



What is the Healthy Schools approach?

The Healthy Schools approach engages the whole school community to promote and enhance the health and well-being of children, youth, school staff, and the broader community.

The school community includes:

- students
- parents, guardians, caregivers, and family members
- school staff (e.g., educators, administrators, support staff)
- community partners such as public health, recreation and sport groups, police and fire services, municipalities, other schools, not-for-profit organizations, local social services and businesses)

The Healthy Schools approach can result in the creation and/or sustainability of a healthy school.

Why implement the Healthy Schools approach?

The Healthy Schools approach motivates and supports school communities in establishing healthy, safe, inclusive, and accepting learning environments in which all students can reach their full potential.

Benefits of a Healthy School

- Healthier Students! And healthy students are better prepared to learn and enjoy the time they spend at school.
- Healthy Choices! It is easier for children and youth to make healthier choices when everyone around them is working together to create a healthy school.
- Lifelong Healthy Living! The healthy skills students develop and practice now can lead them through a life of healthy living.

What is Ophea's HS Certification?

HS Certification supports schools in addressing health and well-being in their school community by following the 6-Step Healthy Schools Process:

- Step 1 - Establish Your School Team
- Step 2 - Assess Your School Community Needs and Assets
- Step 3 - Identify Your Priority Health Topic
- Step 4 - Develop an Action Plan
- Step 5 - Take Action and Monitor Progress
- Step 6 - Celebrate and Reflect

School teams can choose from six health topics:

 Physical Activity	 Healthy Eating	 Personal Safety and Injury Prevention
 Growth and Development	 Mental Health	 Substance Use, Addictions and Related Behaviours

While schools select a priority health topic, they are still encouraged to promote health in all areas.

HS Certification Goals

- to support and increase the capacity of school communities across Ontario to effectively implement the 6-Step Healthy Schools Process
- to celebrate and formally recognize an individual school community's achievements related to the 6-Step Healthy Schools Process

HS Certification Quick Facts

- HS Certification follows a point-based system in which participating schools earn points as they complete each of the six process steps.
- Schools will be able to plan and report on the 6-Step Healthy Schools Process online and apply for Gold, Silver, or Bronze certification.
- HS Certification is an annual process (running from September to April). School certification levels are announced in late May/early June of each year.
- HS Certification is based on a school's ability to follow the process steps, not on the type or number of activities. This allows for the process to be flexible and adaptable to meet the needs of each unique school community across Ontario.
- An important component of HS Certification is student engagement (at both the elementary and secondary levels). This means that students are a fundamental part of the school team, helping identify what the school has and what it needs, choosing the school's priority health topic, and playing a lead role in planning and running activities and celebrations.

What is my role in a healthy school?

Educators are the backbone of any school team. An identified educator will act as the HS Certification School Contact for their school.

School Contact: a full-time educator at the school who agrees to facilitate the school team and act as the main contact for Ophea's HS Certification.

The School Contact does not need to be an expert in the Healthy Schools approach. In fact, they may be new to Healthy Schools but have an interest in promoting health and well-being in the school community.

Educators are typically involved in all stages of the Healthy Schools process, with some leading components and others supporting specific activities.

The more educators who are able to contribute, the more your school team will be able to accomplish, and the more likely students will want to become involved.

How does my school become involved in HS Certification?

If you are an educator interested in having your school participate in Ophea's HS Certification, speak with your school administrator to help determine if a School Contact already exists or who might be the most appropriate staff member to act as the School Contact.

For more information, visit: <http://www.ophea.net/healthy-schools-certification>

For specific questions, email: healthyschools@ophea.net

