

Healthy Schools Rubric: Background and Instructions

A rubric is one tool that can be used to assess the health of a school community.^a This resource provides background information and instructions on how to conduct an assessment using the healthy schools rubric, healthy eating rubric, active living rubric and positive mental health rubric.

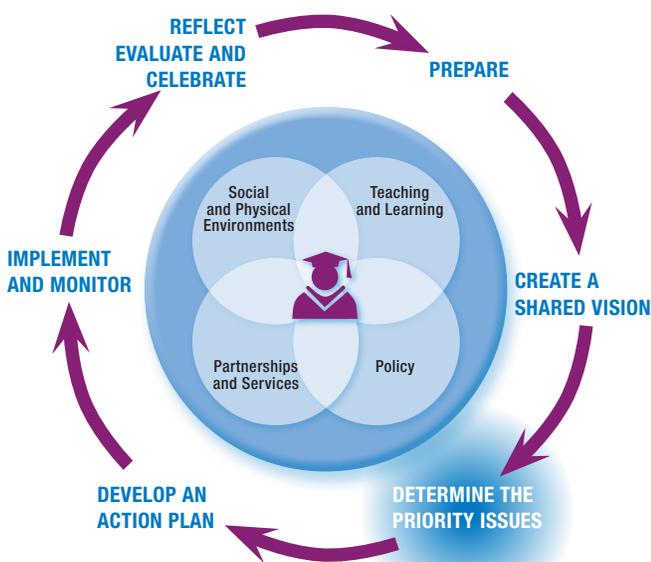
Materials

- Healthy schools rubric (included)
- Supplementary rubrics^b (healthy eating rubric, active living rubric and positive mental health rubric) (optional)

Purpose

Healthy students learn better. The healthy schools rubric is an assessment tool designed to support the well-established link between student health and learning outcomes and to enhance these outcomes through the Comprehensive School Health (CSH) approach. This rubric is a simple tool that can help schools identify school health priorities and determine areas where more in-depth assessment may be needed.

Determining priority issues through school health assessments is one step in the process of building a healthy school community (see diagram). This rubric is one of several assessment tools available.^a



Process for Building Healthy School Communities using the Components of Comprehensive School Health

(Adapted from the Alberta Healthy School Community Wellness Fund)

This assessment tool supports schools by

- offering insight into the overall health and wellness of the school community
- acting as a starting point for identifying priorities related to school health
- initiating discussions related to student health and wellness between multiple partners
- helping schools identify areas where more in-depth assessment may be helpful

All types of school community members (e.g., staff, students, parents, community representatives) can help complete the rubric. The rubric can be used in a variety of settings (e.g., health champion workshops, staff/parent council/administrator/student meetings).

Method

1. Review the “Healthy Schools Rubric: Background and Instructions”.
2. **Assessment #1:** Complete the healthy schools rubric and record the scores and related comments for each category in the results summary table.
3. **Identify priorities:** Use the results to determine areas that the school would like to improve. For example, if the score for healthy eating is low, then the school may decide to do a more in-depth assessment of nutrition and focus on this area for the coming year.
4. **Complete supporting rubric(s) for identified priority area(s):** There are three supporting rubrics to help schools assess healthy eating, active living and/or positive mental health in more depth. These rubrics incorporate the four components of CSH. Each rubric can help identify strategies that schools may include in their action plans.
5. **Create action plan:** Create an action plan to address priority areas.^b The action plan should include goals, strategies, activities, outcomes and indicators to help track progress and ensure that improvements are being made.
6. **Assessment #2:** Complete the healthy schools rubric and results summary table at the end of the year to evaluate/celebrate successes and guide future planning.

Notes

The rubric may be modified to suit different contexts. It is advised that any modifications be based on knowledge of the CSH approach and rubric development.

The content of this rubric is based on a number of evidence-based resources and assessment tools.^{1,2,3}

^a For more information about school health assessments and available assessment tools, visit <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/7123.asp>.

^b To find the optional supplementary rubrics, more information on the process for building healthy school communities, action planning and an action plan template, visit <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/7123.asp>.

Healthy Schools Rubric

This rubric can help schools identify school health priorities and determine areas where a more in-depth assessment may be needed. Refer to page 1 for more information.

