

Healthy Children and Families

2015-2016 Annual Highlights Report

April 2015 -
December 2016



Healthy Children and Families

Healthy Children and Families is situated within Healthy Living, Population, Public, and Indigenous Health. The mission of the Healthy Children and Families team is to promote health and prevent disease in Albertans by using a population health approach. We target the preconception to 18 years of age population and their families.

Three teams develop and deliver initiatives: Reproductive Health, Early Childhood, and Healthy Children and Youth. A fourth team, Knowledge Translation and Evaluation, works with these three teams by providing support in program planning, evaluation, and knowledge translation.



Alberta Health Services (AHS)

Population, Public and Indigenous Health

Healthy Living

Healthy Children and Families

Reproductive
Health

Early
Childhood

Healthy
Children
and Youth

Knowledge Translation and Evaluation

**Healthy Living
Vision:**

Wellness for
every Albertan

**Healthy Living
Mission:**

To promote health
and prevent disease
of Albertans using a
population health
approach

“ Healthy children emerge most often from healthy families, and healthy families are in turn promoted by healthy communities.”

Government of Canada (2014)
The Well-being of Canada's Young Children, p.1



“ Population health refers to the health of a population as measured by health status indicators and as influenced by social, economic and physical environments, personal health practices, individual capacity and coping skills, human biology, early childhood development, and health services. As an approach, population health focuses on the interrelated conditions and factors that influence the health of populations over the life course, identifies systematic variations in their patterns of occurrence, and applies the resulting knowledge to develop and implement policies and actions to improve the health and well-being of those populations.”

Public Health Agency of Canada
What is the Population Health Approach?

Healthy Children and Families has developed a new AHS webpage
<http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/Page13568.aspx>
for healthcare providers and the public. The webpage provides additional details of the Healthy Children and Families initiatives, resources and ordering information.

Healthy Children and Families Priority Areas

Our work centers around six Strategic Priority Areas:

Strategic Priority Areas	
Sexual and Reproductive Health	Promote sexual and reproductive health in school-aged children and youth, as well as among those in the preconception period.
Healthy Pregnancies and Birth Outcomes	Address factors such as nutrition, physical activity, weight, mental health, and substance use in the preconception period and during pregnancy.
Breastfeeding	Promote breastfeeding initiation, duration and exclusivity.
Early Child Development	Promote healthy child development including: physical health; communication and general knowledge; social and emotional wellbeing; and language and thinking skills.
Child and Youth Mental Health	Promote mental health among school-aged children.
Child and Youth Nutrition and Physical Activity	Promote healthy weights in children and youth by addressing modifiable factors such as nutrition, physical activity, sedentarism and mental health.

We use a population health approach to address the needs of the preconception, maternal, infant, child and youth populations and their families. Primary prevention is the main focus of the department, though some elements of secondary prevention are also employed. We work closely with our partners in AHS, the Government of Alberta, and external stakeholders to implement a range of health promotion efforts.

What We Do

Healthy Children and Families Primary Area of Focus	Partner Primary Areas of Focus Healthy Children and Families may collaborate and support
Focus and Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary, (Secondary) Prevention • Families from Preconception to 18 Years of Age
Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary, Tertiary Prevention • 18+ Years of Age
Outcomes of Interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Promotion • Province-wide Planning, Implementation and Maintenance • Performance Measurement and Evaluation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy • Public Policy • Service Delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population-based Screening • Assessment and referral • Treatment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual and Reproductive Health • Healthy Pregnancies and Birth Outcomes • Breastfeeding • Early Child Development • Child and Youth Mental Health • Child and Youth Nutrition and Physical Activity

Health Promotion Includes:

- Strengthening community action
- Building healthy public policy
- Creating supportive environments
- Developing personal skills
- Reorienting health services

Primary Prevention:

Preventing the onset of disease by intervening to remove or reduce risk factors.

Secondary Prevention:

Detecting and addressing disease in early stages, prior to the presentation of symptoms, to stop or slow its progression.

