


healthy schools ALBERTA

FALL 2021 | ISSUE #15



Supporting healthy school communities.



5 Ways to Reset Your Mental and Emotional Well-being

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Healthy Schools Alberta Magazine
Photo Contest Winners

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Feature Story: Creating Meaningful
Land Acknowledgements

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MEET OUR TEAM

For this edition, we opted to show you a little virtual activity!
In this game, our team each used two objects, a beach ball and pair of socks, and tried to bounce them off of one another and catch them – it's harder than it looks!



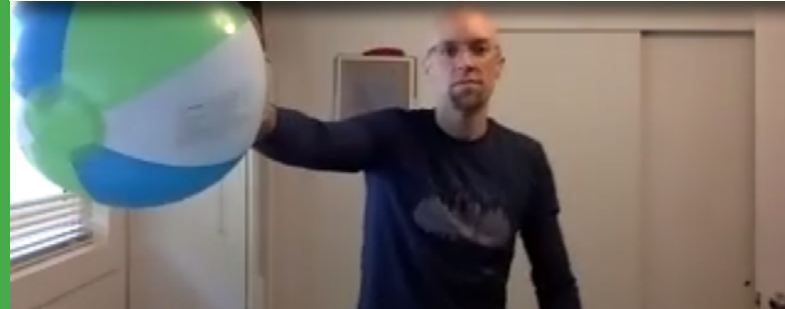
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ADVERTISING

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IN THIS ISSUE

Ever Active Schools acknowledges the First Nations, the Métis, and all of the people across Alberta who have marked these lands for centuries. We are grateful for the friendships, guidance, knowledge sharing and partnership in our shared work of wellness and reconciliation.

The 2020/2021 school year may not have been anybody’s favourite, but it is still worth acknowledging the struggles and celebrating the innovation and successes we all faced. Throughout this issue, you’ll find just that!

Do you have a story of your own to share? Get in touch! Please reach us at info@everactive.org or @everactiveab on social media. We love feedback, questions and stories!

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PLAN YOUR YEAR

2021/2022 HEALTHY SCHOOL COMMUNITY EVENTS

SHAPING THE FUTURE 2022
January 27-29, 2022 | Lake Louise (Treat 7 Territory)
This year, Shaping the Future is heading back to the mountains for an epic return to in-person events. Join us for three days packed with connections, ideas and wellness; or, if you can’t attend in-person, check out our virtual options.
www.everactive.org/stf

STILL I RISE 2022
Date TBA | Virtual
Hot on the heels of last year’s debut event, which saw more than 1,100 students attend, Still I Rise is coming back again!
www.everactive.org/events

TEACHERS’ CONVENTIONS
February/March 2022 | Virtual
Teachers’ Conventions are online again in 2022 and Ever Active Schools and HPEC will be back with fast-paced, interactive videos that you can put to use in your classrooms right away. Look for our sessions supporting Health, Physical Education, DPA and school-wide wellness this winter.
www.everactive.org/teachers-conventions

IWALK DAY 21 | WINTER WALK DAY 22 | WHEEL WEEK 22
October 6, 2021 | February 2, 2022 | May 29 - June 4, 2022
Never underestimate the power of event days to encourage more students and families to travel actively!
www.shapeab.com/list-of-events/



Visit www.everactive.org to discover other Ever Active Schools events and projects.



LET’S WALK AND ROLL TO SCHOOL
By Heloise Lorimer School, Rocky View Schools

The Walk and Roll to School program at Heloise Lorimer School all started as a part of our Comprehensive School Health approach.

We pride ourselves on promoting whole student wellness, and this year we chose to focus on mental health via increased time outside. Our ultimate goal was to help students and their families learn the value of an active start to the day and how this simple lifestyle change can have a big impact on overall health and learning.

Inspired by the Alberta Medical Association Youth Run Club, we decided that twice a week, our staff would meet in various areas in the community to actively commute to school with students and their families. Walk, bike, blade, scoot, or skate – the choice was theirs!

We kicked off the program with a modified Terry Fox Run by tracking kilometers travelled over a 2-week time period. We also coordinated our program start date with International Walk to School Week. More than 75 students and parents attended the first walk! Despite attendance levelling off over the following 2-3 months, the program continued to make an impact, often seeing 10-20 participants each day.

Though there were some challenges along the way (including a few lonely staff on a walk or two), we continued to roll forward (pun most definitely intended). Our program stayed strong until the end of 2020, when we were forced to stop due to COVID-19 restrictions. While this was disappointing, it has given us more motivation to renew the program next year.

In a year full of disconnect, we quickly learned how important this initiative was in helping students and their families feel connected to the school community. In addition to promoting a healthy lifestyle, this was valuable time for making connections and fostering relationships, which we know is key to educational success. We could feel the excitement from students and the appreciation from adults. The extra outdoor and activity time were clear benefits, too.

As you consider what the upcoming school year will look like for you, consider how a comprehensive school health approach could fit into your plans. We chose to Walk and Roll. How will you choose to move? ■

EVER ACTIVE COMMUNITIES
By Kerri Murray, Ever Active Schools

We are thrilled to introduce a new branch of our organization that responds to the need of localized, community-based support for well-being: Ever Active Communities! Through Ever Active Communities, we formally partner with community-based initiatives and organizations to enhance the local impact of our shared mission.

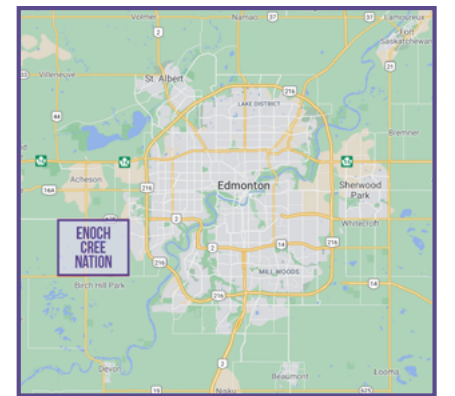
Community Profile: Medicine Hat

The Be Fit for Life centre of Medicine Hat has a 40 year history of supporting physical literacy across the lifespan for the communities of Southeast Alberta, working alongside the provincial Be Fit for Life Network and the Medicine Hat College. When funding cuts meant programming could no longer be sustained in the same way, a small grant from the Government of Alberta and a large effort from the local program staff made a transition possible. This centre now operates as part of Ever Active Communities with the same great services to the region and an enhanced capacity to bring provincial projects to life locally. Five part-time team members staff this regional hub under the continued leadership of Amy Risk Richardson.



