



Ever Active Schools

ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014

Table of Contents

Ever Active Schools Overview.....	3
2013-14 Year in Review.....	7
Collaborative Partnerships.....	10
Support Wellness Education and Comprehensive School Health.....	13
Communication and Knowledge Exchange.....	17
Capacity Building Through Innovative Projects.....	20
Supporting First Nations, Métis and Inuit Communities in Comprehensive School Health.....	20
AMA Youth Run Club.....	23
Healthy Eating at School Sporting Events.....	24
After School Hours: Healthy Hearts Initiative.....	27
Competency Focused Learning Opportunities.....	28
Healthy Active School Symposium.....	28
Professional Learning Opportunities.....	31
Appendices.....	33

Ever Active Schools Overview

Ever Active Schools is a provincial initiative that assists schools to build and sustain healthy school communities through a comprehensive school health approach.

Positioned under the Alberta Teachers' Association as a special project of the Health and Physical Education Council, Ever Active Schools is a successful example of cross-ministry collaboration. Funding support from three ministries — Health, Education and Tourism, Parks and Recreation — enables Ever Active Schools to catalyze diverse skills, knowledge and resources to support school communities and create healthy Albertans.

Ever Active Schools implements five core strategies to advance the health and learning outcomes of Alberta students.



VISION

Ever Active Schools enables knowledge exchange, communication and collaborative partnerships among the health, active living and education sectors.

Ever Active Schools assists school communities to build capacity and sustainability in addressing wellness.

Ever Active Schools is a provincial leader in the provision of competency focused learning opportunities, resources and curricular expertise to support a comprehensive school health approach.

MISSION

Provide provincial leadership that promotes and supports healthy, active school communities.

PRIORITY

Lead, support and connect work towards improved health and learning outcomes of children in Alberta.

Ever Active Schools' Five Core Strategies

Collaborative Partnerships ///

Ever Active Schools facilitates collaborative partnerships within and across health, education, recreation and active living sectors through direct relationships with school communities and school jurisdictions, participation on local, regional and provincial interagency committees and hosting opportunities that bring together professionals from different sectors such as the annual school wellness conference, Shaping the Future.

Support Wellness Education and Comprehensive School Health ///

Ever Active Schools supports the development and delivery of wellness-related curricula through high quality resources that promote interdisciplinary competency-focused approaches and increase the number of schools in Alberta that assess, prioritize and action plan as part of a comprehensive school health approach with online and in-person support.

Communication and Knowledge Exchange ///

Ever Active Schools acts as a conduit for communication and knowledge exchange for school health through the website, newsletters, social media and work with post-secondary institutions. Ever Active Schools is a platform to promote wellness resources by providing ongoing support and informing schools of evidence-based best practices.

Capacity Building Through Innovative Projects ///

Innovative projects empower local communities to build capacity to support wellness initiatives both in and out of school hours and use evaluation to determine best practices that can be scaled up and shared across the province.



Competency Focused Learning Opportunities ///

Ever Active Schools provides competency-focused, interdisciplinary learning opportunities for school communities through professional learning opportunity offerings, workshops, the Physical Literacy Summer Institute and the student-centered Healthy Active School Symposia events that focus on building competencies to support students to become engaged thinkers, ethical citizens, with an entrepreneurial spirit.





Alberta Medical Association
Youth Run Club Launch in
September 2013. Belgravia
School students participated
in a warmup, run and cool
down, after the ceremonies.

2013-14 Year in Review

In 2013-14, Ever Active Schools continued to assist schools in creating and sustaining healthy active school communities.

By fostering a comprehensive school health approach, Ever Active Schools contributed to provincial efforts to support the healthy development of children and youth in Alberta.

Working through our five core strategies, Ever Active Schools saw growth in nearly every area, resulting in expanded support to 43% of Alberta school communities and communications to all 61 school jurisdictions.

