

Success Story

HARRY HOOGE ELEMENTARY
Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows



Action Schools! BC

Throughout her 10 years as a teacher at Harry Hooge Elementary in Maple Ridge, Lorna Harmston has proven herself to be true leader and advocate for the promotion of healthy living. The school registered with Action Schools! BC in September 2004 and Lorna has worked tirelessly since then to activate the school with the resources, in-services and support offered by Action Schools! BC.



Students using Action Schools! BC equipment in Harry Hooge's fitness room

The school was involved in the Action Schools! BC K to 3 pilot and both the primary and intermediate staff have received complimentary Action Schools! BC Classroom Action Workshops – in-services designed to introduce the initiative and the Classroom Action Zone, highlighting popular classroom activities like “Bounce-at-the-Bell” “Chair Aerobics,” and “Yoga for Kids.” As an Action School, Harry Hooge received complimentary Classroom Action Bins and, after Lorna approached the Parent Advisory Council for funding, additional bins were purchased so each classroom could have its own equipment and resources. The staff and students all recognize the value of daily physical activity and aim to include 15 minutes in their classrooms, 5 days a week. One of the many ways they do this is in the “Fitness

Room” – a concept which Lorna, Action Schools! BC Master Trainer Debbie Keel and Anita Winch from Golden Ears Elementary came up with and secured funding to create. The empty classroom, which she converted into a circuit gym using ideas from the Action Schools! BC *Get Strong 101* and *65 Energy Blasts DVDs*, is open to all classes throughout the school day. Students work their way through a set of stations posted around the room, each with activities of varying difficulty. Between stations, everyone turns into the middle of the room and performs an activity (e.g. dancing, stretching) together. According to Lorna, “the fitness room works really well, the kids are enjoying it and they do work up a sweat!”

The staff at Harry Hooge encourage year-round school spirit and involvement of family and community through a variety of physical events. The school takes part annually in the Terry Fox Run, Jump Rope for Heart, a school-wide cross country day, and the SpecTAGular School Challenge, a school-wide game of tag. For the 2006-'07 challenge, Lorna's students created their own tag games, tested them, advertised them throughout the school and then taught their buddy classes how to play.

Physical activity is also supported at recess and lunch at Harry Hooge. Lorna's students act as ball monitors, responsible for bringing out equipment that encourages active play. She also organized the school's Action Schools! BC Student Outdoor Leadership Workshop, a session with Debbie Keel and selected students on outdoor playground game leadership. These students are now able to lead hopscotch, four-square, tag and skipping during breaks.

Healthy living continues to be a large part of school culture at Harry Hooge due to the commitment, passion, and creativity shared by Lorna and her colleagues. Lorna believes that Action Schools! BC has improved student fitness levels, as well as raised awareness of the importance of physical activity and healthy living.



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