Community Profile: Enoch Cree Nation

This partnership presents an opportunity for Ever Active Communities to support the health of maskêkosihk’s (Enoch Cree Nation’s) Indigenous youth through the development of a Community Hub for Enhancing Sport and Well-being. Positive peer mentoring to increase social connections and participation of youth, connections to high school credit-earning opportunities through leadership and coaching, and hosting sport and recreation events form the foundation of the Hub, complementary to existing community efforts. A full-time staff member will be hired to coordinate the Hub.



Ever Active Communities has launched to an enthusiastic reception within the sector. Steve Allan, Executive Director of Alberta Recreation & Parks Association (ARPA) says, “We have appreciated a longstanding provincial-level partnership with complementary scope across schools and communities with Ever Active Schools. We look forward to the ways in which ARPA’s Communities Choosewell Program and Ever Active Communities can work together to support healthy community settings and advance wellness in the province.”

We are grateful to the partner organizations of Ever Active Communities for the experience, passion and knowledge they bring to this exciting new chapter of community-based work. ■



SELF-REGULATION THROUGH MINDFULNESS, MEDITATION AND BREATHWORK

By Shonna Lamb, E-RYT 200, RYT 500, YACEP. Originally posted at [everactive.org](https://www.everactive.org)

With vast access to unlimited content, it can be overwhelming to know where to start when you want to develop a deeper understanding and relationship with meditation and mindfulness practices.

Some of the benefits of breathwork and meditation include:

- Increased self-regulation
- Slows heart rate
- Lowers blood pressure
- Increased levels of calm
- Sharpens the mind's ability to focus and learn
- Enhances daily happiness (we'd love you to report back your findings on this one!)

These practices have cumulative benefits over time with consistency. So, just like if you were wanting to train for a 5km race, you would craft a program to work with your schedule, resources and current level of endurance to slowly build over time.

Ever Active Schools and I have partnered together to create videos to help you dip your toes into various practices. You don't need to have prior experience, fancy clothes or a super calm mind to begin – you simply need to show up and try.

We are excited to share these videos with you and hope that you continue to experiment with them and even share with your loved ones, friends, students and children.

Find the videos on Ever Active Schools' Instagram (IGTV): @EverActiveAB ■

Shonna is a lifelong resident of Southern Alberta, mother to a very rad teenage boy and works in the field of philanthropy. She is trained in various styles of yoga, meditation, yogic philosophy, and yoga nidra (yogic sleep). She oversees and teaches for a donation-based organization called Pop Up Yoga Lethbridge to make yoga accessible to as many people as possible in her community.

- Website: shonnalamb.com
- Instagram: @shonnak

WISDOM IN PRACTICE: TEACHER MENTORING OPPORTUNITIES

By Katelynn Theal, Ever Active Schools

Last Spring, Ever Active Schools launched a peer mentorship opportunity, called Wisdom in Practice, for pre-service, new-career and veteran teachers alike.

Mentorship opportunities are valuable professional learning. They allow **mentees** to network, set goals, and learn how to navigate various work and personal experiences in teaching and education; at the same time, **mentors** have the chance to grow as leaders, learn more about the teaching profession, gain new perspectives and fresh ideas, and achieve personal career gains.

At the Wisdom in Practice kick-off, mentors were paired with mentees following "speed-dating" style coffee conversations. Mentees coordinated the conversations and set up the first meeting once matched. Groups selected activities based on mutually agreed upon goals to suit individual styles and preferences.

A few months into the mentorship, we checked in. Pairs were choosing to connect in different ways: video meetings, phone calls, emails and text messages. They shared different reasons for joining, such as building professional relationships during a COVID reality, exchanging ideas from different communities, and getting off on the right foot as a new teacher.

Some early highlights shared include:

- "I feel like I already have another friend." - Dayna Landry, mentor
- "Connecting with a like-minded human being! I have loved checking in and feeling seen and heard, and have already used a number of resources shared by my mentor. We have had outside chats on our decks—virtually, of course—and it has been an awesome experience so far!" - Sarah Balla, mentee
- "Sharing the excitement with my mentee as she has been interviewed for her first job and hearing about her experiences during her first placement." - Donna Davidson, mentor

Our pairs shared a few challenges as well. Many discussed the difficulties of coordinating time to connect with busy teacher schedules while balancing work and life. Some mentees reflected that, at times, finding the right questions for their mentors was difficult, but overall, the feedback highlights how the positives outweigh the challenges.

Ever Active Schools looks forward to following along the journeys of our pairs and hosting a year-end celebration next winter.

To participate in the next Wisdom in Practice, visit: www.everactive.org/mentoring/ ■

"Mentoring is often an unsung and unrecognized tool in preparing and nurturing individuals new to a profession. Such relationships provide invaluable insight and support." - Lindy Fors, mentor



IT TAKES A VILLAGE.

BUCKETS OF RESILIENCE: 5 WAYS TO RESET YOUR MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

By Kelli Littlechilds, CEO, ASEBP

If the last two years feel like a blur, you are not alone. Amid sudden pivots to online schooling and juggling our own emotions, we have discovered a collective strength that has gotten us through some difficult days.

Through it all, school districts and teams have remained focused on physically protecting students, families, and each other from COVID-19. But, for many, it has come at a personal cost—with many educational workers feeling they are at their emotional limit, unable to cope with continued uncertainty, worry, and pressure to do more with less. If this sounds familiar, you are not alone in how you feel.

