

# Research REPORT

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## **That's A Good Idea!** **Promising Practices for Promoting** **Student Wellness**

by  
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This report was commissioned by the Saskatchewan School Boards Association to communicate promising practices for environmental stewardship and enhanced physical activity in Saskatchewan schools.

The ideas outlined in this resource were offered by Saskatchewan schools as part of The Mosaic Extreme School Makeover Challenge in 2007. Study this resource to learn more about:

- ✓ Promising practices for encouraging environmental stewardship and enhanced physical activity.
- ✓ Links to key online resources.
- ✓ Suggested activities from Saskatchewan schools.



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## Introduction

This report was commissioned by the Saskatchewan School Boards Association for school administrators and staffs, School Community Councils and Boards of Education to utilize as they review the current environmental and physical activity practice within their school or division. It is intended to serve as a resource to encourage and assist them as they consider implementing new initiatives and best practice that support environmental stewardship and enhanced physical activity for students.

Included in this report is a compilation of the many terrific ideas collected in the Saskatchewan Nutrition Advisory Council for Kids *Mosaic Extreme School Makeover Challenge*. Schools from across the province participated in the Challenge and provided a wealth of practical, frontline ideas for improving student nutrition and health. By sharing these success stories, we hope to encourage others to create grassroots makeovers that will provide students with healthier school environments.

Saskatchewan schools are the educational leaders of our communities. Our schools provide learning opportunities that extend far beyond the student body, impacting parents and the community at large. Lessons learned in the classroom can become lifelong habits that will affect the overall health of the student. Healthy choices made at the school can positively influence choices in the home and community. Understanding this, schools should encourage and foster positive lifestyle choices that support productive, healthy citizenship.

Each of us has a shared responsibility for the health and well being of our children and youth. As the African proverb aptly states, *“it takes a village to raise a child”*. Saskatchewan educators understand and embrace this concept and are making significant strides as they work to educate our children and youth.

Government initiatives such as School<sup>Plus</sup>, help build upon the cooperative spirit for which Saskatchewan is renowned. We know that schools are often the hub of the community. By engaging parents, health and social service providers, community leaders, service groups, business and others, we develop a sense of ownership and community that supports student growth and development.

It is encouraging to note that Saskatchewan schools are actively engaged in a wide range of health promotion activities for children

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***Lessons learned  
in the classroom  
can become life-  
long habits that  
will affect the  
overall health  
of the student.***

and youth. Nutrition programs, school community gardens, environmental stewardship and physical activity outside the classroom are just some of the many initiatives that our schools are undertaking.

By teaching students to care for themselves, we send a strong message that they are valued. By teaching them to care for the world around them, we teach them to value others.

*“As we evolve, we strive to become better in our healthy lifestyle and active living endeavors. Each year we look to adopt and develop into a better school in this area. This will enable us to improve and reach into our community, to not only to become better ourselves, but also improve our community.”*

**North Valley Elementary School, Neudorf  
Mosaic Extreme School Makeover Challenge submission**

## 1. ***Environmental Stewardship in Schools***

When we begin to rethink nutrition in schools, we quickly discover that there are many aspects and linkages beyond good nutrition. Using school lunches as a means to teach environmental stewardship ties into the curriculum and promotes good citizenship. The school nutrition program or cafeteria menu can encompass the entire cycle of life by taking the student from seed to table while addressing environmental issues such as conservation and waste management.

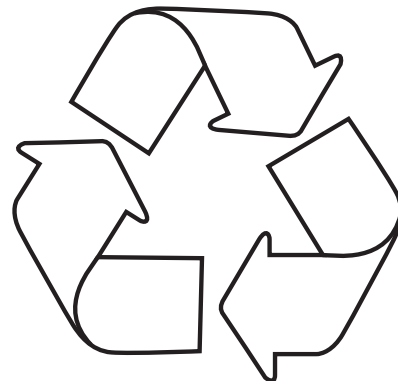
Whether they are inside or outside of the classroom, students are constantly learning at school. The lessons children learn at school can become lifelong habits. David W. Orr, Professor of Environmental Studies and Politics at Oberlin College states, *“All education is environmental education. By what is included or excluded, students are taught that they are part of, or apart from the natural world.”*

Activities such as composting empower students to make a positive impact on the environment. Integrating waste management into the school routine encourages students to consider their roles and responsibilities in shaping the world around them. Waste management provides students with experiential learning activities that support the curriculum and enhance learning.

In caring for the environment, we are caring for the future. This sends a powerful message to our students- not only are they valued, but they have the power to help shape the world in which they live.

***In a lifetime, the average North American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. A 68 kg adult will leave a legacy of 40, 825 kg of trash.***

**Natural Resources Canada**



## ***Reduce, Reuse and Recycle***

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***Schools are joining the trend to encourage and promote waste free or litter-less lunches.***

By the age of 6 months, the average Canadian has consumed the same amount of resources as the average person in the developing world consumes in a lifetime.