With school communities as the primary audience for our work, changes in Alberta's education system shaped our efforts significantly. Setting the stage for the role of wellness and comprehensive school health in the vision and application of *Inspiring Education* meant an emphasis on interdisciplinary, competency focused solutions for healthy schools. Ever Active Schools was successful in coordinating action from many partners and from diverse sectors within this context, while honouring the priorities of each sector.



2014-15 Activities and Results

Intended Outcomes

Results

Increase competency focused interdisciplinary learning opportunities for students in school communities through the Healthy Active School Symposia and evaluating the changes in practice that occur following the Healthy Active School Symposia events.

- Developed a “Cross-Curricular Competencies Through the Lens of the Healthy Active School Symposia” poster
- Hosted 11 Healthy Active School Symposia events throughout the province, reaching 215 schools from 45 jurisdictions with 1,732 participants
- Focused on student leadership, built capacity of local communities to support Healthy Active School Symposia
- Completed evaluation and released report to steering and local committees

Increase the number of schools in Alberta that assess, prioritize and action plan as part of a comprehensive school health approach to support student health and learning outcomes.

- 409 schools completed the Joint Consortium for School Health Healthy School Planner Tool as part of the comprehensive school health approach
- Began development and field testing of an online portal to support schools through the process of comprehensive school health

Host the annual Shaping the Future conference in January 2014, bringing together professionals from different sectors to engage in learning opportunities that support the implementation of comprehensive school health strategies.

- Sold out with 415 delegates from 55 school jurisdictions across Alberta
- 95 per cent of post-conference survey respondents reported they feel confident in understanding comprehensive school health to inspire children and youth to be healthy learners

Increase the breadth and depth of resources available on the Ever Active Schools website to support interdisciplinary competency focused curriculum.

- 18 new resources developed and made accessible on everactive.org
- 78 per cent of new resources focused on interdisciplinary, comprehensive school health approaches and multiple priority areas



A student from Kainai High School waters seedlings in the newly renovated greenhouse, located behind the school. Ever Active Schools and partners helped bring this project to life.

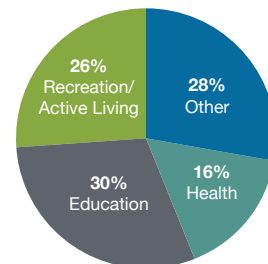


Collaborative Partnerships

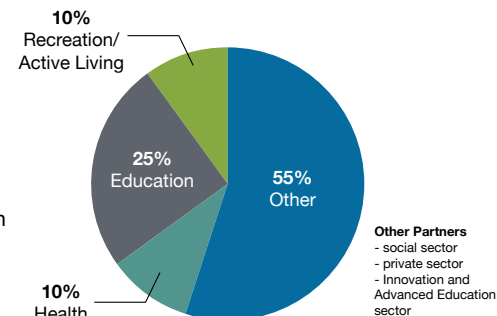
From the perspective of Ever Active Schools, there are two facets to collaborative partnerships: those we engage in to advance work in healthy school communities, and those we facilitate among and between sectors.

In 2013-14, the Ever Active Schools team identified 51 distinct partners with whom we engage, from Health, Education, Recreation/Active Living and “other” sectors. Nineteen of these were new partners, yielding a growth rate of 59 per cent. The majority of new partnerships were established with other sectors, notably the private, social and Innovation and Advanced Education sectors. Intentional engagement of alternative sectors to advance school health builds local capacity to implement and sustain change.

Overall Partners



New Partners



Relationships improved

A unique partnership with the Alberta Medical Association, which supports schools to offer youth run clubs, engaged 55 Alberta schools that previously had no contact with Ever Active Schools. This project was a gateway to promote comprehensive school health more broadly in school communities and engage the medical community in health promotion practices.

Resources leveraged

The Kainai School greenhouse project leveraged financial resources by partnering with the Kainai High School Parent Advisory Council, Ecotrust Foundation, Communities Choosewell and the Kainai Board of Education to bring an additional \$10,000 to the project.

Policy developed

A partnership with the Alberta Schools Athletics Association brought changes to the criteria for hosting school sporting events, where host committees must identify how they will address healthy eating within their school community.