The University of Calgary Werklund School of Education, in partnership with the Alberta Teachers' Association and the Alberta School Employee Benefit Plan (ASEBP), has been sharing research findings on the impact of compassion stress, compassion fatigue, and burnout in Alberta school communities. This work has given voice to the stigma many educational workers feel in sharing these thoughts with others.

The cost of caring

Traditionally, studies on compassion fatigue have examined the emotional and physical costs of caring borne by nurses, firefighters, and other health professionals. But it is taking on a broader definition that includes educational workers who work with staff and colleagues, students, families, and communities. Working within the education system is intense, deeply empathic work that requires establishing and maintaining trusting >

relationships—all while being on-call during the school day, reacting and responding to student needs, and planning lessons or answering emails after hours.

The act of caring, of showing kindness and compassion for others, makes us feel valued and gives our lives purpose. But it too can harm, especially if it slides into emotional exhaustion or feeling like you have nothing left to give. One of the first signs of compassion stress is that you do not feel like yourself. You may notice a change in your mood, sleeping habits, or appetite (eating more or less than usual), as opposed to a major red-flag event like a panic attack. If not addressed, you may find apathy and detachment replacing the passion and satisfaction you once felt in your work.

We all know the best educators are those who care. So, let us talk about some practical tips to help you identify if you are feeling compassion stress or compassion fatigue, and some strategies to help you cope if you are.

What to look for

Everyone experiences and copes with stress differently but, typically, these signs fall into four main categories:

- Emotional: feeling hopeless or powerless, detached, hypersensitive, or insensitive to stories you hear, or experiencing continued feelings of anger, irritability, sadness, or anxiety.
- Physical: headaches, difficulty sleeping, and being tense, agitated, or on edge.
- Cognitive: dwelling on difficult events/circumstances, thoughts of 'I should or could have done more,' reduced sense of accomplishment, difficulty concentrating, or making decisions.
- Behavioural: self-isolation, feeling less efficient or productive at work, self-medicating, increased use of substances, or other negative coping strategies.

So, what now?

If you feel like you are struggling with compassion stress or fatigue, it is important to talk with someone you trust. Check your ASEBP or other benefit coverage for supports such as massage therapy, physiotherapy, or to speak with a registered psychologist to help you heal. If you have a spending account, consider using these funds to cover the cost of a sleep and meditation app, a fitness class, or sports equipment to create new, healthy habits.

If you are not sure where to start, you might consider reaching out to your Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP), to inquire about short-term counselling or to get help with accessing the most appropriate services for your situation.

Outside of your benefit coverage, you might consider adopting some simple calming or coping strategies. What is important is that you identify strategies that work for you, as well as how and who will support you in sticking with them. Some ideas to consider:

- Focus on short bursts of high-quality personal time to re-charge and build resilience. For you, this might mean getting some fresh air on your lunch break or scheduling five minutes of alone-time to practice deep breathing. When we are busy, these small actions can help us from feeling overwhelmed. >

- Set healthy boundaries for yourself, ask for help if you need it, and do not feel bad for saying no.
- Keep a one-hour 'wind down' period before you go to sleep. Having a regular evening routine, where you do something relaxing or enjoyable, helps your body (and mind) get ready for sleep.
- Stay connected with trusted friends, family members, and mentors. Talking to someone about what you are going through can help you feel more grounded and part of a greater purpose.
- Do not neglect your health—make sure you are nourishing your body with healthy eating habits and regular physical activity. If you are not feeling like yourself, or have not for some time, make an appointment to speak with your family doctor.

Taking small steps and sticking to achievable daily goals can help you avoid getting stuck in negative habit loops and can boost your overall well-being.

As an organization, ASEBP is lending our voice to highlighting the impact of compassion stress, compassion fatigue, and burnout in the education sector and supporting educational caregivers on their journey to healing. Visit our mental health hub at asebp.ca/mentalhealth for more self-care information, community resources and support or follow us on Facebook or Twitter at [#ThinkShareHeal](https://twitter.com/ThinkShareHeal) and [#YourASEBP](https://twitter.com/YourASEBP). ■



THE PODCLASS

The Podclass is an educational podcast where our hosts chat with professionals in the worlds of health, education and well-being to explore connections between the three.

Stream The Podclass wherever you get your podcasts.

everactive.org/the-podclass

EXPLORE YOUR 2.4: GEOCACHE CHALLENGE AND COMMUNITY WALKABILITY

By Tracey Coutts, Ever Active Schools



Have you ever considered logging school day fun according to degrees, minutes, and seconds? Geocaching—a fun, free/low cost activity to get your class outside and active—may be the hidden gem you’ve been waiting for!

According to geocaching.com, “geocaching is a real-world, outdoor treasure hunting game using GPS-enabled devices. Participants navigate to a specific set of GPS coordinates and then attempt to find the geocache (container) hidden at that location.” Tutorials are available on geocaching.com for those interested in learning more.

The geocaching bug bit Stony Plain’s MY PATH Program and Forest Green School students this spring as a new way to explore their surrounding 2.4 kilometre walk zone. Parkland School Division 70’s Walking Field Trip Policy facilitated the activity for staff supervisors. They paired initial outings—visits to the town’s historical murals, which held clues to solving a geocaching riddle—with map reading, pedestrian safety, and assessing route walkability. Students then lead the return walks to school as opportunities to improve leadership and communication skills.

Every outing increased the students’ familiarity with community spaces and safe, walkable routes. Their confidence in actively navigating these spaces grew. After multiple finds, the students were ready to try hiding caches. They also wanted to encourage other Stony Plain students to try geocaching; and so, the Earth Day Geocaching Challenge was born. Students contributed to the building, hiding, and logging (using latitude/longitude coordinates) of five caches. As of June 30th, these five caches have recorded 148 separate log entries—a win for fun, active community exploration!

This challenge provided many wins, but it also took work. Cache owners are responsible for cache maintenance, meaning routinely checking to ensure the condition and placement of the cache. The wins, however, are well worth the effort.

