

Success Story

ELSIPOGTOG SCHOOL
New Brunswick



Action Schools! BC

Elsipogtog Health and Wellness Centre in New Brunswick has set a goal to increase awareness of diabetes and its complications to community members through various community activities and programs. A multi-disciplinary team offers health promotion activities to the community as a whole and works with the local school on a nutrition program, wellness program, staff education, and the provision of teaching resources and equipment which support the promotion of healthy living to its students.

The knowledge gained to support the teachers stemmed from a session attended by the centre's Registered Dietitian, Patricia Murphy. While at the International Diabetes in Indigenous Peoples Forum, Ms. Murphy attended a workshop on British Columbia's Action Schools! BC initiative. Action Schools! BC is a best practices model designed to assist BC schools in creating individualized action plans to promote healthy living while achieving academic outcomes. The initiative has seen unprecedented success and is a source of practical and relevant professional development, curriculum-linked resources and support for BC teachers in physical education, daily physical activity (DPA) and healthy eating, and leadership training and resources for BC students.

Professional development is a significant component of Action Schools! BC and leads to the acquisition of teacher knowledge on health promotion and the subsequent integration of physical activity and healthy eating into the school day. Teacher workshops offered by Action Schools! BC share daily physical activity ideas and healthy eating lessons and are complemented by bins of teaching resources, equipment, and tools for food preparation. After attending

the session, Elsipogtog School purchased 20 physical activity and healthy eating pilot bins for each classroom and brought in an Action Schools! BC Master Trainer to lead the teachers through several workshops on how to use the bins to activate their classes.

Teachers now use the bins on a regular basis. Students participate in at least 15 minutes of classroom physical activity each day – dance, aerobics to the 6 Fit Kids' Workouts DVD, exercising with bands, and Head-to-Toe

Stretch are favourites. Students enjoy being more active, their awareness of the value of physical activity has grown, and teachers have found that student focus has increased. The school also offers extra-curricular sports programming, and participates in the annual Terry Fox Run and Walk to School Day. The Action Schools! BC healthy eating resources are used to support the other healthy eating programming at the school, such as Canadian Feed the Children which provides students with a nutritious lunch and breakfast each day during the school year.

Staff and community practitioners at Elsipogtog School and the Elsipogtog Health and Wellness Centre are dedicated to

creating a culture of healthy living at the school and raising awareness of the risk factors, primarily type-2 diabetes, associated with inactivity and poor eating habits. Action Schools! BC, as a conceptual catalyst, has shared its theory on healthy living with Elsipogtog and the whole country to practise. By taking advantage of the resources and services available through Action Schools! BC and the other organizations that support school health, the community is integrating healthy living into the fabric of their school community in unique and creative ways.