Changes made to environments

Partnering with local committees to host 12 Healthy Active School Symposia for 215 school communities around the province, resulted in changes to positive social environments in 67 per cent of survey respondents three months after the events.





Ever Active Schools is a hub for school health in Alberta.

Activities enable connections between school community stakeholders, organizations and community partners to strengthen the comprehensive school health approach and increase sustainability for such an approach at the local level. In 2013-14, the majority of partnerships identified were facilitated between the education and health sectors, between education and recreation/active living sectors and within the education sector (partnerships between schools and/or jurisdictions). While education is rightly at the core of partnerships we facilitate, this analysis also illuminates potential gaps and opportunities for the future. Partnerships between health, recreation/active living and other sectors (such as private, social and post-secondary) could be valuable ways to extend the reach of comprehensive school health work and improve the capacity of these partners to support it. Participation on inter-sectoral committees also allows Ever Active Schools an avenue to facilitate partnerships. Collectively Ever Active Schools staff engaged in 49 committees in this reporting period, compared to the 48 reported last year. See a full listing in Appendix B: Ever Active Schools Provincial Engagement 2013-14.

Key activities Ever Active Schools employs to facilitate partnerships:

- Hosting the annual Shaping the Future conference
- Implementing innovative project based learning opportunities
- Hosting 12 Healthy Active School Symposia around the province
- Maintaining a website as a central communication tool

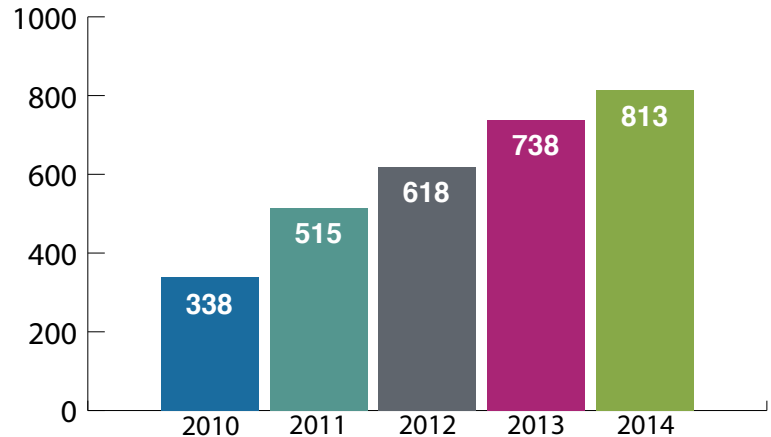
Support Wellness Education and Comprehensive School Health

Ever Active Schools supports school communities with tools for wellness education and with leadership for the comprehensive school health approach. Activities under this strategy include promoting membership, developing and distributing resources, and supporting the assessment, planning, implementation, evaluation and celebration of wellness in Alberta school communities.

Ever Active Schools Membership

- Increase of member and associate member participation to 813 schools
- Under the current membership program, members receive recognition, complete website access, event support, opportunities to participate in special projects and events, connections with other member schools, and member rates for workshops and presentations
- Initiated redesign of the membership program with stakeholder consultations via focus groups (one for south stakeholders in Calgary and one for central and north stakeholders in Edmonton). It is scheduled for completion in the next fiscal year.