This Highlights Report describes the work of the Healthy Children and Families team for the period of April 2015 - December 2016

Action Planning

Building on the work completed for the Healthy Children and Families Strategic Action Plan (2015-2018), Action Plans were developed for the Reproductive Health, Early Childhood and Healthy Children and Youth teams in 2016.

To develop the action plans, all initiatives were appraised using population-health intervention criteria, to identify opportunities to strengthen and expand current work. Stakeholders, including internal staff, steering committees and initiative working groups, as well as leadership were consulted in this process.



Logic models for the Reproductive Health, Early Childhood and Healthy Children and Youth Teams were created to visually represent the work of each team and outcomes they work towards. An overarching Healthy Children and Families Team logic model was also developed to highlight the integration of the work done across the teams. The logic models can be accessed at www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/Page13568.aspx

Public Health Impacts

Improved

perinatal health outcomes
maternal health
child and youth development
sexual health outcomes

Key themes that emerged from the action planning included:

- Strengthening the intensity/dose of interventions and their implementation to enhance impacts on health outcomes
- Strengthening the integration of initiatives within teams, across Healthy Children and Families, Alberta Health Services and with external stakeholders

What's Next:

A performance measurement framework has been developed. In 2017, this will be finalized and steps taken to make it available on the AHS Tableau Platform to facilitate annual reporting for Healthy Children and Families.

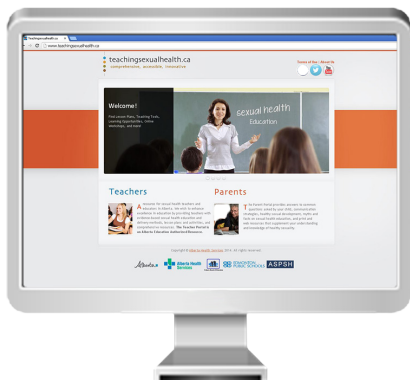
Teaching Sexual Health Website

The Teaching Sexual Health (TSH) Initiative was developed to support teachers and parents in teaching sexual health. The website includes a teacher portal and parent portal.

The **teacher portal** is an Alberta Education authorized education resource that includes information and teaching strategies for teachers to increase their knowledge, comfort, and capacity to teach the human sexuality curriculum. Free **teacher workshops** are offered throughout the year. Lesson plans are available in English and French.

An evaluation of the teacher portal and workshops found that:

- Teachers' understanding, comfort and confidence in teaching the human sexuality curriculum increased
- Overall, TSH is a relatively low cost program with high targeted population reach and impact on teachers' capacity to teach the human sexuality curriculum



To order promotional materials, visit:

<https://dol.datacm.com>

User ID: healthypublic Password: healthy2013

The **parent portal** provides parents of children birth – 18 years, with information and resources.

A media campaign targeting parents was in market from February – June 2016. The campaign resulted in a 4,952% increase in Alberta website visits to the parent portal, with 46,840 total visits.

Between April 1, 2015 – December 31, 2016, Teaching Sexual Health had...

- 7 teacher workshops for 238 teachers
- 138,470 visits to teachingsexualhealth.ca from Alberta
- 56,164 visits to the teacher portal and 52,151 visits to the parent portal
- 570,941 lesson plans downloaded worldwide
- 8,344 parent packages downloaded

What's Next:

A website redesign and content review is in progress to improve functionality, interactivity, navigation, and optimization for mobile devices. The redesigned website will be launched in February 2017.

With grant funding from Alberta Education, comprehensive evidence-based content on sexual consent and lesson plans are being developed.

Preconception Health Website & Media Campaign

ReadyOrNotAlberta.ca

The Preconception Health Website and Media Campaign promotes healthy lifestyles in the preconception period (before pregnancy) for men and women 18 – 44 years of age. As few people seek care or health information before they become pregnant, and almost half of all pregnancies in Canada are not planned, healthy lifestyle and preconception health is important.

