

Featuring: Indoor Air Quality

## SECTION 1: WHAT'S NEW?

**Registration for School Health Annual Conference - showcasing Canadian School Health Innovations now open see:**  
[http://www.cash-aces.ca/conference\\_2008/](http://www.cash-aces.ca/conference_2008/)

When you eat together, you eat better: An overview of the Eat Together Initiative from the BC Dairy Foundation includes the rationale and evidence behind the important issue of family mealtime.

([http://www.bcdairyfoundation.ca/nutrition\\_education/docs/Eat\\_Together-Revised.pdf](http://www.bcdairyfoundation.ca/nutrition_education/docs/Eat_Together-Revised.pdf)). A recent research project notes the significance of meal time in preventing disordered eating.

## EVENTS

The Ontario government recently announced the 2007/08 funding for healthy schools initiatives. It will be providing \$2 million to support the implementation of Daily Physical Activity (DPA) in elementary schools and \$1 million to support secondary student engagement in healthy schools initiatives. The funding is being sent to school boards with their next transfer payments, and **must** be spent by June 30, 2008. The funding for DPA includes a base amount of \$5000 per school board and \$2500 per school authority, plus an additional \$400 per elementary school. It must be used to support the implementation of DPA, and can be used for professional development, school equipment (skipping ropes, balls, etc), teacher release time (for training) or to engage experts, consultants or speakers. Boards will also be allocated \$1000 per secondary school to support student engagement, and can be used for board-wide events or for school level events that student councils would organize to promote healthier schools. The ministry also has resources available to support healthy schools initiatives at this link:  
[www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools)

## Resources

Ready...Set...Engage! Building Effective Youth/Adult Partnerships for a Stronger Child and

SCHOOL HEALTH CONFERENCE  
& SYMPOSIA

2008

Sheraton Four Points Hotel  
& Conference Centre

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Ottawa-Gatineau

April 20-23, 2008

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for more info visit:

[www.safehealthyschools.org/shconferences](http://www.safehealthyschools.org/shconferences)

## RESEARCH, REPORTS & SCHOOL HEALTH KNOWLEDGE

### Research Roundup

#### **Prescription for Danger--Trends in Teen Drug Abuse**

They are seen by teens as safe and easily available, but increasing abuse of prescription and over-the-counter drugs by young people is a serious matter, says the White House Office of Drug Control Policy. The ONDCP report, "Prescription for Danger: A Report on the Troubling Trend of Prescription and Over-the Counter Drug Abuse Among the Nation's Teens," is available online at  
[http://theantidrug.com/pdfs/prescription\\_report.pdf](http://theantidrug.com/pdfs/prescription_report.pdf).

[www.schoolmentalhealth.co.uk](http://www.schoolmentalhealth.co.uk) VOLUME 1 ISSUE 1 CONTENTS

Youth Mental Health System. (Pereira, N. Toronto, ON, Canada: Children's Mental Health Ontario (November, 2007)) This report represents the First Phase of The New Mentality. Its findings offer solid insight into what the term 'Youth Engagement' (YE) actually means and how it can be put into practice. The report provides: definitions of YE and a review of the YE literature; illustrations of how YE is being applied in child and youth mental health agencies across the province; examples of how to: build youth-adult partnerships; support youth as decision makers; and identify roles that youth can assume within organizations.

**Youth-Adult Engagement Qualitative Report Card** (Youth Infusion): this report card can be accessed online at: [www.youthinfusion.com/Documents/qualitative%20report%20card%20sefl%20assessment%20set.pdf](http://www.youthinfusion.com/Documents/qualitative%20report%20card%20sefl%20assessment%20set.pdf) is an online, interactive health magazine for young people, parents and professionals. The resource focuses on teaching mental health literacy, facilitating early detection of health and mental health difficulties and promoting help-seeking in young people.