EAS Membership Growth Over Time

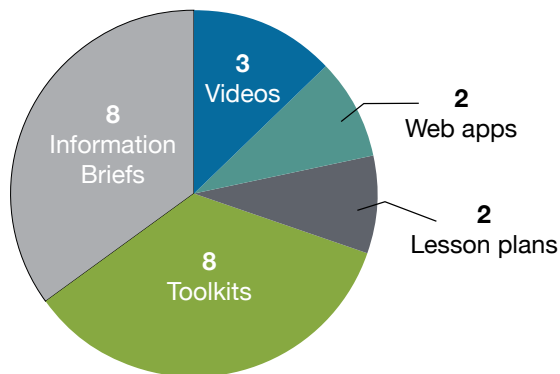




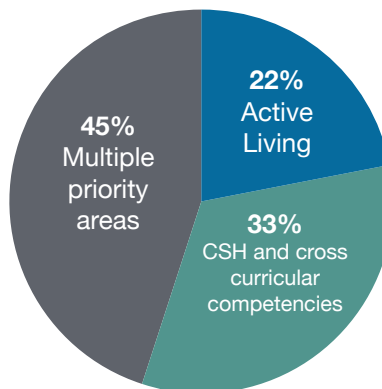
Resource Development and Distribution

Developing and distributing resources offers a tangible support for school communities. Historically, our resources have been directed at teachers in classrooms as a means to promote uptake in the priority areas of healthy eating, active living and positive wellbeing. However, the increasing importance to provide supportive resources for wellness education and the comprehensive school health approach that are interdisciplinary and competency-focused has strongly shaped resource development this year.

Resources Distributed by Type



New Resources by Topic



3,365

Total number of Ever Active Schools resources distributed including: Daily Physical Activity Bins, Recipe Card Lesson Plans, Safety Guidelines, Move and Play Cards, Snack and Activity Bites, Daily Physical Activity Greatest Hits, Youth Run Club Resources, Videos, Information Briefs

23

Number of different Ever Active Schools resources available to school communities

18

Number of resources developed this reporting period

78%

Per cent of new resources that focused on comprehensive school health, Cross Curricular Competencies, and/or multiple priority areas including: Building Student Competencies through Healthy Active School Symposia (1), Teacher's Journey through comprehensive school health and Curriculum Redesign articles (3), High School RCLPs (1), Comprehensive School Health Web Portal (1).

Assess, Plan, Implement, Evaluate and Celebrate

Supporting school communities through the change process of assessment, planning, implementation, evaluation and celebration is essential. In recent years, organizations that promote school health in Alberta have made great progress to consolidate efforts in this area. Notably, 2013-14 marks the first year of consistent use of the Joint Consortium of School Health, Healthy School Planner, a validated assessment tool offering a gateway to the change process for some and a more intensive perspective into school health for others. This collaboration has resulted

in 409 school communities now using the tool, double the 244 school communities with assessment tools in the previous year.

Additionally, Ever Active Schools worked to develop a web portal as an online tool to support the change process more thoroughly. It is designed as a platform for teams of school health champions to connect with several unique features including:

- A means to share within and across school teams and school jurisdictions

- Guidance through all stages of the process including assessment, planning, implementation of action plans and evaluation
- Integration of the Joint Consortium of School Health, Healthy School Planner as the assessment tool.

The online Comprehensive School Health Portal underwent review by stakeholders in June of 2014 and is scheduled to launch with a diverse spectrum of school health pilot users in September of 2014.



Communication and Knowledge Exchange

Ever Active Schools is a go-to organization for information and regular communication, collaboration and connecting on wellness for Alberta school communities. Through numerous communication platforms, Ever Active Schools is able to engage Alberta schools into working through a process of building a healthy school community. Best practices highlighted by Ever Active Schools connect research, practice and policy to create an environment for optimal health and learning.

Shaping the Future Annual Provincial School Wellness Conference:

Ever Active Schools hosted the annual Shaping the Future – Inspiring children and youth to be healthy learners conference, which brings together leaders from the health, education and active living sectors.

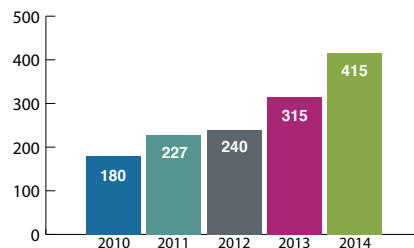
Evaluation Results:

Shaping the Future brought together professionals from different sectors to engage in learning opportunities that support the implementation of comprehensive school health strategies:

- 415 delegates attended, more than double the attendance from the first conference and representing a growth of 31 per cent from the previous year
- Of the 415 delegates in attendance, 61 per cent were from education, 17 per cent from health and 22 per cent from research, active living and recreation.
- There was representation from 55 of 61 Alberta school jurisdictions.