The findings of a literature review and market research were used to develop key messages related to preconception health in collaboration with key provincial stakeholders. Key messages were developed to meet the needs of:

- **Pre-contemplators (“not ready”)** – those who are not ready to consider having children in the foreseeable future
- **Contemplators (“ready”)** – those who are considering and potentially getting ready for pregnancy/children in the future (6 – 18 months)

With funding from Alberta Health, the [ReadyOrNotAlberta.ca](https://readyornotalberta.ca) website was launched in January 2016. The website highlights healthy behaviours and provides anticipatory guidance related to reproductive health outcomes in a user-friendly question and answer format. Interactive tools were also developed.

Between January – December 31, 2016, [ReadyOrNotAlberta.ca](https://readyornotalberta.ca) had...

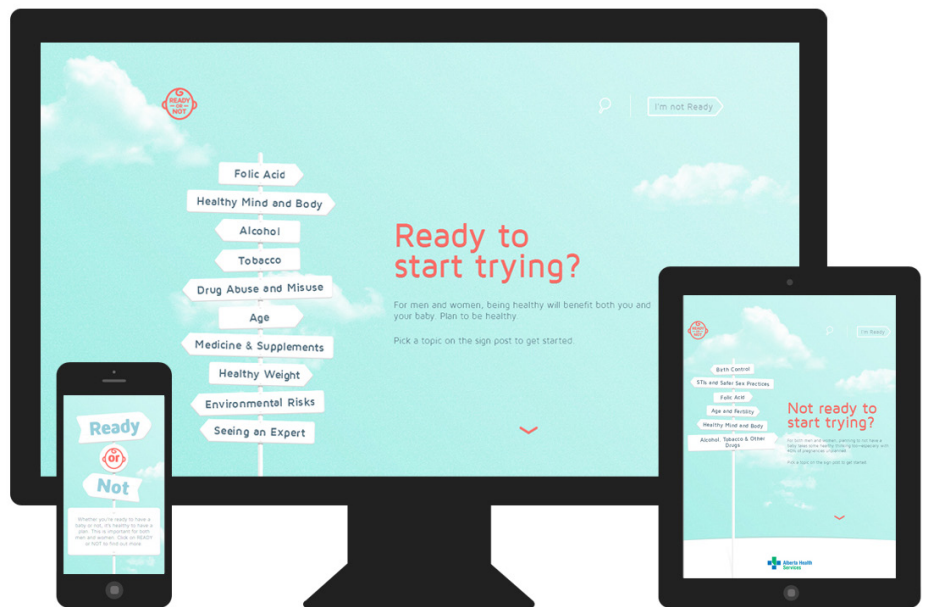
- 67,297 total visits from Alberta
- 29,961 visits to the ‘Ready’ content
- 23,963 visits to the ‘Not Ready’ content



A preconception media campaign targeting both the “ready” and “not ready” audiences was developed and in market from January – June 2016. The purpose of the campaign was to increase awareness and utilization of the newly launched ReadyOrNotAlberta.ca website. Results from the media campaign indicated that:

- 88% of the 97,685 total visits (January 18 – May 31, 2016) came directly from the digital campaign
- Social media ads led to over 7,000 reactions (i.e. Likes, Shares, etc) and 2,200 new followers to the AHS facebook and instagram accounts

A sustained media campaign was launched in October 2016 incorporating the most cost effective digital advertising tactics from the original campaign.



To order promotional materials, visit:

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What's Next:

- Development of a health care provider preconception health learning module in collaboration with the Alberta Perinatal Health Program to be released in Summer 2017
- Ongoing media campaigns

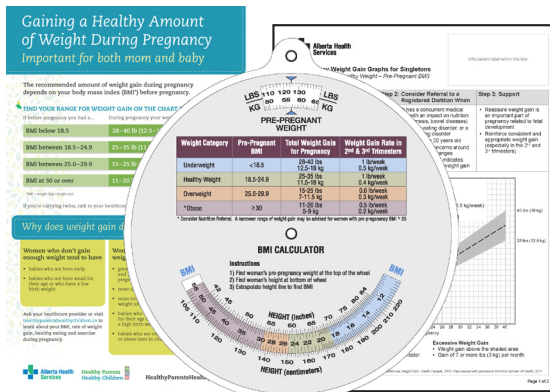
Healthy Pregnancy Weight Gain Resources and Tools

The Healthy Pregnancy Weight Gain resources continued to be available and were marketed to parents and health care providers.