		Healthy eating	Active living	Positive mental health	Social and physical environments		Partnerships and services	Policy	Teaching and learning	Process for building healthy school communities	
		Social environment		Physical environment							
4: Keep it up	<p>All available food choices in our school are from the "Choose Most Often/Choose Sometimes" categories as identified by the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth (ANGCY)⁶, and healthy eating is reinforced in all applicable curricular and extra-curricular areas.</p>	<p>Active living is an integral part of our school culture. A broad range of opportunities for physical activity are provided in all applicable curricular and extra-curricular areas on a daily basis.</p>	<p>All practices and policies within the school community support the development of positive mental health in students by promoting resilience, creating supportive environments and addressing the influence of the broader determinants of health.</p>	<p>We strive to maintain a positive culture within our school community where students, staff, parents and community members feel safe, valued and connected to the school environment.</p>	<p>We ensure that the physical environment within our school is conducive to healthy living in all areas, including the safety, sanitation and quality of the buildings, grounds, equipment and air in and surrounding the school.</p>	<p>We have cultivated partnerships and engaged support from a broad network of agencies, programs and community members. We actively seek out additional partners and services within the community.</p>	<p>We have implemented wellness policies, procedures, practices and processes that support and promote student health and wellness.</p>	<p>We have embedded formal and informal opportunities to learn about student health and wellness into all aspects of school life through appropriate activities, resources and curriculum.</p>	<p>We have adopted the CSH approach and embedded it within the culture of our school. We have completed all steps in this process (e.g., forming a committee with a broad range of members, visioning, assessment, identification of priorities, implementation of action plans, evaluation and celebration).</p>		
	<p>Most available food choices in our school are from the "Choose Most Often/Choose Sometimes" categories as identified by the ANGCY, and healthy eating is reinforced in most applicable curricular and extra-curricular areas.</p>	<p>We are integrating active living into the culture of our school. Several opportunities for physical activity are provided in most applicable curricular and extra-curricular areas on a regular basis.</p>	<p>Most practices and policies within the school community support the development of positive mental health in students by promoting resilience, creating supportive environments and addressing the influence of the broader determinants of health.</p>	<p>We are building a positive culture within our school community where students, staff, parents and community members feel safe, valued and connected to the school environment.</p>	<p>We have implemented some strategies that support healthy living within the physical environment, including the safety, sanitation and quality of the buildings, grounds, equipment and air in and surrounding the school.</p>	<p>We are developing partnerships and gaining support from several agencies, programs and community members. We have encouraged involvement from additional partners and services within the community.</p>	<p>We have begun to implement wellness policies, procedures, practices and processes that support and promote student health and wellness.</p>	<p>We have integrated formal and informal opportunities to learn about student health and wellness into most aspects of school life through appropriate activities, resources and curriculum.</p>	<p>We have implemented the CSH approach and have begun to integrate it into the culture of our school. We have completed most steps in this process (e.g., forming a committee with a broad range of members, visioning, assessment, identification of priorities, implementation of action plans, evaluation and celebration).</p>		
	<p>Some available food choices in our school are from the "Choose Most Often/Choose Sometimes" categories as identified by the ANGCY, and healthy eating is reinforced in some applicable curricular and extra-curricular areas.</p>	<p>We are developing strategies to support a culture of active living in our school. Occasional opportunities for physical activity are provided in some applicable curricular and/or extra-curricular areas.</p>	<p>Some practices and policies within the school community support the development of positive mental health in students by promoting resilience, creating supportive environments and addressing the influence of the broader determinants of health.</p>	<p>We are developing relationships and implementing strategies that support a positive culture within our school community where students, staff, parents and community members feel safe, valued and connected to the school environment.</p>	<p>We are developing strategies that will support healthy living within the physical environment, including the safety, sanitation and quality of the buildings, grounds, equipment and air in and surrounding the school.</p>	<p>We have initiated communication with a range of potential partners and services within the community.</p>	<p>We have developed some policies, procedures, practices and processes that support and promote student health and wellness.</p>	<p>We provide some formal and informal opportunities to learn about student health and wellness through appropriate activities, resources and curriculum.</p>	<p>We have initiated the CSH approach in our school. We have completed some steps in this process (e.g., forming a committee with a broad range of members, visioning, assessment, identification of priorities, implementation of action plans, evaluation and celebration).</p>		
	<p>We are aware of the ANGCY, and are planning to make links to healthy eating in applicable curricular and extra-curricular areas.</p>	<p>We have identified active living as an important element of a healthy school culture. Opportunities for physical activity are provided, but are limited in curricular and/or extra-curricular areas.</p>	<p>A few practices and policies within the school community support the development of positive mental health by promoting resilience, creating supportive environments and addressing the influence of the broader determinants of health.</p>	<p>We understand the importance of creating a positive school culture and have begun to develop strategies to address/improve various aspects of our school climate.</p>	<p>We have assessed the physical environment of our school and have begun to develop strategies to address the safety, sanitation and quality of the buildings, grounds, equipment and air in and surrounding the school.</p>	<p>We have identified several agencies, programs and community members as potential partners and/or services.</p>	<p>We have begun to consider some policies, procedures, practices and processes that will support and promote student health and wellness.</p>	<p>We have just begun to plan some formal and informal opportunities to learn about student health and wellness.</p>	<p>We are planning to use the CSH approach within our school. We have started a few steps in this process (e.g., forming a committee with a broad range of members, visioning, assessment, identification of priorities, implementation of action plans, evaluation and celebration).</p>		
2: On the road	1: Just beginning	3: Getting closer	4: Keep it up								

⁶ Alberta Health. (2012). *Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth*. Retrieved from <http://www.healthyalberta.com/NutritionGuidelines-Sept2012.pdf>

Healthy Schools Rubric Results Summary Table

Rubric components	Assessment #1 (beginning of school year)		Assessment #2 (end of the school year)		Additional comments
	Score (1-4)	What are you doing well?	What could you improve?	Score (1-4)	
Healthy eating					
Active living					
Positive mental health					
Social environment					
Physical environment					
Partnerships and services					
Policy					
Teaching and learning					
Process for building healthy school communities					
Total (out of 36)					

References

This resource was adapted from the “Healthy Students Learn Better Health Champion” tool binder, Alberta Health Services, Central Zone Comprehensive School Health Program, 2009.

¹ Alberta Education. Framework for the K–12 Wellness Education Curriculum.

² Joint Consortium for School Health—Healthy School Planner.

³ Ever Active Schools. (2009). *Health Assessment Tool for Schools (HATS)*. Retrieved from <http://www.everactive.org/health-assessment-tool-for-schools>.