-Recycling Council of Canada <http://www.rco.on.ca/>

Schools are a logical place to practice waste reduction. On average, school lunches packed with reusable items contain 89% less waste and are 45% less expensive than lunches packed with single use items. Many schools across North America are joining the trend to encourage and promote *waste free* or litter-less lunches. Studies indicate that packaging accounts for approximately 35% of municipal solid waste. In light of Saskatchewan's high numbers of households living in poverty it is disconcerting to note that one dollar out of every ten spent on food goes into packaging.

Several Saskatchewan schools have eliminated microwaves in an effort to reduce the dependence upon pre-packaged convenience foods that have little or no nutritional value. The Thermos is being reintroduced as an environmentally friendly alternative for providing students with hot lunches. Anecdotal evidence given by teachers has indicated that foods brought within a Thermos or sandwich container are often of higher nutritional value than the standard fair being warmed up in microwaves. By teaching students and their families to reduce waste we not only benefit the environment, we may also positively influence nutritional choices and reinforce effective financial management.

For step by step information on how your school can participate in *waste free* lunches, visit the Recycling Council of Ontario website at <http://www.wastefreelunch.com>

There are many resources available to assist schools in their efforts to teach students the importance of sound environmental stewardship. Waste Reduction Canada Week website offers a School Resource Kit that provides schools with a comprehensive framework for improving environmental practice. This kit takes a step by step approach to practicing waste reduction in schools. Participants can utilize the



School Waste Assessment Tool to identify and consider current practice. By using the information gathered during the assessment process, they can then formulate a plan on how to make the greatest impact on waste reduction.

A copy of the *School Waste Audit* has been included as **Appendix A** of this report.

To download the complete *School Resource Kit*, visit the Waste Reduction Week Canada website at:  
<http://www.saskwastereduction.ca/wrw/school.html>

Waste Reduction Week Canada actively promotes the three R's in schools: reduce, reuse and recycle. Their theme, *Too Good to Waste* encourages each of us to consider the environmental impact of the choices we make.

### **Reduce, Reuse and Recycle**

Waste reduction, or reducing the amount of waste we produce, conserves resources and protects the environment. Several ways schools can **Reduce** are:

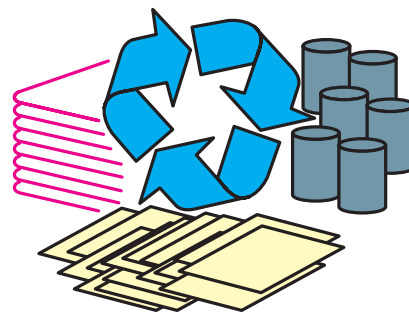
- Reduce paper by using both sides
- Serve/encourage packing lunches in reusable containers
- Purchase products made from recycled materials
- Rent items that are used infrequently

Reusing items reduces pollution and conserves energy. Several ways schools can **Reuse** are:

- Purchase durable items that can be repaired or reused
- Reuse containers/jiffy bags/folders/envelopes/boxes etc.
- Participate in a material exchange program in your area
- Donate or purchase items from charity shops or yard sales
- Purchase/donate used electronic equipment and computers
- Consider buying used items whenever possible

Recycling and purchasing products made from recycled materials conserves resources. Ways that schools can **Recycle** are:

- Set up a recycling program at school
- Consider the recycled content or ability to recycle when purchasing products
- Compost organic materials



The Saskatchewan Waste Reduction Council is a non-profit organization that is working to promote waste reduction throughout the province. They host biannual forums on Waste Minimization and offer composting training, education and resources. Their website offers information on Saskatchewan recycle sites and the types of materials accepted at each venue. The Saskatchewan Waste Reduction Council are responsible for the coordination of Waste Reduction Week in Canada for Saskatchewan.

In 2002, the average Canadian piled up 791 kg of waste annually. Saskatchewan residents exceeded the national average with a per person rate of 799 kg annually.

There are many great ideas for schools posted on the Saskatchewan Waste Reduction website. Below is a list of suggested activities for schools interested in improving their school's waste management and environmental practices and behaviours.

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***Ideas for schools  
interested in  
improving waste  
management.***

Hold a “waste-free” lunch day, week or month! Encourage students to pack their lunches in a reusable bag or lunch box, use resealable containers for sandwiches or snacks, a thermos for drinks and a cloth napkin and reusable utensils.

Involve the whole school in a competition measuring each class's waste, hold a secret tally and announce the winning class at an assembly.

Turn off the lights, computers and other electrical equipment when not in use. Try leaving the lights off on bright, sunny days—it's free energy and studies have shown that natural light can improve student test scores by 5% to 21%.

Encourage students and staff to turn off taps when they're finished washing and to use only the amount of paper towel they need (air dryers can eliminate the need for paper towels completely).

Vermicomposting is a great way to compost indoors - using Red Wiggler worms. These critters eat and excrete their own weight in left-over lunch scraps every day! You can feed your worms vegetables and fruit, coffee grounds, tea bags and egg shells. For suppliers in your region and teaching resources, visit [www.cityfarmer.org/wormsupl79.html](http://www.cityfarmer.org/wormsupl79.html)

Plant a tree...or two...or three. One tree can help reduce global warming by absorbing an estimated 669 kg of carbon dioxide

over its lifetime. Trees protect kids from the sun and absorb toxic pollutants. Shade trees cool down buildings to lessen air-conditioning requirements and reduce heating costs.

