

Success Story

CANYON HEIGHTS ELEMENTARY
North Vancouver, BC



Action Schools! BC

Canyon Heights Elementary, a North Vancouver school of more than 350 students, has been registered with Action Schools! BC since 2004. Action Schools! BC is a best practices model designed to assist schools in creating individualized action plans to promote healthy living while achieving academic outcomes. The initiative is a framework for action, providing diverse daily physical activity, physical education and healthy eating opportunities in six Action Zones: School Environment, Scheduled Physical Education, Classroom Action, Family and Community, Extra-Curricular, and School Spirit.

Staff at Canyon Heights integrates healthy living into each school day across all six Action Zones, and has been particularly successful in the School Spirit Zone. Spirit is cultivated by encouraging physical activity, supporting healthy eating choices, and celebrating the benefits of healthy living for the whole school. Examples of this include:

- **Eat Well, Play Well** – an annual week long district-wide challenge organized through Vancouver Coastal Health in which students accumulate points for the school by taking part in 30 minutes of daily physical activity outside of school time and by bringing in a vegetable, fruit or milk product. Action Schools! BC posters are provided to participating teachers. Canyon Heights recently placed 1st in the challenge!
- **Healthy Lunch Programs** – inspired by Eat Well, Play Well, two students on their own accord decided to promote getting rid of the fast food which was served as part of the Hot Lunch Program (which fell into the Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in BC School's "Choose Sometimes" category). The students persuaded the PAC, held a meal sampling event, and decided, with their peers, that they would prefer freshly made sandwiches instead.



- **Leadership Training** – the school has booked one of Action Schools! BC's complimentary leadership sessions in which student leaders were trained to lead outdoor games during recess and lunch.

- **Healthy Fundraising Events** – the school participates in Jump Rope for Heart, the Terry Fox Run, and holds a four-part fundraiser every year, with the proceeds going to several causes like the BC Children's Hospital Foundation, housing development in Nicaragua, Bicycles for Humanity, a Haitian orphanage, and Free the Children. Fundraising events have included a Jeans Day, We Day's School in Action program, a walk titled "Think Globally, Walk Locally", and Tasty Tuesdays in which popsicles meeting the Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in BC schools were sold.

- **Clubs, Noon Hour Activities and After School Community Programming** – yoga, hip hop dance, and kids' self defense have been offered as noon hour activities and the school offers a track and field, basketball, volleyball and cross country club. The PAC also raised funds to bring in local gymnastics and dance organizations who offered a week-long program for all students. The dance week culminated in a school-wide "Dance Assembly".

By placing a large emphasis on the importance of taking part in and enjoying daily physical activity and healthy eating, Canyon Heights has created a school culture enriched by healthy living in which school spirit runs high. By taking advantage of the services offered by Action Schools! BC and the many organizations that support school health in the province, Canyon Heights Elementary is excelling at integrating healthy living into the fabric of their school community in unique and creative ways.

