as a starting point. It is important to take time to identify your school’s strengths before discussing possible areas of improvement. A great way to capture this information is by using the Foundations for a Healthy School Inventory, which you can get by contacting the Healthy Schools Team. This inventory will help you organize all school activities under the five interconnected areas and six health topics outlined in the Ministry of Education’s Foundations for a Healthy School document.

2.2 Gather available data sources

Consider what information is readily available and what additional information will be needed to give the most complete picture of the school community.

Look at using data from previous school and community surveys (e.g. regional or local community profile data; school board data).

There are many other sources of data that can be drawn upon to help show a complete picture of your school’s strengths and needs, such as:

- staff and student observations
- survey data that gathers student, staff and/or parent input (e.g. School Climate Survey, Middle Years Development Instrument)

If you are unable to find sufficient information from existing sources, the committee may want to conduct a survey or focus group to gather further information from students, teachers and parent/guardians. Before conducting a survey or focus group, be sure to obtain Principal approval and check with the School Board’s Research Coordinator for guidance on obtaining appropriate parental permission for student participation.

- If looking to implement a survey:
  - determine what information you would like to gain from the survey and design appropriate questions
  - inform the school community that the committee will be conducting a survey and encourage their participation
  - promote the survey as a way for school staff, students, parents/guardians and community partners to share their ideas
  - think about ways to use the school website or social media to promote the survey
If looking to conduct focus groups:
- identify the area(s) you would like to get a deeper understanding of through a focus group discussion
- determine who participants will be (e.g. students, staff, parents) and what information you would like to obtain
- remember to keep the questions simple for younger participants and to start with basic questions and then expand for older participants

Once data is obtained, be sure to summarize current strengths, needs, challenges and opportunities and share this information with the whole school community.

Public Health Resources for Step 2:

If viewing this guide online, you can click on the link below to be taken to an online PDF document containing a handout that supports the completion of this step. If viewing a print version, visit the Healthy Schools webpage (www.regionofwaterloo.ca/supportinghealthyschools) to download the handouts for each step in the process:
- Communicating about Healthy Schools: Sample Messages (Step 2 – Establishing a Health Schools Committee)

Contact healthyschools@regionofwaterloo.ca to obtain copies of the following templates:
- Template - Foundations for a Healthy School Inventory
- Template – School Tour (Student Led)

Step 2 Progress Checklist

- We have completed our Healthy Schools Inventory.
- We have gathered key information about the strengths, needs, interests and health of the school community.
- We have gathered data from a variety of sources and sought input from the whole school community.
- We have shared our data results with our school community.
- We have completed Step 2 in our Healthy Schools Six-Step Planning Tool.
Step 3 – Determine Priority Topic

With data in hand (Step 2) the committee will now be in a position to move forward in choosing the most important priority topic for the school to work on over the course of the school year.

3.1 Identify a priority topic

The Ministry of Education’s Foundations for a Healthy School [http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/resourcef4hs.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/resourcef4hs.pdf) identifies six curriculum-linked, health topics to choose from:

- healthy eating
- physical activity
- mental health
- substance use, addictions and related behaviours
- growth and development
- personal safety and injury prevention

The Foundations for a Healthy School offers sample strategies and activity ideas to support schools in addressing the six health topics. Determining a priority topic will support a committee in establishing goal(s) for the year and determining how success will be measured.

Be sure to involve the student, parent, and staff committee members in determining the priority topic as each group can share their personal experiences and ideas for activities that will meet their specific needs. The Healthy Schools approach encourages collaborative problem solving and group decision making.

Keep a record of all the issues/suggestions not addressed this year; they can be considered next year as a priority topic for the Healthy Schools Committee.

3.2 Set goals and success indicators

Now that a priority topic is determined, the committee needs to develop goals. It is suggested that a school develop only one or two goals to make reaching them attainable. A goal is a statement on what the school is hoping to achieve under the chosen priority topic. The purpose of your goal is to state what you would like to see within your school community. The specific steps you will take to achieve this goal come later in the details of your action plan.