**Mental Health Promotion in Irish Schools: A Selective Review**  
*Mike Power, Deirdre Cleary and Carol Fitzpatrick, pps 5-15*

**Readiness and School Improvement: Strategies for Enhancing Dissemination and Implementation of Expanded School Mental Health Practices**  
*Paul D Flaspohler, Dawn Anderson-Butcher, Jerry Bean, Robert W. Burke and Carl E. Paternite, pps 16-27*

**Balancing Feasibility and Treatment Adherence in School Mental Health Research**  
*Steven W Evans, Brandon K Schultz and Zewelanj N Serpell, pps 28-38*

**Implementing and Evaluating Evidence-Based Treatments in Schools: Successes and Lessons Learned**  
*Julie Sarno Owens, Erin L. Girio, Lina K Himawan and Melinda Y Abbott, pps 39-51*

**Contextual Features of Public Schools in the United States as Settings for Mental Health Promotion**  
*Robert W Burke and Sharon H Stephan, pps 52-6*

## FEATURE ARTICLE

### Indoor Air Quality

#### How Serious Is It?

Health Canada has noted an 8% increase in the rate of children's hospital admissions for respiratory distress. Strong associations have been made between childhood asthma and air pollution. Childhood asthma has increased dramatically and 20% of children now live with it. Childhood asthma is now the number one cause of emergency room visits and the number one cause of school absenteeism in Canada. Still not convinced? Consider this: five children die each week from asthma in the US and Canada.

[http://www.greenup.on.ca/images/stories/pdf\\_files/Peterborough%20Moves/factsheets/airqualityandchildren.pdf](http://www.greenup.on.ca/images/stories/pdf_files/Peterborough%20Moves/factsheets/airqualityandchildren.pdf)

#### Indoor Air Quality - Tools for Schools Action Kit for Canadian Schools

Most people are aware that outdoor air pollution can damage their health, but fewer realize that indoor air pollution can also contribute to health effects, such as asthma. Studies by Health Canada, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and other agencies indicate that levels of indoor pollutants may be significantly higher than outdoor levels. Since most people spend an estimated 90% of their time indoors, indoor air pollution is a significant concern. Children may be especially susceptible to air pollution.

[http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ewh-semt/alt\\_formats/hecs-sesc/pdf/pubs/air/tools\\_school-outils\\_ecoles/tools\\_school-outils\\_ecoles\\_e.pdf](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ewh-semt/alt_formats/hecs-sesc/pdf/pubs/air/tools_school-outils_ecoles/tools_school-outils_ecoles_e.pdf)

#### Air Quality

This site covers the ins and outs of air quality and informs you about what is being done to protect the health of Canadians, from a description of pollutants and lung diseases, to research, risk assessment and regulations development. An overview of the Health Canada groups involved in activities related to air quality is also included. This site aims to provide you with valuable air quality information and guide you to other useful resources.

[http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ewh-semt/air/index\\_e.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ewh-semt/air/index_e.html)

#### Is indoor air quality (IAQ) a health and safety concern?

People spend a lot of time indoors -- for example, many office workers will spend their entire working day inside buildings. People working indoors often experience symptoms such as headaches, shortness of breath, coughing or nausea just to mention a few. However, it is rarely possible to prove that these symptoms are related to a particular indoor air contaminant. In fact, building occupants are simultaneously exposed to a wide range of indoor air contaminants. People working indoors often experience symptoms such as headaches, shortness of breath, coughing or nausea just to mention a few. However, it is rarely possible to prove that these symptoms are related to a particular indoor air contaminant. In fact, building occupants are simultaneously exposed to a wide range of indoor air contaminants.

[http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/chemicals/iaq\\_intro.html](http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/chemicals/iaq_intro.html)

The air quality indoors may be worse than outdoors. You could be breathing in the polluted air without even knowing it. Creating a healthy indoor environment is important, especially for children who are at a higher risk for exposure to indoor contaminants.

