



## School Community Partnerships Moving Knowledge to Action: Relevance and Implications for Community Health Nurses

**10<sup>TH</sup> NATIONAL COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSES OF CANADA CONFERENCE 2015**

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## Outline


- **Presentation Objectives**
- **Background and Purpose**
- **Methodology**
  - Enhanced Knowledge to Action (KTA) in Schools
  - Mixed Methodology Design
- **Findings**
- **Acknowledgements**

## Presentation Objectives

**Following this presentation participants will:**

- (1) have an increased understanding of the partnerships required across education, health and community settings to support healthier youth lifestyles in schools,
- (2) develop an appreciation of common barriers to, and effective strategies for, moving knowledge to action within school communities that could inform similar school/community partnership initiatives in other jurisdictions

**Relationship to CHNC Blueprint**




## Comprehensive School Health Research Group




- Multi-disciplinary research team formed in 2003
- Co-Principal Investigators: Dr. Donna Murnaghan and Dr. Jo-Ann MacDonald
- **Goal of CSHR Group:** conduct policy-relevant research that contributes to healthy school environments that promote the optimum health of youth
  - Research focus is youth health with schools as a setting
  - Various influences on health: students, families, communities, policies, etc.
  - Partnership with local / provincial / national collaborators
- **Current Projects:**
  - School Health Action Planning and Evaluation System – Prince Edward Island (SHAPES-PEI)
  - Canadian Student Tobacco Alcohol and Drugs Survey (CSTADS)
  - (S)chools (A)gainst (C)ancer - Using a (K)nowledge to Action Process (SACK)

## Monitoring and Surveillance of Youth Health: SHAPES-PEI



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**YEAR 1: School Health Assessment & Feedback for Planning**

- Biennial Data Collection (grades 5 -12)
- Joint implementation of provincial and national surveys
  - SHAPES-PEI (provincial)
  - Canadian Student Tobacco Alcohol and Drugs Survey (CSTADS) (national)
- Topics:
  - Healthy Eating, Physical Activity, Substance Use, and Mental Fitness
- Voluntary School and Student Participation
  - 90% of PEI schools / 80% of PEI students (approx. 8 500 students)

## Monitoring and Surveillance of Youth Health: SHAPES-PEI

### YEAR 2: Action, Evaluation, and Adaptation

- **School-Level Student Health Profiles**
  - Health behaviours and attitudes of students at each participating school
  - Profiles provided to administrators via email
- **Board-Level Student Health Profiles**
  - Aggregate data from all schools in board
  - Profile provided to board superintendent
- **Provincial Youth Health Profile**
  - Aggregate data from all participating schools
  - Provincial data released in conjunction with Health Canada's release of CSTADS

## Monitoring and Surveillance of Youth Health: SHAPES-PEI

### YEAR 2: Action, Evaluation, and Adaptation

- **PEI School Health Grant**
  - Annual funding for evidence-based projects that address school health issues
  - Grants can be led by principals, staff members, Home & School, or (ideally) a committee of various school community members
- **Knowledge Exchange/Partner Engagement:**
  - School Communities (i.e., students/teachers/parents)
  - Provincial NGOs/Alliances
  - Provincial Departments

## SACK: (S)chools (A)gainst (C)ancer: Using a (K)nowledge to Action Process

Canadian Cancer Society Research Institute (CCSRI) Knowledge to Action Grant (Sept. 2013 – July 2015)

- PEI and Manitoba schools were recruited to monitor the impacts of a knowledge to action (KTA) process on school health policies and programming.
- 10 PEI schools participated in an enhanced KTA process to:
  - Increase knowledge exchange processes and uptake of available evidence (SHAPES-PEI school data)
  - Work collaboratively with school communities to develop action plans based on available evidence (following a Healthy School Communities approach).
- Participating PEI schools created **school action teams** composed of a variety of members (e.g., students, teachers, parents, and community partners).
- School action teams worked collaboratively to create **action plans**.

## Moving Knowledge to Action

- Knowledge Cycle
- Action Cycle

## Building a Healthy School Community (HSC)

- School action teams completed action plan based on HSC framework
- HSCs rely upon the involvement of students, staff, administration, family and community members
- Community partnerships and services recognize that educators cannot be the sole providers of health info and/or interventions

**Healthy School Communities Framework (Basset-Gunter, et al., 2012)**

## School Health Activity Planning

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS & SERVICES: providing access to partners and services that can support students.					
Critical reflection: Examples of what we are doing well in COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS & SERVICES	Critical reflection: What we would like to improve in COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS & SERVICES				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RCMP regularly in to discuss various aspects of student life questions (drug awareness, law, lockdowns)</li> <li>• Public Health nurses support our health curriculum (sexuality topics, etc.)</li> </ul>	Students are showing many signs of stress and anxiety in the classroom when faced with different tasks (quizzes, tests, exams, group work). We want to develop in them the ability to face these challenges with relaxation techniques (meditation, breathing exercises)				
Goals for Community Partnership & Services	Indicators of Success	Actions	Timeline	Responsibility	Partners/Resources
SACK Project	Students regularly use techniques to relax prior to beginning a different task.	Techniques are implemented regularly by all staff	April-May	SACK Team and staff	Yoga Instructor
Future Goals:	Child is comfortable with the techniques (and use them) at home and school	One evening session	May 2014	Principal, SACK Team	Yoga Instructor

