

Healthy Schools Handouts

Step 6

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Healthy celebration ideas

It is important to celebrate your achievements and recognize the hard work of everyone involved. Celebrations both big and small can occur throughout the year as your committee completes action plan items. Below are some ways to recognize committee members and celebrate your Healthy Schools accomplishments!




Healthy Schools Committee:

- Submit an article and photo to healthyschools@regionofwaterloo.ca to recognize your committee in the Public Health Virtual Nurse school newsletter.
- Profile committee work on one of your school bulletin boards.
- Thank committee members through school announcements or assemblies.
- Add a short 'shout out' section on each meeting agenda.
- Host a potluck for your committee where everyone brings a healthy food item and recipe.
- Give each member a certificate of recognition.
- Take a picture of the committee and recognize them in the year-end school newsletter.
- Organize a team end of year celebration activity (e.g. indoor or outdoor game), serve healthy snacks and start discussing plans for next year.



School-wide celebration:

- Plan a mid-year celebration assembly involving the whole school community to highlight the healthy successes made to date.
- Host a wellness fair to share information and to show all the great things the school has been working on to become healthier.
- Provide ongoing updates to the school community through social media, newsletters and announcements.
- Plan family evenings combining curriculum and physical activity (e.g. math and physical activity).
- Participate in the annual Family of Schools FITGO challenge for fun and friendly competition.
- Invite family and caregivers to the school for a healthy meal or fun activity.
- Host a play day for primary and junior students that is organized and led by senior students with support from staff or school council.
- Invite the whole school community to an end-of-year celebration assembly that showcases the achievements made by the school through creative performances.
- Organize a free healthy school lunch or snack for the whole school.
- Provide a certificate to each student to acknowledge their involvement in Healthy Schools activities throughout the year.

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- Send a thank you to parents in the school newsletter in appreciation of their efforts to making your school healthier.
 - Organize a school graffiti board to celebrate your achievements. Pose a question e.g. “what was your favourite Healthy Schools activity this year? or “I did _____ to make my school healthier this year”.
 - Create and display a large mural showcasing what your school has done to promote health.
 - Invite the media to attend when you present your Ophea Healthy Schools certification level.



Healthy food ideas for events

- A vegetable tray served with hummus or tzatziki.
- Mini pizzas made using whole grain english muffins and vegetable toppings.
- Salads with a variety of options including vegetables, leafy greens, lentils and grains.
- Reduced fat cheese, whole grain crackers, popcorn with minimal fat, salt and/or sugar added.
- Whole grain wraps with turkey and vegetables.
- Sliced fruit tray, served alone or with reduced fat yogurt dip.
- Yogurt parfaits or fruit smoothies.

For more information visit the Region of Waterloo’s [Healthy Schools Website](#).

Choosing healthy incentives and rewards

General tips

- Common incentives and rewards such as candy or pizza parties often contradict the health messaging your committee promotes. Aim to replace these rewards with equally exciting options that align with your school's goals and values.
- Choosing rewards is a great opportunity to get students involved. Ask them how they like to be rewarded and encourage creativity!
- Remember rewarding students does not have to cost anything. The simple act of giving thanks and recognition itself can often be enough.



Individual incentives and rewards

- Student can sit with a friend for a day/week.
- Allow a student to do the announcements.
- Give the student extra free time.
- Nominate a "student of the day", and give special privileges (e.g. line leader, lead DPA).
- Give out a "no homework" pass.
- Let a student use the teacher's desk for a day.
- Give a student a free yearbook.
- Let a student eat lunch with the teacher or principal.
- Dress up as the school mascot during an assembly or other school event.
- Give out a free entrance to a school dance.



Group incentives and rewards

- Allow the class to have extra time at recess.
- Teach outside on a sunny day.
- Bring in a special speaker or visitor (e.g. local choir, author, artist).
- Allow the class to pick a theme day of their choice (e.g. PJ day, hat day, crazy hair day).
- Host a board games afternoon.
- Allow extended 'free time' in class (for reading, art, playing, etc.).
- Give the class extra time with special items (e.g. Spheros).
- Host a movie afternoon.

For more information visit the Region of Waterloo's [Healthy Schools Website](#).



Communicating about Healthy Schools: sample messages

Below are some sample announcements for each step of the Healthy Schools approach. Adapt and personalize these messages to suit your school's unique needs!



Step 1 – Establishing a Healthy Schools Committee

PA announcement sample

Healthy students = healthy learners = brighter futures! This is what our school is working to achieve. We are excited to announce our school is becoming a Healthy School. This means there is an opportunity for staff, students, parents and community members to join our Healthy Schools Committee and make a difference in the health of our school community. If you would like to learn more about Healthy Schools and how to get involved, contact _____ (Healthy Schools Champion). An information session will be held on _____(date). Get involved and stay tuned for more updates and exciting events throughout the year. We are on our way to making our school the best it can be!

Newsletter sample

Did you know our school started a Healthy Schools Committee? It is a group of students, teachers, parents and community members working to make our school a healthier place for all! The Healthy Schools Committee will focus on addressing a priority health topic by developing an action plan of activities, events and initiatives that will support improved health for the whole school community. By working together, we can create a healthier school environment. We encourage students, staff, parents and community members to join the Committee and work with us in building a healthy school. If you are interested in joining or want to learn more, we invite you to the first Healthy Schools Committee meeting, which will be held on _____ at _____. Please contact _____ to get involved. See you soon!



Step 2 – Assessing your school's strengths and needs

Your Healthy Schools Committee is well on its way to developing a plan to improve our school's health, and they need your help! As an important member of the school community, the committee wants your input – What are our school's strengths? What areas can we improve on? Voice your opinion on what we should work on this school year! Contact _____ (Healthy Schools Champion) to share your thoughts.



Step 3 – Determine your priority topic

Your Healthy Schools Committee has decided on a clear focus for this school year! At our last meeting, we reviewed everyone ideas, looked at our school data and discussed a number of health topics. We are excited to share that our priority topic this year will be _____. We would like to involve the whole school community with activities that will help us meet our goal of improving _____ (priority topic) and our overall school health! Stay tuned for ways you can get involved or contact _____ (Healthy Schools Champion)!



Step 4 – Create your healthy schools action plan

Your Healthy Schools Committee is busy putting together an action plan with ideas to improve _____ (priority topic) in our school community. One activity that we are working on is _____ (Provide details on an activity or promote an event and how staff and students can get involved). Continue to check _____ (Newswire/School Day), the school website and/or social media for information about upcoming activities and events you can participate in!



Step 5 – Monitor your progress

Thanks to your support and participation, we have made excellent steps towards becoming a healthier school! A few examples of our accomplishments this year include _____ (list activities). We know it's important to always take time to reflect and learn from what we've done. One example of what we learned is _____. (Provide an example action the school will take based on what was learned) Congratulations to everyone involved! Let's keep the momentum going by continuing to work together to make our school the healthiest it can be!



Step 6 – Year end celebration

Your Healthy Schools Committee would like to thank the entire school community for the support and amazing participation seen throughout the school year with the many actions we took to improve _____ (priority topic)! We have accomplished a lot, including _____ (list accomplishments). This success would not have been possible without the hard work and input of the Healthy Schools Committee and the entire school community. As we wrap up this year and begin planning for next year, we'd like to invite new faces to join the Healthy Schools Committee. If you're interested in joining the Committee for next year, contact _____ (Healthy Schools Champion). Our Healthy School has a bright future and we're excited to continue this great work with more exciting ideas next year!

For more information visit the Region of Waterloo's [Healthy Schools Website](#).