- [Mould and moisture control](#)
- [Radon](#)
- [Household products](#)
- [Stoves, furnaces and fireplaces](#)
- [Indoor use of pesticides](#)
- [Air filters](#)
- [Smoke-free home](#)

- [Additional information on healthy indoor environments](#)

[http://www.toronto.ca/health/hphe/air\\_indoor.htm](http://www.toronto.ca/health/hphe/air_indoor.htm)

## **Causes of Indoor Air Quality Problems in Schools**

According to the U.S. government's General Accounting Office, one in five schools in the United States—representing 8.4 million students—has problems with indoor air quality (IAQ) (GAO 1995, 1996). According to the same studies, 36% of the schools surveyed listed HVAC systems as a “less-than-adequate building feature.” The reports also suggested that there appears to be a correlation between unsatisfactory IAQ and the proportion of a school's students coming from low-income households.

<http://www.eere.energy.gov/buildings/info/documents/pdfs/iaq-rpt.pdf>

## **What can you do to improve indoor air quality?**

There are three basic ways to improve indoor air quality.

1. *Control the source:* Remove the source of pollution or reduce the level of the emissions.
2. *Improve ventilation:* Increase the amount of outdoor air coming indoors by keeping your home well ventilated, especially when cooking or painting. Keeping windows open and kitchen and bathroom exhaust fans turned on will improve ventilation. Keep your house clean and dry.
3. *Air cleaning:* Air cleaners, including mechanical filters, may be used in the home in addition to controlling the source and improving ventilation.

<http://www.bchealthguide.org/healthfiles/hfile65a.stm>

## **The Inside Story: A Guide to Indoor Air Quality**

In the last several years, a growing body of scientific evidence has indicated that the air within homes and other buildings can be more seriously polluted than the outdoor air in even the largest and most industrialized cities. Other research indicates that people spend approximately 90 percent of their time indoors. Thus, for many people, the risks to health may be greater due to exposure to air pollution indoors than outdoors.

In addition, people who may be exposed to indoor air pollutants for the longest periods of time are often those most susceptible to the effects of indoor air pollution. Such groups include the young, the elderly, and the chronically ill, especially those suffering from respiratory or cardiovascular disease.

<http://www.epa.gov/iaq/pubs/insidest.html>

The **Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools Action kit for Canadian Schools**, produced by Health Canada, is used as the program's basic building block. The New Brunswick Lung Association (NBLA) has added simple survey forms for all staff to complete at the beginning of the program, a general walk-through checklist, [a walk-through video](#), an online "Ask the Expert" section and several optional complementary initiatives. These include: reduction of school bus and parental vehicle idling; school grounds greening; identification, replacement and storage of hazardous materials; energy efficiency; Flight for Life; Go For Green's - Active and Safe Routes to School; and recycling initiating programs.

<http://www.nb.lung.ca/schools/gettingstarted.htm>

## **Physical School Environment (CDC)**

[http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/shpps/2006/factsheets/pdf/FS\\_PhysicalSchoolEnvironment\\_SHPPS2006.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/shpps/2006/factsheets/pdf/FS_PhysicalSchoolEnvironment_SHPPS2006.pdf)

## **A Checklist for School Districts Addressing the Needs of Students With Asthma**

This checklist is intended primarily for school administrators, although you may need input from other school district personnel such as nurses, teachers and coaches in order to complete it. It should help your district identify areas in which it is currently doing well, as well as areas in which it may want to focus more energy. Regardless of where your school district is in instituting its asthma management programs, we encourage you and your team to use this checklist periodically to gauge your progress and to identify areas that could use more attention.

<http://aasa.files.cms-plus.com/PDFs/Focus/AASA%20Powerful%20Practices%20in%20Asthma%20Management.pdf>

## **Green Schools: Attributes for Health and Learning**

Evidence has accumulated that shows that the quality of indoor environments can affect the health and productivity of adults and children. One consequence is that a movement has emerged to promote the design of schools that have fewer adverse environmental effects. To examine the potential of such design for improving education, several private organizations asked the NRC to review and assess the health and productivity benefits of green schools. This report provides an analysis of the complexity of making such a determination; and an assessment of the potential human health and performance benefits of improvements in the building envelope, indoor air quality, lighting, and acoustical quality. The report also presents an assessment of the overall building condition and student achievement, and offers an analysis of and recommendations for planning and maintaining green schools including research considerations.