Once goals have been established, it’s important to think about how you will know if you’ve reached your goal. Ask yourself “what can we measure to know we’ve been successful?” Use the answers to this question to write success indicators. When writing success indicators, it is helpful to use the S.M.A.R.T acronym outlined on the next page.
**Be S.M.A.R.T. About Your Success Indicators!**

- **S** - Is your success indicator **specific** to helping you reach your goal?
- **M** - Can you easily **measure** your success indicator?
- **A** - Is your success indicator **attainable** given your timeframe and resources?
- **R** - Is your success indicator **realistic** for your goal?
- **T** - What is the **timeframe** to measure your success indicator?

Example of a goal and success indicator:

**Healthy Eating**

- **Goal** - create a supportive school environment that encourages healthy beverage and food choices
- **Success Indicator** - By the end of June, 75 per cent of school or classroom celebration events that involve food will include water-only beverages and healthier food choices that meet maximum nutritional value guidelines such as pitas

**It’s okay to start with small changes - these can lead to big successes!**

**Public Health Resources for Step 3:**

If viewing this guide online, you can click on the links below to be taken to an online PDF document containing handouts that support the completion of this step. If viewing a print version, visit the Healthy Schools webpage ([www.regionofwaterloo.ca/supportinghealthyschools](http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/supportinghealthyschools)) to download the handouts for each step in the process:

- **Sample Goals and Success Indicators**
- **Communicating about Healthy Schools: Sample Messages** (Step 3 – Determine your priority topic)

Contact [healthyschools@regionofwaterloo.ca](mailto:healthyschools@regionofwaterloo.ca) to obtain copies of the following template:

- **Template - Healthy Schools Six-Step Planning Tool**

**Step 3 Progress Checklist**

- We have identified a priority topic for our school.
- We have developed one or two goals and success indicators for each to address our priority topic.
- We have completed Step 3 in our Healthy Schools Six-Step Planning Tool.
Once a Healthy Schools Committee has identified a priority topic, goals and success indicators, the next step is to create and implement a comprehensive action plan to address the chosen priority topic(s).

4.1 Develop an action plan

An action plan includes activities that will help the committee meet their goal(s) and uses a comprehensive approach based on the Foundations for a Healthy School.

**In developing the action plan, keep these questions in mind when choosing the activities:**

- What activities would best address our focus area?
- Do we have activities for each of the five areas from the Foundations for a Healthy School?
- For whom is each activity intended?
- What resources are needed to carry out each activity (e.g. budget, staff, equipment)?
- When will the activities be carried out?
- Who is responsible for planning and implementing each activity?
- How will we measure success?

Focus on what the school already has in place (see Healthy Schools Inventory in Step 2) and then as a committee, work to identify enhancements or new activities to address the chosen priority topic. Speak with others in the school community when creating your action plan to ensure activities meet expressed needs and have adequate support for implementation (e.g. funds, and equipment). Encourage staff, students and parents to take on leadership roles by organizing and overseeing the implementation and evaluation of specific activities in your action plan.

For each activity in the action plan, outline specific tasks, the individuals responsible for completing these tasks, timelines, project status and a link to evaluation notes or reflections (see Step 5). Decide what the committee can realistically do in one year. If unable to do everything planned, that’s not a problem! Committees can restart any unfinished activities next school year.

4.2 Sample action plans

For additional information or to review sample action plans on various priority topics, visit the Healthy Schools webpage (www.regionofwaterloo.ca/supportinghealthyschools).