- The conference evaluations showed:
 - 96 per cent of respondents intended to use the information gained at the conference to create health and wellness initiatives in their school, community or organization
 - 95 per cent of respondents reported they feel confident in understanding comprehensive school health to inspire children and youth to be healthy learners
- Find the full report in Appendix C.

Increase in Shaping the Future Delegates





Communication to School Communities

Ever Active Schools disseminates information and facilitates conversations about wellness in school communities. In 2013-14, Ever Active Schools continued to improve and enhance our reach to schools champions. Ever Active Schools accomplished this by focusing on a social media strategy and expanding contact lists to further engage school community leaders. Continuing to share good new stories from schools that are creating and sustaining healthy school communities, Ever Active Schools has shared messaging around the provincial work of wellness, student leadership initiatives and success stories from schools that have embedded comprehensive school health.



Evaluation Results:

- Email – 5,097 subscribers, an increase of 43 per cent from last year
- Newsletter and electronic newsletter - 2,500 Alberta school recipients
- Social media - 508 Facebook likes and 1,352 Twitter followers, up 51 per cent from last year
- Ever Active Schools website:
 - 138,953 page views (number of pages that have been visited in 2012-13), up 44 per cent
 - 40,317 visits (number of times that people visited the Ever Active Schools website, includes repeat visitors), up 38 per cent
 - 23,270 unique visitors (number of visits to the site, not including repeat visitors), up 43 per cent
- Positive Press: media exposure promoting work around wellness in schools (see the table on page 19).



Ever Active Schools in the News

Media Outlet	Location
Global News Video, "Ask the Doctor" – AMA Youth Run Club http://globalnews.ca/video/920432/ask-the-doctor-21	Edmonton
CTV News Video, "Ever Active Schools" http://edmonton.ctvnews.ca/video?clipId=323487&binId=1.1203457&playlistPageNum=1	Edmonton
Edmonton Herald, "Did you hear something?" – AMA Youth Run Club	Edmonton
Daily Herald Tribune, "Healthy Active School Symposium Returns" http://www.dailyheraldtribune.com/2013/10/20/healthy-active-school-symposium-returnsSuccess	Grande Prairie
Peace River School Division Webpage, "PRSD Students Participate and Help Lead in the Healthy Active School Symposium" http://www.prsd.ab.ca/view.php?action=object&id=6773&stream=Homepage%20News	Lethbridge
Communities Choosewell Success Travels - Kainai Award	Alberta
Earthbox Newsletter, "Earthboxes Around the World" – Kainai Project http://earthbox.com/newsletters/education/fall2013.html	Online
Global News Video, "Health Matters" – AMA Youth Run Club Launch Video	Edmonton
CTV News Video, "Your Health" – AMA Youth Run Club Launch Video	Edmonton
CBC News Video, AMA Youth Run Club Launch Video	Edmonton

Capacity Building Through Innovative Projects

In 2013-14, Ever Active Schools supported and led innovative projects to provide meaningful solutions that support improved health and learning outcomes for Alberta students.

The findings from the projects have the potential to be shared provincially and the opportunity for best practices to be scaled up to impact more school communities across Alberta.

Ever Active Schools was able to leverage additional funding of \$307,763 to support innovative, collaborative wellness projects that have resulted in increased capacity and better understanding of evidence based approaches to improved health in children and youth. Project-based work helped lay a foundation of wellness and has provided an understanding of the actions and strategies needed to impact change in complex learning environments.

The projects on the following pages involved collaborative partnerships, resulting in increased capacity to address health and learning outcomes in Alberta students. Full project reports available upon request.

A view of the interior of the Kainai greenhouse.