Resources for parents include print and online resources, including an online gestational weight gain tracking tool accessible through healthyparentshealthychildren.ca

Resources for health care providers include:

- Singleton weight gain graphs
- Key messages
- A Body Mass Index calculator wheel
- A poster for health care provider offices



Health care providers in Alberta can order resources to support their practice by visiting:

<https://dol.datacm.com>

User ID: healthypublic Password: healthy2013

As part of the Healthy Pregnancy Weight Gain Project, Healthy Children and Families began collaborating with the University of Alberta on a Collaborative Research Innovation Opportunities (CRIO) five year research grant beginning in 2013. The project is titled, "ENRICH: Promoting Appropriate Maternal Body Weights in Pregnancy and Postpartum through Healthy Dietary Intake".

The Healthy Pregnancy Weight Gain project assisted with developing digital ads to promote awareness and utilization of healthy pregnancy weight gain messages for women. These ads were in market over the period of March – October 2015 and again from November – December 2016.

What's Next:

As part of the ENRICH partnership, an online Continuing Medical Education program is being developed in collaboration with the University of Calgary and ENRICH. The goal is to increase the knowledge and skills of health care providers that interact with pregnant women in regard to healthy pregnancy weight gain. The module will be available free of charge to health care providers throughout Alberta.

Healthy Parents, Healthy Children Resources

Healthy Parents, Healthy Children (HPHC) provincial resources are in their third year as a provincial resource providing Alberta families with pregnancy and parenting information. The online and print resources contain comprehensive and reliable information based on evidence and best practice for expectant parents, parents of children up to 6 years of age and health care providers.

This year, HPHC underwent an extensive content review process that engaged stakeholders from across the province. The feedback received was reviewed and incorporated, ensuring HPHC remains up to date and relevant.

A media campaign targeting expectant parents, parents with young children and their families, occurred between March – October 2015. This campaign resulted in 228,037 visits to the online resource. The campaign was re-launched October 2016.

To order promotional materials and resources, visit:
<https://dol.datacm.com>
User ID: healthypublic Password: healthy2013

Between April 1, 2015 – December 31, 2016:

- **68,340** HPHC Book sets disseminated
- **61,330** *The Early Years* (single books) disseminated
- **323,487** total online visits to healthyparentshealthychildren.ca from Alberta



What's Next:

A redesign of HPHC resources will be completed resulting in:

- a unifying brand
- improved functionality
- additional interactivity
- enhanced user experience

Breastfeeding Education Online Modules

The protection, promotion and support for breastfeeding are a priority for AHS. Previous work completed by Healthy Children and Families indicated a need for a standardized provincial approach to education and supports for breastfeeding.

Working with provincial stakeholders, two online education modules targeting perinatal health care providers across Alberta have been developed. Hosted by the Alberta Perinatal Health Program, *Breastfeeding Foundations* and *Breastfeeding: Challenges and Supplementation* provide consistent, evidence- and practice-informed education about breastfeeding, and supporting women through common challenges of breastfeeding and supplementation.



The *Breastfeeding Foundations* and *Breastfeeding: Challenges and Supplementation* modules are available online and can be accessed at:

<http://aphp.dapasoft.com/>.

Breastfeeding Foundations is also available on MyLearningLink.