Students can research a product's lifecycle to discover the amount of natural resources needed to design, produce, deliver and dispose of commercial goods. Students can pick an item like a car, T-shirt, banana, running shoes, etc. and then consider 1) what kind of equipment is required to grow or extract the raw resources? 2) what kind of fuel is required to extract, process, manufacture and transport the resources? 3) how might some of these environmental impacts be avoided?

Crayon Recycling Program—Gather up old and broken crayons and ship them to: LAF Lines Ltd., 16830 Edgewood Avenue, Wayzata, Minnesota, USA 55391. For every pound of crayons received, you will receive one “Crazy Crayon” back (just include your return address inside the box). For more information, see <http://crp3.tripod.com>



For more information on the Saskatchewan Waste Reduction Council visit their website at:  
<http://www.saskwastereduction.ca/info.html>

***“Leadership is not so much about technique and methods as it is about opening the heart. Leadership is about inspiration- of oneself and of others. Great leadership is about human experiences, not processes. Leadership is not a formula or a program, it is a human activity that comes from the heart and considers the hearts of others. It is an attitude, not a routine.”***

**-Lance Secretan**

### ***School Nutrition Programs as Environmental Leaders***

School nutrition programs can play an intricate role in the development of school waste management policy. By growing their own produce and shopping locally, they conserve resources and reduce pollution. There is a growing trend towards purchasing *locally grown* foods. Agriculture is not only a staple of the Saskatchewan economy it shapes and defines much of our culture. The challenges facing the family farm impact us all. Buying locally grown produce reduces the burden placed on the environment, encourages a strong local economy, while fostering relationships in the community and maximizing the nutritional benefit for students. We know that fresh foods taste better, this in turn will encourage healthier food choices.

Most US grown produce is picked 4 to 7 days before reaching grocery store shelves. This produce is shipped an average of 1,500 miles before being sold in country.

- Mark Jeantheau, 2004 for the Grinning Planet

The distances are significantly longer when we consider produce imported into Canada from the United States, Mexico, Asia and South America

School nutrition programs that use environmentally friendly detergents and reduce or limit the use of disposable products minimize the ecological footprint of their school. Recent market demand has inspired the growth of environmentally friendly products and businesses. Petroleum free and bio-based products made primarily from plant products such as corn and potatoes support both agriculture and the environment and are an intelligent alternative to disposable plastics and Styrofoam. These products readily break down into organic material during composting in much the same way as other plants. Thanks to recent advances in technology, even bio-degradable plastics made from traditional sources have been redesigned to break down completely during the composting process. Compostable and biodegradable cutlery and dishes are widely available and are supportive of sound waste management practice.

For more information on bio-based products use your internet search engine and enter biodegradable cutlery or biodegradable products. Or visit the Waste Reduction Store website at:  
[www.wastereductionstore.ca](http://www.wastereductionstore.ca)

Not only are plastic bags hazardous to manufacture, they can take as much as 1,000 years to degrade.

## ***Composting and Vermicomposting***

Canadians produce approximately 7 million tonnes of organic waste each year. Two thirds of our household waste can be composted.

Composting is an excellent way to reduce the amount of material that gets deposited into landfills. By making use of food scraps and yard waste, we can help to eliminate one third to one half of all the garbage we produce.

Compost is made by depositing materials into piles and then speeding up the decay process. Properly done, composting is easy and odour-free. Compost can be made from a wide range of waste materials and is valuable organic matter. By utilizing compost, you can:

- Reduce the amount of waste being deposited in landfills
- Improve the soil quality in your yard and garden
- Reduce the demand for garbage collection and disposal

Vermicomposting is composting with worms. This type of composting is usually done indoors and is terrific when it is 40 below or where yard space is a concern. Vermicomposting requires a particular type of worm known as a red worm (*Eisenia foetida*). The red worm is a voracious garbage eater and will eat and expel almost its own weight daily. The compost produced by vermicomposting can be utilized in three months.

The Saskatchewan Waste Reduction Council offers extensive information on composting and vermicomposting on their website at <http://www.saskwastereduction.ca/composting/index.html>

***“North America is home to only 5% of the world’s population, but is responsible for consuming one third of all the Earth’s resources - 75% of which ends up wasted.”***

**Global Action Plan for the Earth**



### ***Rethinking the School Lunch***

The Center for Ecoliteracy has developed a project entitled Rethinking School Lunch. This project considers all aspects of the school lunch program from nutrition policy and academic performance to ecological literacy and waste management. Rethinking School Lunch looks at the lunch program as an intrinsic part of the greater curriculum as it relates to the health and well-being of students. It addresses the many benefits and barriers to creating healthy school lunch policy and provides the framework for educators to undertake this important process.