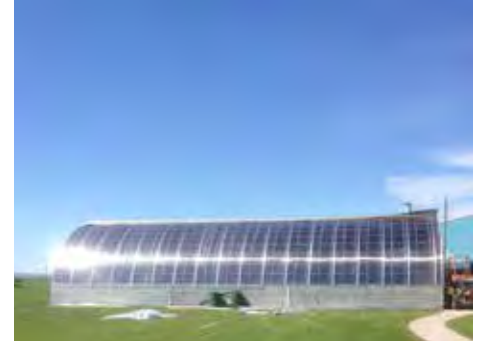
Supporting First Nations, Métis and Inuit Communities in comprehensive school health - In Partnership with Ecotrust, Alberta Agriculture, Calgary Zoo Grounds for Change and the Kainai Board of Education

In its second year (of three years), this work supports communities with a high population of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, who are at increased risk of obesity and co-morbidities, to improve health and engage students in making healthy choices.

Building on work in the Kainai region that used Photovoice to engage students in leadership in year one, the focus this year was on revitalizing the greenhouse at Kainai High School to increase healthy eating, connection to the land and environment and overall wellness of the school and entire Blood Tribe community.

Key Successes

- Built capacity to address wellness in an First Nations, Métis and Inuit High School environment
- Daily Physical Activity and Healthy Eating initiatives built within the school day
- Installation of Earthbox indoor gardens to begin making curriculum links to gardening activities
- Completion of structural upgrades to on-site greenhouse
- Expansion to share learnings with Piikani Nation Secondary School.





Alberta Medical Association Youth Run Club - In Partnership with the Alberta Medical Association, the Running Room and Alberta Physiotherapy

As a partner with the Alberta Medical Association (AMA) and other key stakeholders, Ever Active Schools has spearheaded a youth run club program in Alberta to tackle the decreasing levels of physical activity levels among school-aged children. After a pilot project in 2012-13, this represented the first year of the run club. It primarily aims to educate children about the importance of leading a physically active and healthy lifestyle while giving them an opportunity to be critical thinkers in their own personal growth and wellbeing. The goal is to instill the importance of regular physical activity in children so they form habits that become part of their everyday lives as adults.

Key Successes

- 233 schools participated in AMA Youth Run Clubs across Alberta
- 11,000 students participated in the AMA Youth Run Club
- 82 per cent of the teachers indicated that AMA YRC helped their student engage students who are not traditionally active
- Participants of the AMA Youth Run Clubs received an additional 40-50 per cent of Moderate to Vigorous Physical Activity as compared to provincial averages
- The program was a gateway to comprehensive school health, engaging approximately 55 schools that were not previously engaged as Ever Active Schools members.





Healthy Eating at School Sporting Events - In Partnership with the Alberta Schools Athletics Association

In partnership with the Alberta Schools Athletics Association, Ever Active Schools is continuing to support healthy eating initiatives at school sporting events in Alberta in the second year of this project. Year one utilized focus groups and input from 573 coaches, teachers and athletic directors to identify barriers to healthy eating within their school community and events. In 2013-14, Ever Active Schools aimed to develop tools to support schools through the barriers, where the third year will assess impact. Additionally, the project serves a connecting point for school district nutrition policies and action in the after school time period.

Key Successes

- Development of online toolkit with content for menu planning, evidence and guidelines, promotion and marketing and policy
- Policy change with the Alberta School Athletics Association event hosting application where applicants must identify how healthy eating will be supported at the event
- Collaboration with multiple partners (province- and nation-wide) to develop a visual lecture on Hosting Healthy Sporting Events to promote public support.



Clockwise from top right, the Healthy Eating at School Sporting Events interactive website landing page, an image from the whiteboard video, and healthy foods at an Ever Active Schools event.





After School Hours -
Healthy Hearts Initiative.
Students participated in
cooking clubs in multiple
locations throughout
Leduc County.

After School Hours – Healthy Hearts Initiative - In Partnership with the Public Health Agency of Canada

Year two of this project worked to scale up the successes from the first year with provision of resources to expand after school support in Slave Lake and provide learning opportunities for other communities through a pre-conference event at Shaping the Future.

Key Successes

- Increased sustainability for work in the after school period in Leduc County with the creation of a staff positions in local communities
- Built capacity and collaborative efforts in the after school time period in Slave Lake
- Increased communication and knowledge exchange for those working in after school programming across the province.