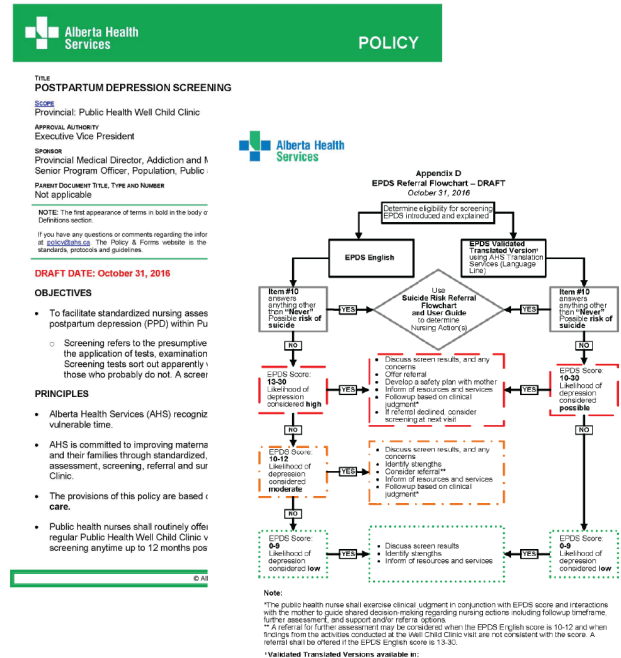
What's Next:

Provincial stakeholders are being convened to oversee the development of a Provincial Breastfeeding Strategy. Proposed components include policy, staff education, peer support and health marketing.

Postpartum Depression Screening Policy

With the support of a Provincial Working Group, Healthy Children and Families, in collaboration with Addiction and Mental Health, has developed an AHS Postpartum Depression (PPD) Policy Suite for screening and referral in Public Health Well Child Clinic settings. The AHS PPD Policy Suite includes a policy and guidelines with supporting appendices including:

- The Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS)
- EPDS validated translated versions (Arabic, Traditional Chinese, French, Italian, Punjabi, Spanish, Vietnamese) and Alternate Questions
- Staff Education Module
- Referral Pathway
 - EPDS Referral Flowchart
 - Postpartum Depression – Alternate Questions Referral Flowchart
 - Suicide Risk Referral Flowchart
 - User Guide for Suicide Risk Referral Flowchart
 - Public Health Postpartum Depression Screen Referral Form
 - A Safety Plan for New Mothers
 - An online PPD Services and Resources Inventory



What's Next:

Consultation on the AHS PPD Policy Suite will occur with numerous stakeholders including Public Health and Addictions and Mental Health leadership, physicians, public health nurses and clients. Approval will be sought in September, 2017 once consultations with and endorsement by all key stakeholders are complete.

Public Health Well Child Clinic Standardization

The current public health well child service delivery model provides childhood immunizations, one-on-one health assessment, health education and anticipatory guidance at six time points at 2, 4, 6, 12, 18 months and prior to school-entry at 4.5 – 6 years of age. The purpose of the Well Child Clinic (WCC) Standardization was to identify the recommended non-immunization activities and associated interventions for each WCC visit.

Under the guidance of the Provincial Working Group, key deliverables were completed, leading to the final proposed recommendations. These deliverables included:

Completing an AHS Environmental Scan to identify the current activities and interventions occurring in WCC visits across the province.

Completing a Parent Perception Review to identify parents' needs, priorities, perceptions and expectations of the non-immunization portion of the WCC visits.

Developing Criteria and Guiding Principles to help assess each current activity and provide guidance for decision making.

Completing a Rapid Review of Evidence to provide information on the evidence and best practices related to the current activities and interventions.

Developing a Process to Determine the Recommended WCC Non-immunization Activities to assess each current activity against the criteria.

Developing Consensus with the Working Group for the recommended routine and non-routine activities for Well Child Clinic for endorsement by AHS Population and Public Health Leaders Committee.

Criteria
Directive/Policy
Evidence Based/Informed
Safety
Surveillance Priority
Alignment with Other Priorities
Population Health Burden
Measurable Outcomes for WCC
Parent Informed
Feasibility

Guiding Principles
Patient and Family Centred Care
Health Equity
Cost Neutrality



The recommended activities were categorized as routine and non-routine. Delineation of the activities into routine and non-routine provides guidance within the time constraints of the WCC on what activities to focus on, as opposed to covering them all. It also places the emphasis on patient and family centred care, while preserving the Public Health Nurses' ability to use their clinical judgment.