For a complete copy of *Rethinking School Lunch Guide* or to learn more about the Center for Ecoliteracy visit their website at: <http://www.ecoliteracy.org/>

### ***Green Street***

Green Street endeavours to provide opportunities to actively engage students and teachers in environmental learning and sustainability education. This program links Canadian schools with reputable Environmental Education organizations. Their goal is to deliver credible, accessible and affordable programs that are linked to the curriculum and encourage a sense of personal responsibility for the environment, foster commitment to sustainable living and promote environmental stewardship.

Green Street challenged Canadian environmental learning and sustainability organizations to effectively assist teachers and students. They currently offer:

- the retooling of programs to align them with provincial curricula;
- the repackaging of materials to make them ready-to-use in the classroom; and
- the assurance that there will always be someone to call upon when a teacher has questions.

By registering with Green Street, you can access high quality environmental learning and sustainability programs that are free and/or low cost.

For more information on Green Street or to register,  
visit their website at <http://www.green-street.ca>

Another excellent resource for schools is *Away with School Waste*. This guide is designed for teachers who are interested in starting a school-wide waste reduction program at their schools. It was produced by Ecology Action, Life Lab Science Program, and the Santa Cruz County Office of Education.

To download a copy of *Away With School Waste*  
visit the Waste Free Schools website at  
[http://www.wastefreeschools.org/away\\_with\\_waste.html](http://www.wastefreeschools.org/away_with_waste.html)

***“The future belongs to those who understand that doing more with less is compassionate, prosperous and enduring and thus more intelligent and even competitive.”***

**Paul Hawken, businessman, environmentalist and author**





## 2. Physical Activity in Schools

Physical activity is necessary for proper growth and development in children and youth. Physical activity supports healthy body weights and the development of healthy hearts, lungs, muscles and bones. Physical activity pursuits can also support positive social and emotional development.

The lack of daily physical activity in our children and youth is a complex issue and one that poses a serious health concern for our society. Technology, distance factors, safety, time constraints and ever-changing lifestyles all play into sedentary routines that do little to support or enhance our students' health.

Elementary school aged children spend as much as 25% of their school day outdoors on the school grounds and yet concerns for safety, cost factors and legal issues have prompted some schools to remove playground equipment and curtail healthy physical activity that was once a staple of the school environment.

Federal health guidelines indicate youth require a minimum of 60 – 90 minutes per day of physical activity to receive optimal health benefits. Over half of Canadian children and youth aged five to seventeen are not active enough for optimal growth and development (Public Health Agency of Canada, no date).



A 2003 survey commissioned by Saskatchewan *in motion* found that over 68% of Saskatchewan youth aged 13 - 19 were identified as not being active enough to achieve optimal health benefits. In a similar survey conducted in 2005, the number of inactive youth increased to 73%

Saskatchewan *in motion*

In 2005, Active Healthy Kids Canada released their report entitled *Dropping the Ball: Canada's Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth*. This report was based on a nation-wide study that investigated physical activity opportunities and behaviours among Canadian children. It highlighted many disturbing trends such as rising overweight and obesity rates. The overall grade given in this report was "D". The subsequent 2007 report, *Older But Not Wiser: Canada's future at risk*, sees the trend continue with the overall grade assessment holding steady at "D".

Physical activity reduces the risk of overweight and obesity. We know that overweight and obesity is a serious health concern. Childhood obesity increases the risk of chronic disease and health problems both in childhood and later in life. Overweight and obesity rates among children have increased substantially.

According to Statistics Canada (2004):

- Adolescents aged 12 to 17 overweight rates more than doubled from 14% to 29% and their obesity rate tripled from 3% to 9% in the last 25 years.
- 18% of Canadian children aged 2 to 17 are overweight and just over 8% are obese. The combined total of overweight/obese children in this age group is 26%.
- 19% of Saskatchewan children aged 2 to 17 are overweight and 10% are obese. The combined total of overweight/obese children in this age group is 29%.
- Saskatchewan's overweight and obesity rates in children aged 2 to 17 are 3% higher than the national average.
- Children and adolescents who consume 5 or more servings of fruit and vegetables a day are significantly less likely to be over weight or obese.

Schools are an excellent environment for promoting physical activity. Each of us has a responsibility in ensuring the health and well-being of our children and youth. Parents, educators, community members, business and school and municipal planners all need to work together to create environments that are supportive of healthy lifestyles.

Schools can act as the center of physical activity for the entire community. By involving parents, community leaders and others, we provide students with positive adult role models and encourage an environment that is actively engaged in health promotion.



***“Those who think they have not time for bodily exercise will sooner or later have to find time for illness.”***

**- Edward Stanley**

## **Saskatchewan in motion**

Saskatchewan ***in motion*** is a province-wide movement aimed at increasing physical activity for health, social, environmental and economic benefits. Their intent is to ingrain understanding and behaviour changes into the culture and fabric of Saskatchewan communities. The key components to achieving their vision are to build partnerships, raise awareness, mobilize communities and measure success.

