

Success Story

JOHN PAUL II CATHOLIC SCHOOL
Port Alberni, BC



Action Schools! BC

John Paul II Catholic School, a Port Alberni school of 71 students, has been registered with Action Schools! BC since 2006. Action Schools! BC is a best practices model designed to assist schools in creating individualized action plans to promote healthy living. The school registered with Action Schools! BC with hopes of building on existing healthy living initiatives in place since the school opened its doors in 2005.



These included not having vending machines, discouraging junk food, and organizing physically active events involving family members and the broader school community such as Terry Fox Runs, the World Food Day Walk, bike rodeos, fun days, community parades, and family skating in the winter and picnics in the spring. According to Angela de Bruijn, the school's PE teacher, the school registered with Action Schools! BC to "further these activities and implement the daily physical activity requirements".

In 2006, the school booked an Action Schools! BC Classroom Action (Physical Activity) Workshop. The staff embraced the activities learned in the workshop and continue to integrate them daily throughout class time.

In 2007, the school booked an Action Schools! BC Outdoor Student Leadership Workshop. This model involves an Action Schools! BC Regional Trainer teaching a group of intermediate aged student leaders how to lead outdoor games (like hopscotch, four square, long rope skipping and Chinese jump rope) for younger students. As a result of this and the school's new tetherball poles and climbing apparatus, there has been a significant increase in physical activity during recess and lunch. Students are also

encouraged to use equipment provided in the Action Schools! BC Classroom Action Bins – skipping ropes, sidewalk chalk and balls.

In 2008, the school booked an Action Schools! BC Classroom Healthy Eating Workshop to encourage staff to promote healthy eating throughout the school day through Learning, Tracking, Tasting and Snacking activities that focus on vegetable

and fruit consumption. Ms. de Bruijn describes the resource as "an easy-to-use, comprehensive set of lesson plans for teaching health units." The primary students love the Vegetable and Fruit Sticker Competition activity and record the vegetables and fruit they consume on a chart provided in the Classroom Healthy Eating Action Packs. The school has used the Action Schools! BC Healthy Eating School Food Grant to provide fresh produce for special food days – one class chose to have an Orange and Yellow Day and an Eat Your Colours activity in another class revealed few students had ever tried eggplant, so the teacher brought in stir-fried eggplant for everyone to try. Students loved it and many took the recipe home to share with their families. Parents are equally supportive about the promotion of healthy eating. The organizers of the hot lunch program are enthusiastically replacing unhealthy foods with healthy choices.

John Paul II Catholic School is exemplary in its steadfast efforts to create a healthy, active school culture. By taking advantage of all that Action Schools! BC has to offer, John Paul II Catholic School is excelling at integrating healthy living into the fabric of their school community in a unique and creative way.



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