



A Health Promoting Schools (HPS) approach fosters healthy, inclusive, and vibrant school communities that enable everyone to learn, grow, thrive, and succeed. This comprehensive approach is used to address low levels of physical activity. Only 28% of children and youth meet the physical activity recommendations in the Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines.

Increasing physical activity and reducing sedentary time has profound effects on the health and learning of children and youth. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Education developed the [Physical Activity Framework for NS Schools](#) (2023) to guide Regional Centres for Education, Conseil scolaire acadien provincial, and school communities to support students to move more and sit less before, during and after school.

The following demonstrates the HPS approach's four component areas applied to goals for physical activity. Under each are action areas that build coordination and momentum toward the goals.

School Environments

- Barriers to participation in school, education and recreation activities are removed (e.g. equitable gymnasium schedules; community use of school; fewer restrictions in play spaces)
- Schools, classrooms, properties and amenities facilitate active learning, movement, outdoor play and active transportation. (e.g. classroom configuration; outdoor active learning amenities; bike/scooter storage; driveway/lot safety measures)
- New and upgraded buildings and properties are designed to promote a physically active school environment.

Teaching and Learning

- Core health and physical education curricula are delivered by an adequate number of qualified and trained teachers.
- School staff have opportunities to advance their understanding of social, emotional and healthy child development and healthy living concepts, such as physical activity.
- Teaching practices and in/outdoor spaces facilitate physically active learning across subjects.
- Minimum instructional time for physical education is met or exceeded.

Health Promoting Policies

- Transportation policies enable and encourage use of active transportation and transit.
- School insurance policies enable participation in a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities.
- Community-use-of-school policies enable municipalities and community groups to access school property for recreational programs, with priority for young people and their families.
- School policies are revised according to their impact on encouraging and inhibiting movement.
- Time allotted for breaks and lunch account for sufficient time to eat and move/play.

Services and Programs

- Students provide input on their needs regarding school environment, services and programs.
- Programs are developmentally appropriate.
- Programs follow best practice standards.
- School active travel plan, programs and resources support students to walk, cycle or wheel.
- Teams and clubs (structure, schedules) facilitate participation among more low-/inactive students.
- Movement is a priority in after-/before- school programs, extracurricular activities, events, trips.