

# Ophea Update (Ontario Healthy Schools Coalition)

June 2020

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## Advocacy

### Prioritizing Well-Being within Ontario's Recovering Education Sector

- As we prepare for the re-opening of schools in the Fall, Ophea's advocacy work is focused on prioritizing the health and well-being of students, families, and staff.
- All students (and families) have encountered different levels of stress, anxiety and loss through this pandemic and will bring that experience to school with them.
- Well-being is always central to our education system. Students can't learn—and we can't teach—without it.
- Health and Physical Education (H&PE) will have an important role to play when schools re-open. In fact, it's already proven essential to student well-being at this difficult time as it's the only curriculum where student outcomes and expectations directly related to well-being and social-emotional learning are fully embedded across all teaching.
- The implementation of the Health and Physical Education curriculum supports students in recognizing and managing stress, building resiliency, developing communication and emotional regulation skills, and solving problems. It sets the foundation for student well-being and learning.
- This will also include understanding how H&PE classes can run in consideration of any space limitations in schools (such as gymnasiums being used for other purposes) and public health standards.
- Other policies such as Daily Physical Activity should also be considered as an opportunity to increase activity amongst students (whether they are learning in school, at home, or a combination of the two).

## Programs and Resources

### Healthy Schools Certification

- Healthy Schools Certification (HSC) ran with an adapted approach which included extending deadlines by a month into May and modifying certification levels (schools completing steps 1-4 are certified and schools achieving 800 points or above and passing an audit were certified as Gold schools).
- This year, **137 schools** across the province were certified, including 96 Gold certified schools! To check-out how this unique year shaped up [here's a list of certified schools](#).
- Given the current situation with school closures, we will be mailing recognition banners in Fall 2020 (although electronic banners are available by request via email – [healthyschools@ophea.net](mailto:healthyschools@ophea.net)).
- While schools can no longer edit any of their reporting information, they can still access their submission by clicking the “Print” button next to each step until June 30, 2020. This information can be saved to support healthy schools work in future school years.
- For the 2020/2021 school year, we will continue to closely monitor how schools will operate in light of COVID-19 and adapt our approach (as needed) to continue to support health and well-being in schools. We do intend to run the program but we will be sure to support schools as much as we can and be flexible as needed.
- We are also running a HSC pilot nationally in partnership with PHE Canada, Ever Active Schools in Alberta and DASH BC. This pilot will continue into next school year with the goal of potentially expanding HSC into other provinces in the future.

### H&PE At Home

- Ophea's **H&PE At Home Resources** have been developed to provide curriculum-linked resources to support educators, parents/caregivers and students progress in their learning.
- These resources include:
  - **Ophea Open Class:** Each Monday at 10:30am, April through June, a recorded demonstration video will be posted with a different lesson, game or activity from Ophea; highlighting curriculum expectations, learning goals, safety requirements, equipment, and success criteria for primary, junior and

- intermediate learners. Each Friday at 3:00pm, Ophea will host [a live online session](#) with our Ophea Ambassadors to answer questions on that week's lesson, game, or activity.
- **H&PE Content** including: mindfulness activities, physical activities, dance activities, physical activities with math, health and financial literacy activities, and puberty and health activities.
  - Ophea is also incorporating physical activity breaks into online programming through a partnership with TVO Kids and their 'Power Up' programming for teachers.
- Ophea is currently in the process of developing additional H&PE at Home supports to address the gaps identified in our recent needs assessment and environmental scan. The phased release will take place throughout the remaining 2019/2020 school year and potentially into the 2021/21 school year (depending on the circumstances).