Unexpectedly, students learned that community exists in the world of geocaching. Fellow geocachers leave messages for cache owners when they log their finds (or attempts!) that are overwhelmingly positive and helpful:

- “Such a fun find! The exhilaration of nature was truly emotional:)”
- “This (cache) was totally out in the open so I covered it a bit better.”

Such positivity encourages all cachers - those new to the experience and seasoned veterans - to continue this pastime.

Geocaching is for the explorer at heart and is an inclusive activity that builds even more fun into active community exploration. ■



P.E. ON THE PLAYGROUND: HOW TO DESIGN AN OBSTACLE COURSE

By Marta Orellana. Originally published at [activeforlife.com](https://www.activeforlife.com)

Educators across the country agree: teaching PE during pandemic times has been exceptionally hard! Many teachers had limited or no access to gymnasiums or equipment, and guidelines limited physical contact. With so many go-to games and activities suddenly off-limits, it was a struggle to find creative solutions to help students develop fundamental movement skills in meaningful ways.

Despite the struggles, some creative solutions emerged that will stick around even as the world returns to a state of relative normalcy. One simple solution that worked for my Grade 5 class is to hack the school playground and work together as a class to create a skill-building obstacle course.

Here's my recipe for a pandemic-safe PE unit that blends physical literacy, applied design, and fun. This unit can bring some purpose and a focus to your outdoor PE class, encouraging students to be active and work together to spread the fun.

Start with basic movement skills

Give students the chance to explore the playground equipment differently by asking them to find different ways to use the spaces.

You can say things like, "Pick three different places on the playground where you can jump," or "Find three places where you can balance."

Have students take turns showing you and each other all the spots on the playground where they can demonstrate basic movement skills, like:

- Hopping
- Jumping (straight, side, distance, height)
- Balancing (while walking, standing)
- Climbing (up, down, under)
- Going under
- Going through
- Going over >

Get creative with the equipment

A bench doesn't have to be for sitting—it can be a place to jump from. Crawl like a bear up the slide or climb the fireman's pole instead of going down it.

Here are some more things to try:

- Stand and balance on a spring rider or see-saw
- Crawl under the swings
- Swing and long jump off the monkey bars
- Plank on the bench

Start pulling all the elements together

If your students are like mine, by this point they have probably come up with all kinds of creative challenges on the playground. Now it's time to up the ante and challenge them to create an obstacle course for the rest of the class to try.

Give your students a clear explanation of what you want them to do, and what boundaries or rules they need to follow. For example, the obstacle course needs a clear start and finish. The route needs to follow a clear direction, and each stop should invite a change of activity.

You can also ask students to include a short list of particular movements, or to come up with variations that would allow classmates with mobility challenges to participate.

Conduct trials and test runs

In our class, students worked in small groups of two to three, but bigger groups of four to five kids could work well too.

After designing the course, groups in the class challenged each other, adding to and adapting activities to make them harder or easier, also allowing them to adjust their expectations.

Weave in some STEAM

You can incorporate some math and art into your unit too. Challenge older students to sketch a bird's-eye view of the playground. They could also calculate the perimeter and area, and label the various equipment. Students can then indicate on their sketches where each activity is to be performed. You could also use satellite images from Google Earth to help plan the obstacle course layout.

For younger students, you can skip this part and create a template that each group will mark with the instructions for their obstacle course.

You could ask students to draw stick-figure illustrations that show what to do, or take pictures of the students doing each activity. Glue these on the template near the area of the playground where the action happens.

Bring it to other classrooms

If your class is having fun with this, why not challenge the other kids at school?

In our class, I assigned my students to create either a primary-level obstacle course for kids aged 5-8 or an intermediate-level one for ages 9-12 (you can adjust depending >

on the ages at your school). The kids worked together to modify their courses to make them suitable for their assigned grade levels.

When everyone was finished, we blended together the best ideas to come up with a single, super-fun version for both age groups. We integrated skills like backward bear crawls across the playground bridge and swinging long jumps off the monkey bars. Then we challenged different classrooms to try our obstacle course.

First, my class walked the other kids through the challenges, explaining and demonstrating each station, showing others how to climb the fireman pole, and how to do two flips around the bars. After our training session, we left a copy of our obstacle course with each teacher, so that they could run the activity during outdoor PE time.

We saw students training and practicing their skills all the time—before school, at recess, at lunch, and after school, always trying to improve their finish times.

This meant that for some classrooms, outdoor time now had a clear purpose. Students enjoyed learning, teamwork, physical activity, and most importantly, had lots of fun.

Take it further: Make it a school-wide competition

Now that your students have come up with so many cool ways to move, can you get the whole school involved in creating something? Maybe each class could create an obstacle course to provide to the other classes.

Or maybe each class could hold an event to find their top competitor, who could advance to compete with others for the fastest time?

The options don't stop there. Why not get the whole school moving and working towards a common goal?

Have fun! ■

Marta Orellana teaches upper intermediate grades in a North Vancouver elementary school, where PE is generally taught by classroom teachers rather than PE specialist teachers.

Active for Life is a national initiative created to help parents raise physically literate children. At activeforlife.com, parents, educators, and coaches will find fun activities, engaging articles, and free resources to get kids active, healthy, and happy.



SNOWSHOE FUN
By Scott Bailey, Ever Active Schools

Thanks to support from the Calgary Parks Foundation, Ever Active Schools was able to share snowshoeing with nearly 1,000 students in Calgary schools over the winter of 2021.

Snowshoeing is an ideal entry-level winter activity – if you can walk and there's a little bit of snow on the ground, then you can snowshoe! Many schools across Alberta have invested in class sets of snowshoes to encourage classes to spend more valuable hours outdoors in the winter months. As part of our program, we encourage schools to make snowshoes available for families to borrow over the weekend through their school libraries. Watch our e-newsletter for opportunities to bring snowshoes to your school.

When kids learn how to snowshoe at school, they can teach their families on the weekend!

