

This edition of the newsletter "Health Matters" is created by the ASBA Student Health and Wellness Task Force.

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The Essential Conditions for Implementing Comprehensive School Health

Comprehensive School Health (CSH) is an effective approach for creating healthy school communities, which has been shown to enhance health behaviours of students while also improving academic outcomes. Despite this effectiveness, there is a need to focus on how CSH is implemented. With this in mind, researchers from the University of Alberta looked to key stakeholders ($n=125$) within CSH project schools in Alberta to understand what needed to be in place for successful implementation.

Ten conditions were identified and grouped into two categories: *Core Conditions* are those necessary for CSH to be successfully implemented while *Contextual Conditions* have significant influence on whether the core conditions can be obtained. These combined with already established process conditions represent the essential conditions of successful CSH implementation as described below.

Core Conditions

Students as Change Agents: Students are the heart of CSH; their enthusiasm increases engagement and students are also drivers of change in the home environment.

School Specific Autonomy: Interventions need to be flexible to allow each school to build upon their strengths, assets, and needs. This builds a sense of ownership for the school community.

Demonstrated Administrated Leadership: Administrator (i.e., principal) support is vital to implementation; administrators need to be actively engaged to help shift the school's culture.

Dedicated Champion to Engage School Staff: Whole staff engagement is important for ongoing CSH integration and sustainability. A dedicated champion was seen as essential to facilitate engagement.

Community Support: Establishing strong internal and external relationships helped alleviate the pressures of implementation, creating a 'village' of support.

Evidence: Access to local school-level data was key to planning and refining implementation, celebrating successes, and gaining stakeholder buy-in.

Professional Development: Ongoing professional development opportunities provided staff with CSH-related knowledge and skills to keep the project moving and build confidence.

Contextual Conditions

Time: Enough time needs to be dedicated for implementation success; this allows for CSH to be viewed as an embedded part of the school culture.

Funding and Project Support: Sustainable funding and project support greatly contribute to implementation.

Get engaged into
CSH implementation
conversation



Shaping the Future 2018: A Pan- Canadian School Health Summit

January 30 -
February 3, 2018, at
Lake Louise. The
Pan-Canadian School
Health Summit will
build upon other
provincial and
national events to
continue the
conversation on
positive, inspiring
and evidence-based
initiatives occurring
across Canada.
Leaders in education,
health, active living,
research and policy
will gather from
across the country to
contribute to shared
work and build a
network of support
for healthy school
communities.

To register for the
Conference click
[here](#).

Readiness and Prior Community Connectivity: School communities need a clear understanding of CSH and trusting relationships between stakeholders to transition to a healthier school community.

This research provides school communities with a set of understandable essential conditions to support and optimize CSH implementation, to shift school culture and improve health, education, and well-being. We encourage readers to utilize these conditions as they implement CSH in their own school communities.

By Storey, K. E., Montemurro, G., Flynn, J., Schwartz, M., Wright, E., Osler, J., ... & Roberts, E. (2016). Essential conditions for the implementation of comprehensive school health to achieve changes in school culture and improvements in health behaviours of students. BMC Public Health, 16(1), 1133.

You can locate and share the full article [here](#) or view the [Essential Conditions](#) infographic.

We are currently interested in talking to individuals engaged in CSH implementation on the essential conditions described in this article to see if they are relevant in other contexts. If you are interested in sharing your opinion through a qualitative interview, please contact Dr. Kacey Neely at neely@ualberta.ca.

Ever Active School Conference 2018

Ever Active Schools is hosting Shaping the Future (Pan Canadian School Health Summit) in Lake Louise, January 31 - February 3, 2018. In partnership with national and provincial school health organizations they are bringing a national feel and content to the annual [Shaping the Future School Health Conference](#). The conference will engage over 500 delegates with a focus on creating healthy school communities.

They are seeking poster [presentations](#) on school success stories and school health research. The submission deadline is December 4, 2017.

Student Health and Wellness Task Force Announcement

At its March 9 - 10, 2017 meeting, the ASBA Board of Directors determined that the work of the Student Health and Wellness Task Force would be concluded effective August 31, 2017. As a result, this will be the last edition of this newsletter.

The work done by the Regional Health Committees through Zones has proved to be very valuable and relevant and it will continue.

ASBA would like to thank the following people representing various organizations for their input, perspective, and effort in the work of this Task Force: Dr. Kim Kelly, AMA; Brian Torrance, Executive Director, Ever Active Schools; and Stefanie Clarke, Trustee, Peace Wapiti Public School Division.