Public Health Nurses can support schools to identify evidence-informed practices for their activities and to apply a comprehensive approach that ensures activities are included under all five interconnected areas of the Foundations for a Healthy School. If the committee chooses another priority topic that is not included in the above resources, remember these tips:

- refer to the committee’s goals and success indicators when creating the action plan
- include activities in the action plan that address all five of the interconnected areas of the Foundations for a Healthy School: Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, School and Classroom
Leadership, Student Engagement, Social and Physical Environments, and Home, School and Community Partnerships
- align activities with existing school priorities and school improvement plans

4.3 Launching the action plan

Now that the action plan is created, it’s time to involve the whole school community in making it come to life! Share information about the work that the committee is doing through announcements, newsletters, the school website and social media accounts. Be sure to include details about how others can get involved in implementing the action plan and participating in activities and events. The more you engage others, the greater support and interest you will receive for all activities! To stay on track, review and update progress of activities in the action plan at each committee meeting and allow for revisions as needed.

Don’t forget to document successes (big and small) by taking photos throughout the year and showcasing them in a Healthy Schools Photo Album (see Step 5). Photos can be used in Step 5 to reflect on activities to see what went well and what could be improved upon in future years and in Step 6 as part of celebrating your Healthy Schools achievements.

Public Health Resources for Step 4:

If viewing this guide online, you can click on the links below to be taken to an online PDF document containing handouts that support the completion of this step. If viewing a print version, visit the Healthy Schools webpage (www.regionofwaterloo.ca/supportinghealthyschools) to download the handouts for each step in the process:

- Avoiding Mixed Messages in Healthy Schools Initiatives
- Healthy Fundraising Ideas
- Sample Action Plan Ideas: Healthy Eating
- Sample Action Plan Ideas: Physical Activity
- Sample Action Plan Ideas: Mental Health
- Communicating about Healthy Schools: Sample Messages (Step 4 – Create your healthy schools action plan)

Contact healthyschools@regionofwaterloo.ca to obtain copies of the following templates:

- Template - Healthy Schools Photo Album
- Template - Healthy Schools Six-Step Planning Tool

### Step 4 Progress Checklist

- We completed Step 4 in our Healthy Schools Six-Step Planning Tool.
- We developed an action plan based on our goals and success indicators (from Step 2).
- We ensured that at least one activity falls under each of the five areas of the Foundations for a Healthy School.
- We communicated and promoted our action plan with school community members.
- We reviewed progress made on our action plan at each committee meeting and revised as needed.
Step 5 – Monitor Progress

Monitoring progress is important as it keeps schools on track to achieve their vision of becoming a Healthy School. Reflection should be completed throughout the school year to help assess the impact of activities. Schools will want to ensure that the activities in their action plan are supporting the achievement of their goal and making a difference in the school and the school community.

Reflections

By reflecting on each activity, the committee can determine both what worked well and what could be improved, which can inspire new ideas and inform actions for next year. Reflections can be completed by the activity lead(s) or as a group during a committee meeting. Students, staff or parents can complete these reflections. The chair will ensure that the reflections are captured in Step 5 of the Healthy Schools Planning Tool.

Sharing successes will keep the momentum going, and will motivate those involved to continue their hard work, inspiring others in the school community to participate.

Reflections will identify:
- who participated in the activity
- any data collected from the activity (e.g. number of participants, resources developed, messages distributed)
- what worked well
- what could be done differently next time
- if the activity is worth repeating
- specific lessons learned from the activity

Public Health Resources for Step 5:

If viewing this guide online, you can click on the link below to be taken to an online PDF document containing a handout that supports the completion of this step. If viewing a print version, visit the Healthy Schools webpage (www.regionofwaterloo.ca/supportinghealthyschools) to download the handouts for each step in the process:
- Communicating about Healthy Schools: Sample Messages (Step 5 – Monitor your progress)

Contact healthyschools@regionofwaterloo.ca to obtain copies of the following templates:
- Template - Activity Reflections Log
- Template - Healthy Schools Six-Step Planning Tool

Step 5 Progress Checklist
- We reviewed our Healthy Schools Six-Step Planning Tool at each meeting.
- We have completed a reflection for each activity.
- We have included the action items and progress updates in our planning tool.
- We have completed Step 5 in our Healthy Schools Six-Step Planning Tool.
Step 6 – Evaluate and Celebrate

Evaluating the committee’s progress is important and will help to make improvements and changes to future action plans. Be sure to build in time at the end of each school year to evaluate the activities completed by the Healthy Schools Committee.