Here are a few quick tips to share with students and families to create a successful experience:

- There is no bad weather – only bad clothing! Make sure to dress in layers.
- When putting on your snowshoes, keep the buckles on the outside of each foot.
- It's best to put snowshoes on in the snow.
- Practice some basic skills in an open space, like falling down, getting back up, and turning around in a circle. ■



#JoinTheClub

Need a little workout inspiration? Check out this interval workout, brought to you by the AMA Youth Run Club! No equipment needed.

- 200m x 3 (1 minute break between each)
- 2 minute break
- 100m x 4 (1 minute walking break between each)
- 200m x 2 (1 minute break between each)
- 2 minute break
- 100m x 6 (1 minute walking break between each)
- 200m x 5 (1 minute break between each)
- 2 minute break
- 100m x 6 (1 minute walking break between each)
- 400m x 2 (1-2 minute break between each)
- 2 minute break
- 200m x 2 (1 minute break between each)
- 2 minute break
- 100m x 4 (1 minute walking break between each)

The AMA Youth Run Club provides a free, fun and flexible school-based, inclusive environment for children and youth in Alberta. ■

amayouthrclub.com



FOOD AND YOU

By Lindsey McGregor, Registered Dietitian

Eating well feels good! Fall is all about creating new routines. Speaking with a Registered Dietitian can help you get into your best eating routine.

With so much nutrition information out there, it can be hard to figure out what small practical changes you can make to your eating routine to promote better health. Dietitians can help!

Dietitians are supportive and knowledgeable health professionals that help simplify everyday eating. They are intermediaries who will break the noise and information overload. Above all, Dietitians will help you get to the heart of the matter - your relationship with health and food.

Alberta Dietitians and Nutritionists are University educated and registered with the College of Dietitians of Alberta. Find your Dietitian today with the Dietitian Directory: www.dietitiandirectory.ca ■



A fun, free healthy living app

One small step at a time, students will level up and discover tiny habits that will make them happier and healthier.

Students will learn to:



Be healthy eaters



Be screen smart



Be well rested



Be active



Be body positive



Be green

Students can share the health goal they are working on with their teacher and their parents. Aim2Be delivers a gamified, customized experience for kids 10-13 and 13+ years.

Aim2Be aligns with Canadian health & fitness recommendations.



For more information visit: aim2be.ca



FUELING YOUR WORKDAY

By Alberta Health Services
Registered Dietitians

As the leisurely days of summer fade into a distant memory, they become replaced with the daily bustle of getting up and out the door each day for school. Getting fueled for your workday can help energize you for your day ahead.

Taking some time each week to create a meal plan can fuel your workweek, while saving time, money, and stress over what to eat in the moment. Plan to have ingredients on hand to prepare nutrient-dense foods that meet your preferences, daily demands for time, and where you'll be eating - be it at home or on the go.

Follow Canada's Food Guide and use the Eat Well plate model - fill your plate with vegetables and fruits, whole grain foods, and protein foods.

Follow the 4 P's to make meals a breeze.

Plan

Planning is helpful for healthy eating. Without planning, we can be left scrambling, often turning to foods that are less healthy for us. A little pre-planning can go a long way.

Here are some ideas to get started:

- Set aside a time each week to plan meals for the week.
- Use a calendar or your favourite app and select recipes to prepare for the week.
- Include breakfast and snack foods too.

Look at the upcoming week's activities. If you have scheduled activities or commitments after work, plan a slow cooker meal

or plan to use leftovers. Evenings with fewer or no activities may be a great time to cook and prepare extra food for those time-crunched nights.

- Consider recipes that use the same ingredients - this helps reduce waste and save money. For example, use lettuce one day for salad and another day for tacos.
- Involve your family or household by asking for input, and ask them to share ideas for new recipes to try, or old favourites to include.
- Make a grocery list once you have your plan that includes the ingredients needed to make the recipes you selected.
- Keep previous menus and tried-and-true recipes for use later to keep in the meal rotation.

Purchase

Shop for ingredients to make meals and recipes. Often, our fresh foods go to waste before we have a chance to use them. If you make a plan to use them, it can reduce food costs over time related to this unintended waste and spoilage.

Check your pantry, fridge, and freezer for foods that you typically have at home and make your list based on what you need to make the recipes selected for your menu plan.

- When making your list, you can organize it by using the layout of your usual grocery store for ease of shopping.
- If available for you, ordering groceries online may save time and help you stick to your list.

Prepare

Choose healthy ingredients! Start >

with healthy, whole ingredients like fruits, vegetables, whole grain foods, and protein foods. Save time and money with these ideas:

- Use time saving appliances and tools like a slow cooker, pressure cooker, or mini chopper.
- Prepare ingredients ahead of time. For example, after grocery shopping, wash and chop vegetables and fruit before even putting your groceries away.
- Involve your family or household in food prep and delegate tasks that match the food preparation skill or ability of the helper.
- Cook once, eat twice. Make larger batches of recipes so you have a meal to eat now, and can freeze meals for another time.
- Consider time saving ingredients, such as mini carrots, precut vegetables, shredded cheese, and rotisserie chicken.
- Make planned extras: Cook chicken, beef, or beans that can be for supper one day then added to wraps, salads, quesadillas, or go into a soup.

Pack

In order to ensure that you are getting good healthy fuel during your workday, pack that healthy food with you. Some packing tips include:

- Have the right supplies on hand to make easy meals and snacks portable and food safe. This includes containers, ice packs, a lunch kit, or cooler.
- Make packing your next day's lunch part of your supper kitchen-time routine. This may also free-up some time the next morning.

- Individually package multiple days' worth of foods you eat often. Try making a large batch of overnight oats then dividing it into containers to keep in the fridge for several days of quick and nutritious breakfasts.

Include snacks and beverages to fuel your workday:

Snacks aren't just for kids. Unpredictable days and schedules can sometimes turn our mealtimes upside down. Snacks can:

- keep you energized
- provide important nutrients
- help satisfy your hunger between meals

Choose healthy choices for snacks that contribute to fueling your body and meeting your nutrient needs.