Competency Focused Learning Opportunities

Healthy Active School Symposia

Ever Active Schools led school health partners in 12 Healthy Alberta School Symposia events across the province, involving 215 schools from 45 jurisdictions with 1,732 student and adult participants. The events focused on building competencies that support students to become engaged thinkers and ethical citizens, with an entrepreneurial spirit.

The learning opportunities for students were competency focused and empowered students to develop communication skills, provided opportunities to think critically about their role as school health champions and experience interaction with others while working cooperatively with their school wellness team.

Improved evaluation practices this year allowed Ever Active Schools to better assess the changes in practice that occur following the Healthy Active School Symposia. Participants were asked to complete evaluations immediately following the event, and then again one and three months afterward. The findings showed sustained impact from the event and successful implementation of action plans. Some of the key findings are listed below, full report included as Appendix D.

“This was very informative and helpful. I would like it if we could present next year.”

Student comment on the HASS event

“This has been awesome for my students to take a leadership role. It has sparked them to do more.”

Teacher comment on the HASS event



Photos taken at the
Healthy Active School
Symposia events in
Red Deer, Camrose and
Parkland.

Student Skill Development

Resulting from Healthy Active School Symposia Partnerships

Thinking critically ///

93%

of adult participants agreed

98%

of student participants agreed

Identifying problems ///

86%

of adult participants agreed

97%

of student participants agreed

Communicating ideas ///

97%

of adult participants agreed

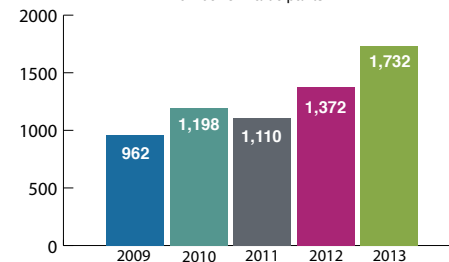
98%

of student participants agreed

Location of 2013 HASS Events



Healthy Active School Symposia Growth
Number of Participants



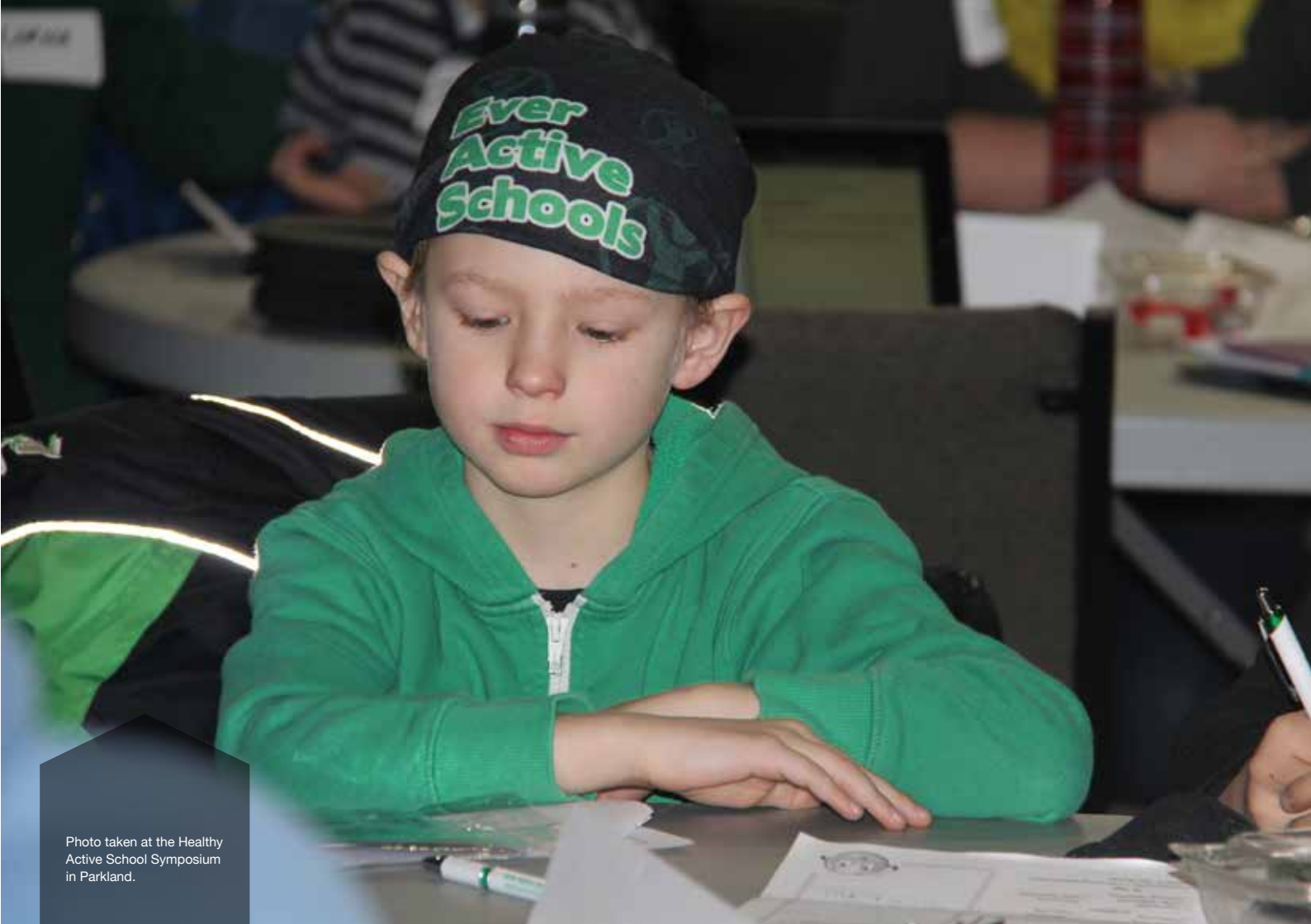


Photo taken at the Healthy
Active School Symposium
in Parkland.

Healthy Active Schools Symposia Results

Result	1 month post-event	3 months post-event	Notes
Changes to healthy eating practices	37%	62%	Healthy breakfast or lunch programs, announcements, special events ("Try It Tuesdays")