### **Vision**

*The people of Saskatchewan will be the most physically active in Canada*

### **Goal**

*To move from the bottom of the top three of Canada's most physically active provinces by 2010*

Saskatchewan ***in motion*** children and youth strategies support elementary and high schools in the promotion of physical activity in a fun and meaningful way. They offer many programs, events and activities that incorporate physical activity and have wide appeal. Their approach is to incorporate teaching strategies that encourage students to be physically active while they learn.

For more information on Saskatchewan ***in motion*** visit their website at: <http://www.saskatchewaninmotion.ca/>

### ***Healthy Canadians Website***

Healthy Canadians is an online initiative created by the Government of Canada to provide Canadians with access to a wide array of information on health and lifestyle issues. Users of this site are able to follow links to existing Government of Canada web content. The website offers information on physical activity initiatives as well as the Canada Food Guide.

For more information Healthy Canadians visit their website at: [http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/pa-ap/cg-cg\\_e.html](http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/pa-ap/cg-cg_e.html)

Healthy Canadians website offers Healthy Kids Activity Guides for children and youth. These guides teach children that physical activity is fun. The goal of the guides is to increase time children and youth spend on physical activity while reducing the amount of time spent on “non-active” activities such as television. Each guide provides the reader with information on the benefits of physical activity and tips on how to stay active.

To access a free copy of Canada's Physical Activity Guide for Children (aged 6-9) or

Canada's Physical Activity Guide for Youth (aged 10-14) go to [http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/pa-ap/index\\_e.html](http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/pa-ap/index_e.html).

## ***ParticipACTION***

The Government of Canada announced that it will renew ParticipACTION to promote sport and physical activity among Canadians of all ages and abilities. ParticipACTION was founded in 1971 as a charitable organization promoting fitness and physical activity throughout the country. ParticipACTION encouraged Canadians to “*keep fit and have fun,*” during the 1970’s through the 1990’s.

The Federal Government has dedicated \$5 million to be spent over the next two years to support its renewal. ParticipACTION will support the work of provincial/territorial governments in an effort to build a healthy and active Canada. The re-launch is partnering with media, business, labour, education, volunteer organizations, as well as physical activity and sport groups to encourage and support physical activity.

For information on ParticipACTION visit the website  
[http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/media/nr-cp\\_e.html](http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/media/nr-cp_e.html)

***“Movement is a medicine for creating change in a person’s physical, emotional, and mental states.”***

**- Carol Welch**





### **3. That's a Good Idea! Mosaic Extreme School Makeover Challenge Success Stories**

In 2007, the Saskatchewan Nutrition Advisory Council for Kids launched the first ever Mosaic Extreme School Makeover Challenge in an effort to promote healthier learning environments for students. Along with their partner, the Mosaic Company, they challenged Saskatchewan schools to develop and commit to action plans for improved school nutrition and health for the upcoming year.

Submissions to the Mosaic Extreme School Makeover Challenge came in from schools throughout the province representing a vast array of the many demographic and geographic distinctions that currently exist in our education community.

Each school that participated in the Mosaic Extreme School Makeover Challenge is considered a winner by the Saskatchewan Nutrition Advisory Council for Kids (SNACK). As a result, they all receive a Certificate of Recognition signed by the Ministers of Learning and Healthy Living acknowledging their efforts to improve student nutrition and health.

Participants were asked to give a description of the current school practice with respect to nutrition and health and to identify proposed changes. The response from these schools was simply amazing! Our judges were truly impressed by the wealth of unique and effective health promoting ideas and initiatives that schools were undertaking.

We knew that this information needed to be shared.

***“The Mosaic Extreme School Makeover Challenge motivated us to review what we are presently doing, discuss areas that we could develop and look for new ideas to support our students and families in making healthy life choices.”***














**- Bishop Klein Community School  
Mosaic Extreme School Makeover Challenge submission**























### ***Food For Thought***













Below is a list of the many tremendous ideas schools submitted in the Mosaic Extreme School Makeover Challenge as healthy nutrition initiatives. Some of the initiatives listed were duplicated with only subtle differences from school to school therefore individual schools are not credited but will likely identify themselves by the unique terminology and descriptions reproduced in this document.

It should be noted that collaboration with a Public Health Nutritionist and the creation of food school policy are highly recommended as best practice for all schools.

-  Host a “*Moo Splash*” event where all students are given free milk on this day. A team of designated leaders visits every class and presents information on the importance of milk consumption. Information is sent home to parents.
-  Offer after-school cooking classes that teach and encourage healthy food choices.
-  Start a school cooking/nutrition club as an extra-curricular activity.
-  Engage students in creating healthy messaging by producing commercials to be played continuously on school monitors.
-  Host a “*Chili Cook-off*” where community teams, students and staff challenge each other to create and serve the best chili recipe. Chili can then be served to the entire student body for lunch.
-  Partner with local First Nations communities to provide cultural foods such as baked bannock to students.
-  Have students create nutrition promotion posters that support healthy food choices.
-  Partner with the School Community Council to provide healthy alternatives.
-  Work with students to create “*Healthy Lifestyles Contracts*” which they can then choose to sign.
-  Provide staff with professional development on wellness issues.
-  Provide Food Safety and Handling training for all volunteers.
-  Ensure that all signage and messaging throughout the school is consistent with healthy choices.
-  Plant a school garden.