Keep shelf-stable snacks on hand for busy days and to avoid afternoon energy slumps.

Try these snack ideas:

- Veggies with hummus
- Fruit with nut butter
- Homemade energy bites
- Fruit and yogurt parfait
- Muffin and cheese
- Frozen smoothies
- Trail mix
- Rice cakes
- Whole grain crackers
- Roasted chickpeas
- Unsweetened applesauce
- Air popped popcorn
- Oatmeal packs
- Canned tuna and salmon with crackers

For more information, contact:
PublicHealth.Nutrition@albertahealthservices.ca ■

MYRETIREE PLAN



Are you over 50 and thinking of retiring?
Have retirement benefits under another provider?
Or maybe you're a surviving dependant of a former ASEBP covered member? If this is you, ASEBP's MyRetiree Plan is here for you!

Our plan offers:

1. **Options:** choose from single, couple or family coverage (everyone's needs are different)
2. **Monthly savings** of \$30-\$80 (when compared to competitors)
3. **A referral bonus**

4. **Rate guarantee** (until September 1, 2023)
5. Benefits **coverage indefinitely!**
6. Beyond industry-standard age cap for **emergency travel insurance**
7. **Life and AD&D** insurance (if under 65)
8. **Peace-of-mind!** We've been the primary benefits provider for Alberta's education sector for more than 52 years!

Piqued your interest? Find more information about our MyRetiree Plan at asebp.ca or email benefits@asebp.ca

ASEBP's MyRetiree Plan: Benefiting you today; there for you tomorrow!



LEADERSHIP LEARNING IN OUR "VIRTUAL" REALITY THROUGH VIRTUAL CREDIT CAMPS

By Jamie Anderson, Ever Active Schools

The shift to online learning has posed both unique challenges and possibilities for students and teachers for more than one year. Although access to technology remains a barrier experienced by many, virtual learning has also opened up new opportunities for students, especially those located in more rural communities.

Ever Active Schools jumped at the chance to take an existing program for high school students into the virtual classroom, to support capacity for physical literacy leadership among youth in the province.

In May 2021, Ever Active Schools delivered our first ever Recreation Leadership Virtual Credit Camp to students enrolled in Livingstone Range School Division's Pursuits Program. Over the course of two days, students joined our program from their homes to engage in experiential learning and interactive workshops focussed on the development of recreation leadership skills. Facilitated in partnership with the Be Fit for Life centre in Medicine Hat and with support from Alberta Recreation & Parks Association, we were able to bring together presenters and participants from all over southern Alberta. Students earned nationally recognized certification in HIGH FIVE, one high school credit, and a certificate in physical literacy leadership as a result of their participation. This program was especially timely for those students preparing for summer jobs in day camps and children's recreation programs.

Our first ever Virtual Credit Camp was offered under our Miyomahchihowin/In Good Health project portfolio. The goals of this project are to provide pathways to employment in the fields of recreation and human services through opportunities to earn high school credits, gain volunteer and work experience, and engage in relevant training. In the past, these projects have taken many different forms: from full-semester courses to spring break camps and credit-earning weekends. Based on the success of our first Virtual Credit Camp, we look forward to future opportunities to offer experiential learning in online classrooms this fall. If you are interested in exploring what a Virtual Credit Camp might look like in your school jurisdiction or community, contact us for more information: info@everactive.org ■

HEALTHY SCHOOLS ALBERTA MAGAZINE COVER PHOTO CONTEST

By Kayli McClelland, Ever Active Schools

For the first time ever, Healthy Schools Alberta is featuring student artwork on the cover and in a full spread in the magazine!

After a year of forgoing our on-the-ground work in schools, we realized we had very few photos to capture what the 2020/2021 school year actually looked like. In an effort to bring student voice to life, we decided to host a photo contest!

We asked Alberta K-12 students to submit artwork following the theme of “what I love about Alberta”. We received more than 65 incredible submissions, and our judging panel of four EAS staff members and four EAS board members had a tough job to pick winners!

After all the votes were tallied, grade 10 student Suneeta Dhol came out as the winner for her artwork depicting “the synchronicity between the gorgeous environment and human connection.” Congratulations Suneeta and our three runners up: Franka Sparks, Kyla Granado Bailey and Nirvana Ahmed! Thank you to everyone who participated – we were blown away by your enthusiasm and creativity. ■



WINNER:
SUNEETA DHOL, GRADE 10

“The art piece that I created encompasses the most beautiful aspects of Alberta; nature and community. The design showcases the gorgeous landscape of the province. Nature is always a source of unity, bringing families and friends together. I wanted to incorporate a story element in the design to express how nature perpetuates community. Growing up, being in nature and exploring the surrounding environment guaranteed my entire family coming together. The main idea I strived to capture was the synchronicity between the gorgeous environment and human connection.”

Oil pastels, pencil crayons and watercolour paints.



FIRST RUNNER UP:
FRANKA SPARKS, GRADE 11

“A young girl sowing the seeds of spring on the Wapta Icefield overlooked by Mount Saint Nicolas.”

Original photograph with custom embroidery.



SECOND RUNNER UP:
KYLA GRANADO BAILEY, GRADE 4

“My painting is a representation of the beautiful sunsets/sunrises, rivers, and mountains in Alberta, just like in Jasper and Banff. I love going camping with my parents and seeing the mountains. Nature is the most amazing thing. Its very peaceful to enjoy the sunrises early in the morning, and the sunsets at night! The sounds of the river flowing gives me joy as well. “

Acrylic paint.



THIRD RUNNER UP:
NIRVANA AHMED, GRADE 6

“This painting incorporates multiple things that I love in Alberta. The most obvious is the scenic beauty in Alberta, from mountains to lush forests and rivers. The second thing that I love about Alberta are the First Nations. I find that their culture and traditions are interesting and unique, and I am continuously learning about them. So I decided to draw a Blackfoot First Nation in my painting.”

Graphite, crayola paint and acrylic paint on canvas.