## SACK School Activities



SACK Schools chose to use a variety of strategies to address their school health needs, including:

- Additions to wellness rooms and **purchasing of equipment** (e.g., pedometers, snowshoes, etc.)
- **Targeted groups** (e.g., girl's fitness group) and **school wide events** and programs (e.g., fun days, fitness month, anti-bullying program, etc.)
- Introduction of **non-traditional physical activities** (e.g., zumba, geo-caching, scavenger hunts, etc.)
- **Guest speakers** (e.g., dietician, education/career planning, stress management, etc.)



## SACK School Activities: The Role of Community Partnerships

Schools accessed support (in various ways and to various degrees) through community partners to assist in the implementation of action plans.

- **Local health and recreation organizations** (e.g., Go! PEI, HEA) coordinated events and hosted activities for schools, taking the burden off school staff.
- **Local health and recreation leaders** drew on their personal knowledge/expertise to provide leadership for a variety of activities in their school communities.
- **School staff and parents** volunteered their time to support, plan, lead, supervise, and participate in school activities with students.




## Moving Knowledge to Action: Facilitators


### STRATEGIES USED BY SACK SCHOOLS TO TRANSLATE LOCAL HEALTH EVIDENCE INTO ACTION

## Facilitating KTA in Schools


- **Student Voice** – Students as generator of ideas, meaningfully involved and engaged
- **Having a Team** – Important for goal setting, division of responsibilities/duties, and uptake of health activities by school community
- **Effective Administrator** – Sets school agenda, secures staff buy-in and can adapt programming to school community

*"If you get students involved, I like to see [them] leading. Like, we give them the tools and then they do it because I just think, the same people planning and teachers leading all the time, you know - the impact is not as great as students doing it."*

*- Intermediate School Vice-Principal*




## Facilitating KTA in Schools



**Individual Champions** – To lead initiatives; successful leaders take ownership/responsibility for a project, but divide tasks among a team members

**Student Uptake of School-Based Activities** – Offering alternative activity options that focus on fun, are less competitive than traditional school sports, and build a sense of belonging/school connectedness

**Community Partnerships:** Engaging with people and organizations outside of the school that can help plan, support, fund or implement health initiatives



## Moving Knowledge to Action: Overcoming Barriers

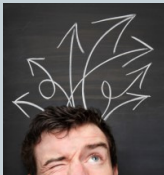
### USING SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS TO MITIGATE SCHOOL HEALTH BARRIERS

## Overcoming Barriers to KTA

- **Human Resources**
  - Lack of parent/community volunteers
  - Overburdened school staff
  - Over-representation of certain voices in priority setting, decision-making and activity planning

**How Can School - Community Partnerships Help?**

- Build the broader **school community**
- **Reduce staff burden** for overseeing activities and leading programs
- Enhance knowledge base; provide **new expertise**
- **Offer new perspectives/voices** in school health planning and decision-making




## Overcoming Barriers to KTA

- **Time**
  - Activity planning/organizational time for school staff
  - School day schedule (inflexible curriculums, limited 'time off task')
  - Limited time for 'extras' before, during, or after school hours

**How Can School - Community Partnerships Help?**

- Offer **easy to implement** activity plans to schools
- **Connect** schools to community resources
- **Adapt programming** for unique school environments
- **Be flexible** to accommodate school time constraints




## Overcoming Barriers to KTA

- **School Infrastructure**
  - Lack of outdoor equipment and facilities
  - Physical space within a school
  - Student transportation issues
- **Financial Resource Challenges**
  - Short term funding seldom creates long term impact

**How Can School - Community Partnerships Help?**


- **Share facilities and/or equipment** with local schools
- **Target programming** to address particular school needs (e.g., no cafeteria, lack of outdoor PA opportunities, etc.)
- Support schools through **donation** of time, resources, and services
- **Initiate and foster** relationships with school admin/staff



## Steps to Fostering School and Community Partnerships

**How Can School - Community Partnerships Help?**

- **Share facilities and/or equipment** with local schools
- **Target programming** to address particular school needs (e.g., no cafeteria, lack of outdoor PA opportunities, etc.)
- Support schools through **donation** of time, resources, and services
- **Initiate and foster** relationships with school admin/staff



*"We don't collaborate enough between the schools, because there's so much going on **within** our school, but it's nice to know, "what's the other school doing? And who's that contact person?"*  
- High School Vice Principal

- Re-envision what a 'school community' looks like
- Build capacity for enhanced communication/sharing between schools
- Use a comprehensive approach to embed health within school culture






## Acknowledgements

**Funders and Project Partners:**

- Canadian Cancer Society (KTA Grant #701900)
- PEI Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
- PEI Department of Health and Wellness
- Health Canada
- Propel Centre for Population Health Impact, University of Waterloo

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## Thank You!

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