-  Consider appropriate serving sizes when providing foods to students.
-  Integrate nutrition and healthy cooking into other classes and subject areas.
-  Host a “*Health Fair*”.
-  Combine literacy initiatives with nutrition by hosting a “*Breakfast and Reading Club*” in which students read to one another while enjoying a healthy meal.
-  Invite seniors in to share recipes and cooking skills with students.
-  Promote healthy options daily.
-  Involve families by hosting a “*Healthy Family Lunch Competition*” where families can enter recipes for prizes in various categories such as “*unique snacks, easy meals*” etc.
-  Survey students on their views towards school nutrition practice and policy.
-  Challenge students to come up with creative ways to improve school nutrition.
-  Allow all staff to utilize the school home-ec lab or canteen to integrate food experiences as part of their lesson plans.
-  Involve local service clubs to provide universal food/milk programs to all students.
-  Promote fruit and veggie consumption by partnering them with all food sales.
-  Send home copies of Canada’s Food Guide to all families.
-  Partner with business to provide healthy foods at competitive prices.
-  Host a “*Healthy Lunch Week*”.
-  Consider reducing or restricting the use of microwaves by students in order to promote healthier nutrition choices.
-  Involve parents in school nutrition initiatives.
-  Include nutrition as a theme for Spirit Days. “*Milk Spirit Week*”
-  Host healthy food promotions by offering students free samples of healthy foods such as kiwi, pineapple etc.
-  Host a “*Celebrity Noon Hour Cooking*” event. Invite in local dignitaries to pass on recipes and teach cooking skills to students.

-  Invite in guest speakers to educate and inspire students, parents, staff and community on nutrition and health issues.
-  Utilize the school intercom system to announce nutrition facts, advise students of healthy food sales and encourage healthy eating.
-  Include “*Nutrition Notes*” in monthly newsletters to parents. These notes would include nutrition facts and tips on how to make healthier food choices.
-  Introduce “*Purchase Cards*” for canteen use. Parents can purchase cards for their children to utilize at the canteen in order to eliminate the use of cash. Parents can then choose which items their child is able to purchase.
-  Assemble a team to assess and suggest improvements for student nutrition and health. Team members should include students, staff, parents, health care professionals and community members.
-  Use incentive or reduced pricing to promote healthy food choices.
-  Consider “*Packaging*” less nutritious food items with healthy choices.
  - > Traditional hotdog sales can be nutritionally improved by including veggie packs and milk as a combo. Consider serving on a whole wheat bun.
-  Partner with business to offer students and their families the benefits of bulk purchasing healthy, fresh food boxes.
-  Involve students in all aspects of nutrition programming and policy. From menu development to preparation and delivery, students learn most and will take ownership for initiatives when they are fully engaged.
-  Request only nutritious snacks for class parties and school functions.
-  Allow students an “*Apple Period*” where they are encouraged to consume an apple or other piece of fruit during class.
-  Measure success of your nutrition education initiatives by testing student knowledge of nutrition at both the beginning and end of the school year.



Set nutrition goals for your school

Eg: *“A goal for the coming year is to have at least 80% of students eating breakfast somewhere, whether at home or school.”* Deslisle Elementary School



Consider partnering with local business to operate the school food servery. Rules to guide the partnership:

- 1) Nutritious foods only
- 2) Affordable pricing



Run a *“Soup Kitchen”*. Student leaders are responsible for ensuring healthy soup is available for sale to students at a reduced cost.



Create a healthy recipe book. Involve students and parents.



Have students *“Taste Test”* healthy menu items for consumption in the school canteen and cafeteria or nutrition program.



Run a *“Fruit and Veggie Program”*. Students operate a program that provides veggie bags, fruit cups and salads to students at a reduced cost.



Provide students with *“Snack Trades”* whereby healthy food choices are kept at the school for students to *“trade”* non-nutritious food items with.



Challenge each class to plan and prepare a healthy lunch for the school



Provide students with healthy, affordable nutrition choices daily.



Utilize school nutrition programs to teach students basic life skills training such as budgeting, meal planning and preparation.



Host a *“Food Fair”* displaying healthy food choices.



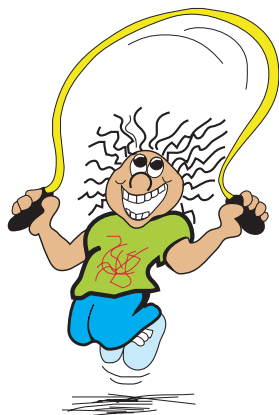
Become a *Nutrition Positive* school. Contact the Saskatoon Public Health Region for more information.



Allow students to bring water bottles to class.