PD IN YOUR PJ'S

By Jamie Anderson and Rebecca Marjoram, Ever Active Schools

Ever Active Schools is bringing you professional learning that you can enjoy anywhere - in your PJs and/or on your patio!

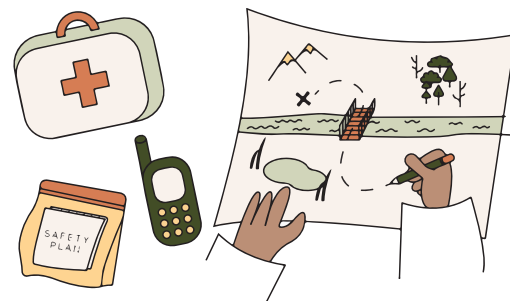
The Podclass is a podcast created with in-service and pre-service teachers in mind, offering conversations with experts and examples to shift practices to support healthy school communities. The show addresses topics like teacher well-being, positive nutrition messaging, inclusive physical activity, weight-neutral health promotion, and more.

Podcasts are a promising mode for professional learning and offer opportunities to invest in your own wellness as you listen and learn. You can listen while you walk, cook, craft, cycle, etc. All you need is access to a podcast platform and a set of headphones (or a speaker, if your neighbours don't mind...) Check out The Podclass today! You can find us on any and all major podcasting platforms, or visit us at everactive.org/services/the-podclass/ for more details. This is one class you don't want to miss! ■

OUTDOOR LEARNING MADE EASY

By Scott Bailey, Ever Active Schools

Ready to get your class outside? Ever Active Schools has just released a brand new deck-of-cards style resource: the Outdoor Learning Quickdraw!



Much like some of our other popular card decks, the Outdoor Learning Quickdraw features 52 unique activity ideas organized into four suits:

- **Physical Literacy cards** suggest activities to help develop agility, balance, coordination and strength skills related to all types of movement in the outdoors.
- **Teamwork cards** feature challenges for small group and full class activities that develop collaboration, communication and critical thinking.
- **Environmental Action cards** suggest activities and learning topics that can be tried as close as your schoolyard and as far away as hiking trails and provincial parks.
- **Outdoor Skills cards** feature key competencies for students to practice at school to prepare for single or multi-day trips into front and backcountry destinations.

Order your set at shop.everactive.org and let us know which activities you try first! ■

A VERSATILE CYCLING GUIDE FOR THE BUSY SCHOOL COMMUNITY

By Tracey Coutts, Ever Active Schools

With the growing popularity of cycling, demands for school-based cycling events are on the rise, but where does a busy school find the time to plan and prepare? Look no further: *Bringing City Cycling Strategies to Life: A Guide to Hosting City Cycling Clinics* is here to help.

If cycling events are new to your school, start small with a Bicycle Rodeo. Students move through stations to practise skills such as shoulder checking, balance and fitting a helmet. These events also give older students the opportunity to coach at the stations and develop leadership skills.

If your school is ready for something bigger than a Bicycle Rodeo, reach out to your local cycling community for help with things like mechanical safety checks and identification of safe cycling routes. Lead a guided ride through your neighbourhood. It's an adventure that builds core competencies: improving spatial familiarity and increasing confidence to travel actively, safely and independently.

No matter what your needs, this guide will wheel you in the best direction. ■

Download the free guide here: bit.ly/eas-cycling

WELL-BEING IN YOUR POCKET

By Katelynn Theal, Ever Active Schools

Back Pocket Well-being Boosters are here to, well, boost your well-being!

Designed for teachers, principals and school staff, these cards have got you covered. Brain Boosters, Team Meeting Boosters, Well-being Boosters and Conversation Boosters bring well-being to the palm of your hand – literally. Pull these cards out during conversations, in meetings, on breaks, and when you feel ready to better your well-being practice.

The cards are 4" x 3" and come neatly packaged in a matching box with 64 cards per box. Get yours at shop.everactive.org! ■



CRAFTING MEANINGFUL LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

By Adrian Xavier, Andrea Dion, Cassie Flett, Jamie Anderson and Katie Mahon; Ever Active Schools

In September 2020, Ever Active Schools began to question our practice of territory land acknowledgements. The tipping point for some staff could be expressed in the words of Kay Ho: “Oftentimes, when non-Indigenous organizers make a territory acknowledgement, it is done hastily, and then discarded.” (2014, An Introduction to Settler Colonialism: Part Three) This led to a pause in our practice and discussions with colleagues: Should this be done differently? How could we do it differently? What interest do we, collectively, have in doing this differently?

A crucial aspect of the learning experience, which we initially overlooked, was spending time as a team with an Elder. We asked, “how do we go about this?” and “what is the proper protocol?”

Gathering with Elder Russell Auger (Heatwave Buffalo Child) provided an opportunity to meaningfully pause and listen to him speak about the importance of land (askîy ᐱᐣᐅᐣ). This time also offered a safe place to reflect on the meaning and importance of acknowledging the land, and to share among one another what we do not know. The discussions and teachings with Elder Russ served as a reminder and encouragement to continue to learn and practice.

It has been important to invite our colleagues into this journey and weave our learning about land acknowledgements across the organization so these conversations are not separate from our work, but rather central to it. The intention is to embed this learning into the organization, prioritize decolonizing and Indigenizing the systems we work within, and how we take up comprehensive school health in our communities. We continue to share our learning across the Ever Active Schools team and have created some internal resources that will continue to support us in walking this journey together.

We thought it would be valuable to share some of our reflections about this process, including where we started from and where we still have to go. Read on to learn the experiences of five of our staff members: Adrian Xavier, Andrea Dion, Cassie Flett, Jamie Anderson and Katie Mahon. >



Adrian, Jamie, Katie, Cassie, Russ and Andrea gather around a fire.

What was your previous knowledge around or experience with land acknowledgment?