Celebration is an integral part of the Healthy Schools process. It takes effort from many individuals to make a school a healthy place and one of the ways to keep a school energized is through recognizing the efforts of the committee members and all who have been involved in Healthy Schools activities. Changing health behaviours and attitudes can have positive life-long benefits for individuals and the whole community. These changes don’t happen overnight, so celebrating both small and large successes helps to keep the school energized towards achieving its long-term vision.

Celebrate small and large successes, learn from challenges and look at which direction to take for the next school year.

6.1 Year-end evaluation

During this step, the committee reviews the action plan along with the goal(s) and success indicators. In the end of year evaluation, the committee should:
- list key successes
- identify what has changed in the school’s environment
- review the goal(s) and success indicators from Step 2 and indicate if the committee was successful in achieving these and include why or why not
- discuss what the committee could/should do differently next year
- assess whether all five areas of the Foundations for a Healthy School were covered in the action plan and decide how to strengthen efforts for next year

6.2 Plan for next year

In planning for next year, the committee should discuss any changes that may be occurring within the school community that could affect next year’s priority topic and/or activities (e.g. changes in administration, new committee members, new policies, funding opportunities, new community partnerships). As a committee, remember to:
- set a date and plan the agenda for next year’s first Healthy Schools Committee meeting
- start discussing next year’s Healthy Schools action plan by noting any activities the school didn’t get to this year and any ideas that came from the evaluation to consider for next year
- discuss whether the committee would like to continue working on the same priority topic next year or identify a new priority
- use the evaluation results next year as data for Step 2 when assessing strengths and needs and in Step 3 when determining a priority topic
6.3 Year-end celebration

A year-end celebration provides the opportunity for the whole school community to come together to hear about Healthy Schools accomplishments. Celebrating together can build a sense of community and may even encourage further support and involvement in Healthy Schools in the future. Be sure to celebrate all successes, even the small changes, as all change is a step in the right direction!

To celebrate, the committee can:

- share successes with staff, students and parent/guardians through the school newsletter, website or social media accounts
- encourage students and teachers to share their successes with the whole school through announcements or by presenting the Healthy Schools Photo Album at an assembly
- acknowledge and celebrate the efforts of each Healthy Schools Committee member by providing a recognition certificate or letter of appreciation
- plan a year-end celebration for the whole school community to showcase Healthy Schools achievements and to strengthen support and commitment to the Healthy Schools approach

Public Health Resources for Step 6:

If viewing this guide online, you can click on the links below to be taken to an online PDF document containing handouts that support the completion of this step. If viewing a print version, visit the Healthy Schools webpage (www.regionofwaterloo.ca/supportinghealthyschools) to download the handouts for each step in the process:

- Healthy Celebration Ideas
- Choosing Healthy Incentives and Rewards
- Communicating about Healthy Schools: Sample Messages (Step 6 – Monitor your progress)

Contact healthyschools@regionofwaterloo.ca to obtain copies of the following templates:

- Template - Healthy Schools Photo Album
- Template - Letter of Appreciation
- Template - Healthy Schools Recognition Certificate
- Template - Healthy Schools Six-Step Planning Tool

## Step 6 Progress Checklist

- We completed the Year-end Evaluation section in our planning tool.
- We completed the Plan for Next Year section in our planning tool.
- We discussed which priority topic to address next year.
- We brainstormed possible activities for the next school year.
- We planned and implemented a year-end celebration for our committee.
- We planned and implemented a school-wide celebration to showcase our accomplishments.
- We completed Step 6 in our Healthy Schools Six-Step Planning Tool and are ready for the first meeting next school year.