***“It was important for me to be involved on the SNACK Committee. I believe that the purpose of school is to teach people how to live successful lives and being healthy through proper eating and exercise is definitely part of that.”***

**Kaylee, student Prince Albert Collegiate Institute  
Mosaic Extreme School Makeover Challenge submission**







































### ***Let's Get Physical***

The following is a list of the many excellent ideas that were submitted by schools to the Mosaic Extreme School Makeover Challenge as healthy physical fitness activities. Due to the duplication of some of the initiatives within the submissions, individual schools are not credited but will likely identify themselves by the unique terminology and descriptions reproduced in this document.

It should be noted that collaboration with Saskatchewan *in motion* is recommended as best practice for all schools.

- 🍎 Change from movie day to “*Movement Day*”.
- 🍎 Host “*Walking Wednesdays*”. Parents are also invited to participate in these 20-30 minute weekly school-wide walks.
- 🍎 Incorporate “*Brain Breaks*” into the school day with yoga and *Brain Gym* activities.
- 🍎 Host monthly school-wide fitness challenges that are theme-based
  - > *Learn to Dance Month, Winter Fitness Carnival*, etc.
- 🍎 Teach students aboriginal cultural games.
- 🍎 Develop recess activity packages for each teacher. Teachers instruct students in games to promote physical activity on the school grounds.
- 🍎 Peer Mentoring. Older students teach younger children new playground games.
- 🍎 Involve families and encourage them to be physically active both at home and by joining in with school activities.
- 🍎 Send home information on the importance of an active lifestyle and include tips on how to become more active.
- 🍎 Host a “*Walk, bike, skateboard, rollerblade to school/work*” week.
- 🍎 Host a “*Winter Carnival.*”
- 🍎 Host a “*Dance Off*” for students with classrooms competing against each other.
- 🍎 Partner with KidSport and others to assist students in being physically active.
- 🍎 Offer “*Traditional Dance*” and “*Traditional Drumming*” as extra-curricular activities that teach and support native culture.

-  Encourage students to volunteer with seniors by going for walks together.
-  Start a walking club as an extra-curricular activity.
-  Invite in guest speakers to educate and motivate students on the benefits of physical activity.
-  Offer free swimming lessons to students.
-  Participate in events such as the *Canada-Wide Fitness Challenge*, *Terry Fox Run* and the Heart and Stroke Foundation *Jump Rope for Heart*.
-  Provide each classroom with “*Activity Buckets*” that contain “active” equipment.
-  Encourage classes to compete in fitness challenges by keeping logs of daily combined minutes spent in physical activities.
-  Host a “*Healthy Lifestyle Fair*”.
-  Challenge classes to create “*Movement Dances*” for presentation at assembly.
-  Participate in fitness challenges with a neighbouring school or community.
-  Invite parents and community to participate in school fitness challenges.
-  Provide students with Intramural programs during lunch hour.
-  Create a “*Fitness Group*” to assist students with education, training and support.
-  Encourage extra-curricular activities that promote physical activity.
-  Set fitness goals for the school.
-  Reinforce healthy lifestyle choices daily.
-  Provide students with the opportunity to participate in an early morning fitness activity from 8:30 – 9:00 am daily.
-  Engage students in school ground or community “*clean-up*” activities.
-  Have staff role model active living by participating in games and physical activities.
-  Partner with other organizations and service groups to create fun and exciting physical activities for students.

-  Start a “*Kids Fit Club*”.
-  Provide students with magazines and other literature that promote physical activity.
-  Praise students for their physical activity.
-  Encourage daily walking/biking as the preferred mode of transportation to and from school.
-  Develop school grounds to support physical activity.
-  Encourage the use of pedometers to measure physical activity.
-  Invite the community to participate in “*Block Walks*”.
-  Host a “*Wellness Day*” at the local leisure centre for all students and staff.
-  Create a “*Wellness Centre*” within the school that includes a weight room and cardio-vascular equipment.
-  Partner with local recreation facilities and organizations to provide students with enriched opportunities for physical activity.
-  Engage students in the planning of physical activities for the school.
-  Incorporate a walk/run at the end of the school day where applicable.
-  Establish a committee devoted to focusing on healthy life choices in school.
-  Host noon hour “*Sock Hops*” to promote physical activity in younger students.
-  Have parents and staff challenge students to sporting competitions.
-  Host “*Clinics*” to teach students a wide array of sports and physical activities.

***“By building the quality of our local school environment, we will be improving the quality of our students’ overall life.”***

**- Milestone School  
Mosaic Extreme School Makeover Challenge submission**

## **Conclusion**

Schools provide an ideal environment to teach children and youth the importance of healthy lifestyle choices. Lessons learned in the classroom can become lifelong habits that will impact our children and our society years after the student has graduated. The expansion of wellness lessons taught in the classroom throughout the entire school environment provide increased learning opportunities and allow students to practice making healthy choices. Students benefit from the experiential teaching afforded them by the school taking an holistic approach to wellness teaching.

It is incumbent upon schools to model the healthy choices encouraged in the formal curriculum. As the hub of the community, the school has the power to impact students, parents and entire community by influencing the lifestyle choices they make. Schools can support and educate families and the community at large. By working together, we can define and role model healthy choices for our children.