Adrian: My beginnings with land acknowledgement started when I was teaching with the Toronto District School Board. A land acknowledgement was read daily during the morning announcements, and this sparked a personal curiosity to learn how the land acknowledgements differed depending on the location of schools across Toronto. What also strikes me as I look back on the experience was how some students would challenge themselves to recite the acknowledgment from memory. At the time, I didn’t (and still don’t) know what to make of it – the students were listening and engaging, yet doing so in a rote way. Is it meaningful if there is a disconnect between the words being spoken and who and where we are speaking of?

Jamie: The first territorial acknowledgement that I witnessed was at an LGBTQ2S+ Pride event in Vancouver, about a decade ago, and I think that this formed some of my early conceptions (and misconceptions) about land acknowledgements. Given the nature of the event, I remember interpreting the acknowledgement as an act of resistance to ongoing colonial violence, specifically that which took place in Vancouver leading up to the 2010 Winter Olympic Games. The non-Indigenous speaker shared a quote from Lilla Watson, a Murri (Indigenous Australian) activist, which I continue to hear at pride events: “If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.” A significant learning from this experience was the recognition that colonial violence is interconnected with other forms of violence and oppression, like homophobia. That said, I think that my early understanding of land acknowledgements was limited, thinking that the acknowledgement itself was enough in terms of resisting colonial violence. Additionally, I attributed it as a responsibility of non-Indigenous people, failing to learn about and recognize the histories and traditions of land acknowledgement within Indigenous communities.

Andrea: When I first heard a land acknowledgement provided I was so proud of my Indigenous heritage and identity. As it became more of a common practice, my hope for acknowledging lands tied to culture and history increased. It’s important for organizations and communities to remember and honour the land and its original inhabitants. The calls to action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission were developed as a pathway to reconciliation with contemporary societies and the Indigenous lives that are from these lands. My connection to the land acknowledgements are based on pride of my culture and ties to the land through ceremony and I hope that all our paths forward pay homage to the Indigenous peoples for generations to come.

Share one impactful takeaway from this experience thus far.

Adrian: A territory/land acknowledgement is not something to be recited. It is an intentional moment in time to reflect on and consider your relationship with the land and how your connection with the land is meaningful to you personally, professionally and in relation with others. It’s dynamic. How we think, feel and act towards the land is unique >

in every moment we consider it. Who we are today is different from who we will be in a month's time, so when we share our acknowledgement with others it evolves and can be somewhat ever-changing because of what is happening within and around us.

Katie: As a non-Indigenous person enculturated in the Western world, which values fast and busy, I am continually learning the lesson to slow down; I am learning this lesson across my personal life, within my work and specifically my work in partnership with Indigenous peoples and communities. Taking action is important; we won't achieve healing and reconciliation through dialogue alone. However, meaningful action can only be taken from a place of understanding, which requires listening first. Our team identified the opportunity to evolve our understanding and our practice around offering Land Acknowledgements with enthusiasm and, invariably, speed. I am grateful for Elder Russ' gentle guidance to slow down and embrace the learning journey with respect and care; I am grateful for an organization that supports the speed of this important work.

Cassie: It is extremely hard to pick just one take away from such a powerful experience. This work around land acknowledgement has been very valuable and extremely humbling. The biggest lesson for myself was that the learning will never stop and that we will continue to learn about important processes like this everyday. This is not just reading a land acknowledgement and you have done your part; it goes deeper than that, and how to take what you know and apply it to your everyday life. An extremely important lesson was that it is okay to say, "I don't know;" but it's important to nurture your understanding and not stay in that place of not knowing.

Where do you envision this going within Ever Active Schools?

Katie: Ever Active Schools has long valued equity as a core priority of our work; our organization was founded on the principle that all children deserve to belong to healthy school communities. As we've grown and evolved, we've dedicated time and effort to advancing the priorities of equity, access and inclusion not only for the communities we serve but also within our internal practices and communication. Over the last few years we've grown further still by formally naming this work across our organization, creating dedicated portfolios and committing team time and people power to advancing efforts towards equity, access and inclusion. I am deeply moved and motivated by our work on creating meaningful Land Acknowledgements as an intentional piece of this broader puzzle and as a commitment to action to advance truth and reconciliation. As an organization, we will only continue to grow, to learn and build understanding, to challenge biases and to advance issues of equity and justice for all.

Cassie: As an organization we have come a long way in this process, and it wasn't quick and easy. Challenging your own understanding is probably one of the toughest tasks out there and learning to slow down to really think through this work requires patience. We operate in a fast-paced world of quick fixes and easy solutions, and what I envision our work around Land Acknowledgement is sharing how our process has been impactful for individuals. >

Jamie: I think there is a lot of learning and growth ahead to continually weave and braid this learning into our day-to-day work so that we can nurture our relationships with the land and with each other. I think it's also important to reflect on, for me at least, what it means to have privilege to share in this learning as a white settler and that keeping this notion of relationship in the abstract, or in conversation and learning alone, is problematic. I think the path forward involves living these relationships in a better way and living that responsibility to others in real and tangible ways every day.

Andrea: I am excited for the meaningful work that we as a team have accomplished in bringing a respectful path to learn together; I envision our team continuing to respect traditions yet strive to improve understanding of equity for all the students and people we interact with. I highly encourage school communities to take meaningful steps to engage local Indigenous knowledge keepers to assist them in implementing land acknowledgement in the culture of their communities. This work is so crucial to connecting people to the lands as we are all rooted in places tied to experiences and history.

A land acknowledgement is a deeply personal step towards reconciliation. In bringing our experiences to our wider team, we asked everyone to find a photo that helps them feel connected to the land. Each person had a personal story or feeling to accompany their chosen photo. We nudged everyone to channel those stories and feelings into their land acknowledgements, to create them from the heart and dig deep to understand the importance of the land for all who have been and will be a part of it: past, present, and future. We encourage you to reflect on and further your own knowledge so that you can deliver honest and grounding land acknowledgements, and so that we may all move together towards reconciliation. ■





January 27 - 29, 2022
Lake Louise, AB

everactive.org/stf

See you –in the– *mountains*