

Ophea's Healthy Schools Certification - Public Health



Ophea's Healthy Schools Certification (HS Certification) recognizes and celebrates school communities for promoting and enhancing the health and well-being of students, school staff, and the broader community.

Goals of HS Certification

- 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

Why Get Certified?

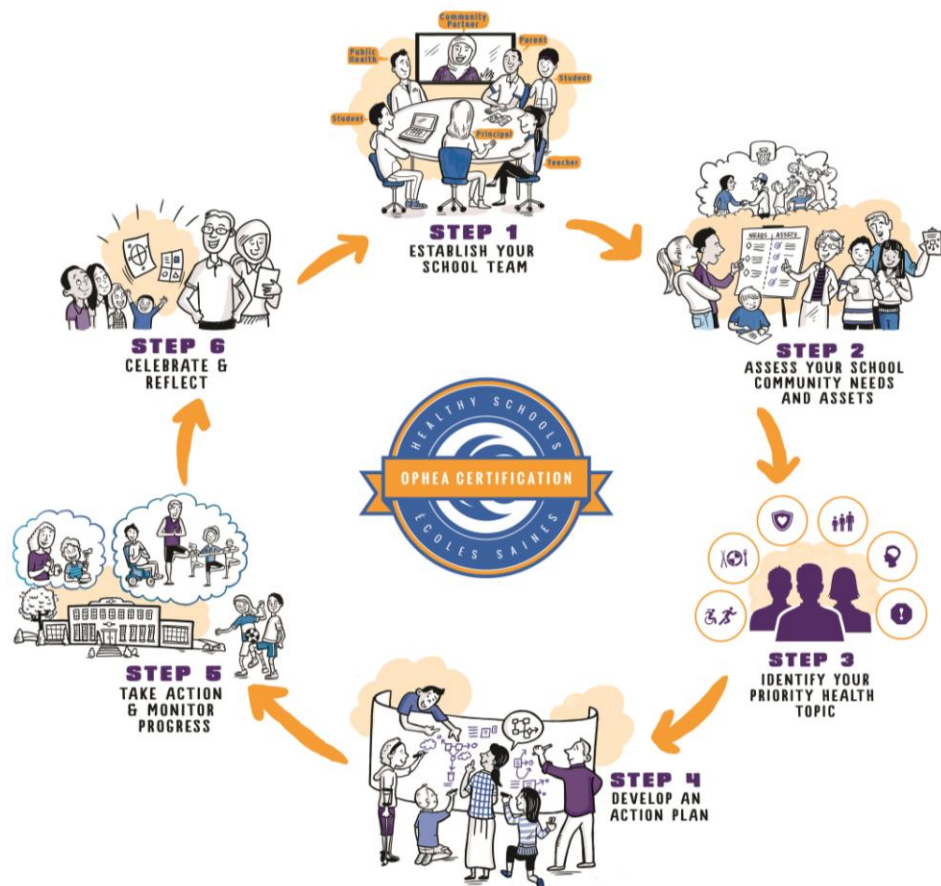
- ✓ To increase student engagement and leadership
- ✓ To strengthen and/or make new community partners
- ✓ To connect the dots between what schools are already doing
- ✓ To implement provincial education policies at the school and board level
- ✓ To support your School Improvement Plan and Board Improvement Plan
- ✓ To guide your school community in addressing a priority health topic through the 6-Step Healthy Schools Process
- ✓ To encourage students, staff, and the broader community to make healthier choices
- ✓ Bragging rights! Everyone will know that your school has been formally recognized for being a healthy school!

How Do Schools Get Certified?

By completing the 6-Step Healthy Schools Process over the course of the school year, registered schools will earn points and can apply online to be certified as a Gold, Silver, or Bronze level Healthy School at the end of April.

Certification is based on a school's ability to follow and complete the process and not on the type or number of activities chosen, so it's flexible and adaptable for all school communities.

School certification levels are announced in May of each year and a banner is sent to certified schools celebrating their level.



Based on each school's individual needs and assets, school teams will choose one of six health topics to focus on during the school year.

The 6 choices are:



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.

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, and family members
- School staff (e.g., educators, administrators, support staff)
- Community partners (e.g., 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.

What is Public Health's role in a healthy school?

Publicly funded schools in Ontario are supported by 36 local public health units that often play a key role in supporting school communities in adopting the Healthy Schools approach. Public Health services and programs address a variety of health topics and promote the health and well-being of children, youth, and the school community. Depending on capacity, some health units actively participate on healthy schools teams, others provide resources for activities, others support schools through materials available on their website. Some health units choose a select number of schools to support while others support all schools participating in Healthy Schools Certification in their region.

For more information, visit: ophea.net/HSCertification

For specific questions, email: healthyschools@ophea.net

To see what schools are doing, check out our Twitter hashtag [#HSCertES](https://twitter.com/HSCertES).