Changes to physical activity participation	36%	46%	Indoor recess, daily walk/run, active living challenges, active assemblies
Positive social environment changes	54%	67%	Student "recess guardians," awareness days, "Acceptance Project," student leadership
Increased community connectedness	67%	59%	Other groups in the community have supported their initiatives
Student development	71%	69%	Healthy Active School Symposia helped the students become leaders
Policy development	16%	15%	Most commonly nutrition/healthy eating

Competency Focused Learning Opportunities

69 per cent of school community leaders said that learning opportunities provided by Ever Active Schools had changed teaching practices and had an impact on student learning.

Ever Active Schools' learning opportunities are made available to school communities across the province and support a comprehensive school health approach, cross-curricular wellness, student leadership, support of the Daily Physical Activity policy and staff wellness. Learning opportunities provided to participants address the needs of school communities today and help prepare schools for the "education system of tomorrow."

Ever Active Schools presented a total of 81 learning opportunities to 2,133 participants over the past year:

- 69 per cent of school community leaders said that learning opportunities provided by Ever Active Schools had changed teaching practices and had an impact on student learning
 - Developed and delivered sessions at all Alberta Teachers' Conventions across the province of Alberta
 - 9 teacher conventions to 419 participants
 - Video learning opportunities (success stories and priorities of comprehensive school health)
 - 3,611 learning opportunities viewed on "Ever Active Schools" YouTube channel
 - Find the brochure of learning opportunities offered in Appendix E.



Physical Literacy
Summer Institute, held
in Edmonton, Alberta in
August.



Appendices

Appendix A: Ever Active Schools 2013-14 Financials

Appendix B: Ever Active Schools Provincial Engagement 2013-14

Appendix C: Shaping the Future Final Report 2014

Appendix D: Healthy Active School Symposia Evaluation Spring 2014

Appendix E: 2013-14 Learning Opportunities Brochure

*Appendices available upon request of Brian Torrance, Director.

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