Schools endeavour to teach children the skills necessary to become successful, productive citizens. By encouraging environmental stewardship, we teach children that they have a responsibility to themselves and others to protect and care for the natural world. By taking care of the environment, we take care of our future. This sends a very important message to our children that they are valued.

The challenges that face our schools today are tremendous. Many students come to school hungry. Some worry about the environment while still others suffer from the lack of proper daily physical activity. By addressing these issues, we improve their ability to learn and create a lasting impact on their lives and the lives of their families.

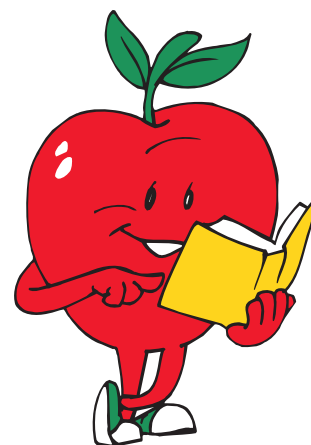
Saskatchewan schools, in the spirit of cooperativeness, have reached out to build partnerships to support and enhance the services they provide our students. In loco parentis has taken on new and greater meaning as schools reach out to embrace their students' needs.

By making healthy choices the easy choice, schools influence the decisions students make at home and in the community. Schools have the power to influence the choices that our students make. That is our greatest responsibility.

***“Students, teachers and parents alike, often struggle with proper healthy lifestyle choices. We are excited about the opportunity to help teach and promote nutrition, fitness and well being at our school.”***

**- Tisdale Elementary School**

**Mosaic Extreme School Makeover Challenge submission**







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## Appendix A

Copied with permission from Waste Reduction Week Canada,  
<http://www.wrwcanada.com/02wasteauditSprint.htm>

### A Sample Waste Audit to Perform

#### A School Waste Audit

Use this form to conduct a waste audit of your school. The totals indicated with the letters **G H I J R** and **C** are used in calculations for parts of the audit. Waste refers to all the unwanted materials produced by the school: garbage placed in hoppers, materials put out for recycling and organic material that is mulched or composted.

**School Population:**

Students \_\_\_\_\_

Staff \_\_\_\_\_

Total \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Audit** \_\_\_\_\_

#### 1. Sources of Your School's Waste:

Place ticks (✓) in the table to indicate the source(s) of each type of waste in your school.

Type of Waste	Source						
	Classrooms	Staffroom	Office	Canteen	Cleaners	Garden	Other
Paper and Cardboard							
Glass							
Plastic							
Cans							
Other Metals							
Timber							
Garden Waste							
Food Waste							
Chemicals							
Other							

## 2. What Happens to Your School's Waste?

Place ticks (✓) in the table to indicate how each type of waste in your school is disposed. In the last column write in estimates for the composition of your school's waste.\*

Type of Waste	Method of Disposal				Est.% of school's waste (by weight)
	Mainly Recycled	Mainly Composted	Mainly to Hopper	Mainly to Drains	
Paper & Cardboard					
Glass					
Plastic					
Cans					
Other Metals					
Timber					
Garden Waste					
Food Waste					
Chemicals					
Other					

\*Sample bins from different sources, weighing different types of waste.

## 3. Recycling in Your School

Complete the table for each material recycled by the school.

Material Recycled	Amount Collected (bags/bins per year)	Estimated Weight (kg per year)	Income (\$ per year)
<b>Total</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>I</b>

#### 4. Quantities of Garbage Produced by Your School

What size hopper/skip/bin does your school have? \_\_\_\_\_ m3

How many hoppers/skips/bins does your school have? \_\_\_\_\_

How many full hoppers/skips/bins of garbage are collected by the waste contractor each week? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the total amount of garbage produced by your school in one week? \_\_\_\_\_ m3

What is the total amount of garbage produced by your school in one year (assuming 40 weeks in the school year)? \_\_\_\_\_ m3

If 1 cubic metre of “loose” garbage weighs approximately 150 kg, what is the weight of garbage produced by your school in one year? \_\_\_\_\_ Kg G

How much garbage is produced per student in your school? \_\_\_\_\_ Kg

How much organic material (food scraps and garden waste) is composted each week? \_\_\_\_\_ Kg

How much organic material (food scraps and garden waste) is composted in one year? \_\_\_\_\_ Kg C

#### 5. The Total Amount of Waste Produced by Your School

Method of Disposal	Amount Produced per Year (kg)
hopper/skip/bin(s)	<b>G</b>
Recycling	<b>R</b>
Composting	<b>C</b>
<b>Total</b>	

The total amount of waste produced by your school each year is:

\_\_\_\_\_ kg or \_\_\_\_\_ tonnes.

## **6. The Total Cost of Waste Disposal for Your School**

Estimate the cost for each form of disposal. Write these figures in the table.

<b>Method of Disposal</b>	<b>Cost (\$) per year</b>
hopper/skip/bin(s)	<b>H</b>
Recycling	
Composting (tools, bins fertiliser)	
Total	<b>J</b>

Calculate the net cost of waste disposal by subtracting **Total I** (Table 3) from **Total J** (Table 6).

The net cost of waste disposal for your school is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per year.