Recommended activities include:

Routine Activities Within Patient and Family Centred Care, a routine activity will be <i>prioritized</i> based on parent questions/concerns and/or nursing clinical judgment.	Non-Routine Activities Within Patient and Family Centred Care, a non-routine activity will <i>only be addressed</i> based on parent questions/concerns and/or nursing clinical judgment.
Breastfeeding/Nutrition Child Growth (Measurements) Injury Prevention Parent/Family Adjustment Postpartum Depression Tobacco Exposure Reduction Safe Infant Sleep	Domestic Violence General Development and Behaviour Hearing Hip Dysplasia Oral Health Plagiocephaly/Fontanel/Sutures Vision

This standardized approach to non-immunization activities and associated interventions will support public health nursing to make the best use of their limited time, demonstrate the importance of their work and align with the best available evidence for the non-immunization portion of public health WCC visits.

What's Next:

- Develop an implementation plan:
 - Standardize protocols, guidelines, tools and develop referral pathways
 - Standardize data elements and anticipatory guidance in Meditech
 - Conduct a pilot study (including a timing study) and evaluation
 - Develop staff education and communication plans
- Engage primary care (e.g., physicians)

Facilitating the Comprehensive School Health Approach

Comprehensive School Health (CSH) is an internationally-recognized approach to building healthy school communities. By taking coordinated action to address the four components of CSH (Figure 1), schools are able to improve both health and education outcomes among students.

Healthy Children and Families advances CSH in Alberta through a number of key actions:

- Coordinating communication and overall strategies related to school health promotion within AHS
- Supporting success sharing and evidence-informed practice
- Identifying, developing and sharing evidence-informed resources
- Supporting school jurisdictions by:
 - Facilitating connections with partners who can support CSH initiatives
 - Offering professional learning opportunities
 - Providing guidance on completing school health assessments and developing action plans that include interventions and policies to improve healthy eating, active living and positive mental health among students

CSH in Action

Wellness Policy Development

One Healthy Children and Families team member supports all four francophone school boards at a provincial level. In 2015–16, these jurisdictions collaborated on a health and wellness policy. The policy is currently under review by the Alberta Francophone School Board Federation and once approved will be implemented within the four jurisdictions.

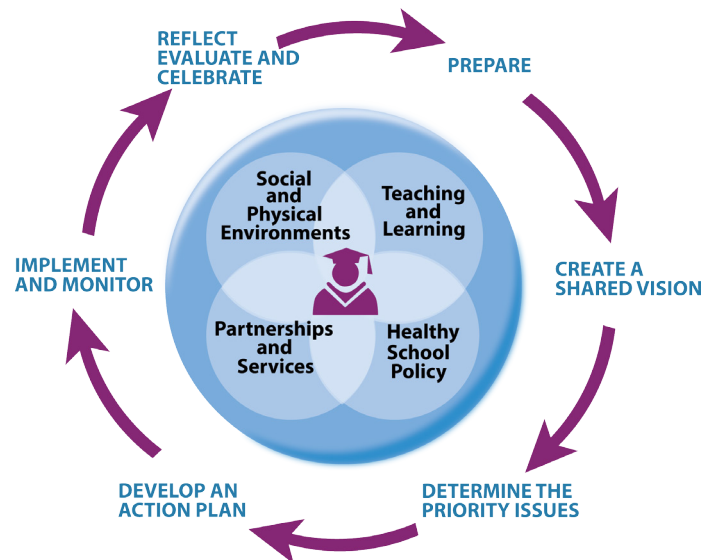


Figure 1. Comprehensive School Health Approach

The Comprehensive School Health Approach within School Jurisdictions

Every school jurisdiction in Alberta has an AHS staff member assigned to support CSH. Health Promotion Coordinators from Healthy Children and Families are assigned to support 51 of the 61 public, Catholic and francophone school jurisdictions in Alberta.

In 2016, Health Promotion Coordinators worked with 46 of 51 (90%) of these school jurisdictions at a systems level. These 46 school jurisdictions represent over 1500 schools and more than 550,000 students.

School Jurisdiction Commitment to the CSH Approach

Of the 46 school jurisdictions that worked with Healthy Children and Families in 2016:

- 65% took action to embed CSH or related health topics into accountability structures (e.g. business plans)
- 83% facilitated the completion of school and/or jurisdiction level health assessments
- 52% had a jurisdiction-level committee responsible for CSH initiatives
- 87% had a designated staff member responsible for coordinating CSH initiatives
- 61% collaborated with other school jurisdictions on CSH initiatives

CSH in Action

Mental Health Professional Development

School jurisdictions have increasingly identified students' mental health as a priority. Jurisdiction-level support from Healthy Children and Families focuses on helping students improve mental health through the acquisition of social and emotional competencies, relationship building skills, and coping skills.

Calgary Catholic School District's work in this area is guided by their Student Wellness: Mental Health and Resiliency Strategy 2015–17. With support from Healthy Children and Families, the district was successful in obtaining a jurisdictional wellness grant from the Alberta



Health School Community Wellness Fund to support the implementation of an evidence-based strategy. Key elements include a pilot of the PATHS social-emotional learning program, district-wide training for junior high teachers in The Fourth R healthy relationships curricula, and a partnership with the AHS Mental Health Literacy Project to train Go-To Educators in each school.

Facilitating the Comprehensive School Health Approach

Provincial Resources and Webpage

Using ongoing feedback and guidance from the CSH Steering Committee and Working Group, Healthy Children and Families maintains the CSH Resources Web page. Traffic to the website increased by 20% over the previous year and feedback collected through 26 key informant interviews with education sector partners was favourable.

The screenshot shows the website's navigation menu with options like 'ABOUT AHS', 'FIND HEALTH CARE', 'INFORMATION FOR', 'CAREERS', 'NEWS', and 'AHS IN MY ZONE'. The main content area is titled 'The Comprehensive School Health Approach' and includes sections for 'How Can You Build Healthy School Communities?' and 'Resources'. The 'Resources' section lists 'Provincial Teacher Resource List', 'Healthy Children and Healthy Teens Newsletters', and 'Healthy Schools Calendar'.

The following resources were updated this year:

- Healthy Children and Teens parent newsletters
- Health Promotion Calendars
- Teacher Resource List

These resources and more are available at: www.ahs.ca/csh

CSH in Action

School Nutrition Policy Implementation

In 2016, Parkland School Division (near Edmonton) hosted their first ever Food Choices for Change vendor fair to raise awareness about healthy food options available in the community and start conversations about how to create healthier school food environments. This event brought together community food vendors, hot lunch providers, parents, student leaders and health champions. Healthy Children and Families helped the division identify resources for vendors to aid them in assessing their food according to the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth (ANGCY). At the event, school representatives were able to identify new, healthy options for their school menus.



Evidence-Informed Practice

CSH can be adapted to meet the needs of school communities. It is important to use evidence-informed interventions in the context of this flexible process. This past year, Healthy Children and Families staff completed three applied research projects to ensure that recommendations made to school jurisdictions are informed by high quality evidence. These included:

- **Intervention Summaries on Healthy Eating, Active Living and Positive Mental Health** - a series of research summaries to identify effective strategies that can be used within the CSH Approach to improve student health outcomes related to healthy eating, active living and positive mental health
- **Critical Appraisal on CSH and Student Success** - a critical appraisal of high-quality literature to determine the effect of the CSH Approach on student success
- **School Health Policy Appraisal** - an appraisal of 150 publically-available school jurisdiction policies related to healthy eating, active living and positive mental health using a set of evidence-informed criteria



CSH in Action

Action Planning Using a CSH Approach

During the 2015–16 school year, with support from Healthy Children and Families, Northern Gateway School Division in Northern Alberta established both division and school-level wellness teams with designated health champions from all schools. The division funded two staff to attend the Shaping the Future Conference in 2016, and hosted a professional learning session to train the wellness committee on CSH. In response to a division-wide student assessment and to align with the division Three Year Education Plan, the division committee has started to develop a coordinated approach to address healthy relationships and positive mental health.

What's Next:

Healthy Children and Families is leading a systematic review of service delivery models for school health promotion, and an environmental scan of current work being done across the province. These findings will be used to make recommendations related to a standardized provincial approach to school health promotion.

Healthy Children and Families Team

