



Board Report

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PROGRAM REPORT JUNE 2019

101 17TH Street East, Owen Sound, Ontario N4K 0A5

Phone: 519-376-9420 or 1-800-263-3456

WEBSITE: www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca

Working with the Grey Bruce communities to protect and promote health

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Pathways to Infection Prevention and Control Success in the Dental Profession

Jointly hosted by the Infection Control and Oral Health programs, the “Pathways to IPAC Success in the Dental Profession” workshop was held on May 1, with over 110 dental professionals attending. The goal of the event was to increase awareness of best practices in infection control within the dental setting.

The event was timely, given the November 2018 release of new standards of practice for infection control in the dental office by the Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario (RCDSO). Additionally, new public health standards and protocols regarding Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) and lapse investigation requirements were finalized in 2018. The last workshop in Grey Bruce to focus on dental professionals and infection control was held in 2011.

Dr. Brian Feldman, RCDSO, presented on the role and resources of the College related to IPAC. Laura Farrell (photo), an IPAC specialist with Public Health Ontario focused on the lapse process. Darlene Rojek, a Southwest Regional IPAC specialist, shared IPAC resources available from Public Health Ontario.



Following the workshop, participants identified they will be making changes to their reprocessing to support IPAC best practices and committed to IPAC training and education, including Public Health Ontario training modules.

The education session met Standards for Boards of Health to consult and work with local associations and service providers to address their need for resources and supports and to increase awareness in infection prevention and control. The event was also an opportunity to share public health's role and outline our processes with respect to complaints regarding infection prevention related to regulatory bodies. Attendees earned continuing education credits.

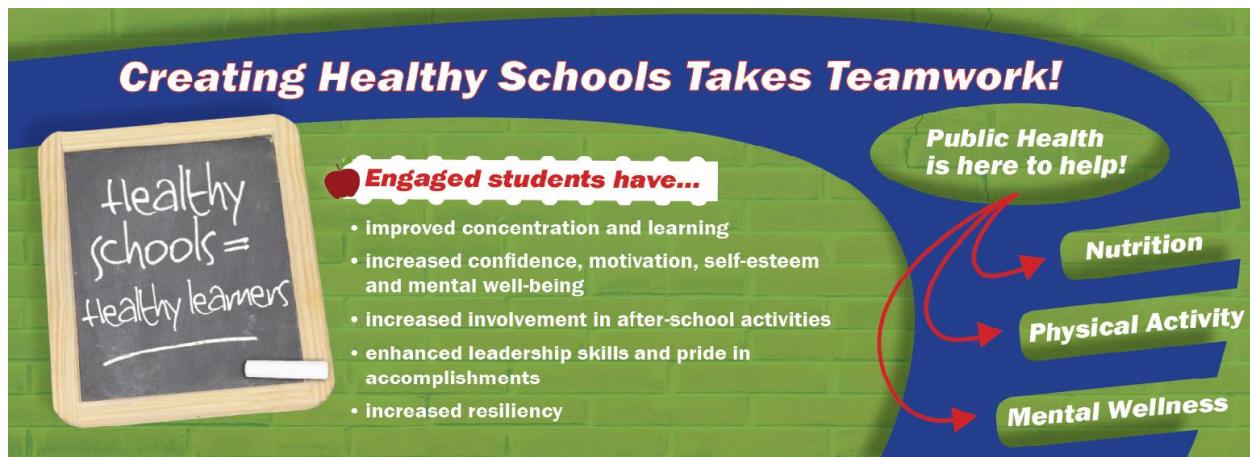
School Health Program

The School Health Program works in partnership with schools and school boards on health related policies, programs and supportive environments. Public Health Nurses (PHNs) coordinate various school programs including Roots of Empathy, Youth Mental Health Champions and Healthy Schools. PHNs meet with principals through-out the school year to identify key health issue at schools. Education, programs and curriculum supports are recommended and/or provided to the board, staff, students and parents, based on school needs and requests. Common health topics identified by schools have included cannabis, vaping, mental health, nutrition, substance misuse and sexual health.

Healthy Schools

Healthy Schools is an internationally recognized framework that supports improving students' outcomes while addressing school health with an integrated and holistic approach. The program is built on the recognition that health and learning are interdependent; healthy children make better learners and better educated children are healthier.

The Healthy School Toolkit was revised this year and rolled out to the Bruce Grey Catholic District and Bluewater District School Boards through meetings with principals, electronic sharing and the School Health Newsletter. PHNs were available to assist in creating a positive school climate through supporting development of Healthy School Committees and helping build relationships between school staff, parents, students and community partners. The School Health section of our website was updated with the revised toolkit, additional resources and curriculum support.



Youth Mental Health Champions

Youth Mental Health Champions is an evidence-based program delivered in partnership with the Bruce Grey Catholic District and Bluewater District School Boards. This peer-to-peer initiative is designed to promote mental health awareness and reduce stigma for JK to Grade 12 students. This year, 17 schools were engaged through peer designed and led activities, including stigma walks, meditation & yoga, random acts of kindness, physical activities and calming exercises.

Launched with Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care one-time pilot funding in 2014, the program started in five schools in the 2014/15 school year. It has expanded yearly and will be offered to 32 schools in the 2019/20 school year.



Roots of Empathy

Roots of Empathy is an evidence-based classroom program designed to raise levels of empathy, resulting in more respectful and caring relationships and reduced levels of bullying and aggression. At the heart of the program are a neighbourhood infant and parent who visit the classroom nine times over the school year. A trained Roots of Empathy instructor visits the classroom 27 times over the school year and coaches students to observe the baby's development and to label the baby's feelings. In this experiential learning, the baby is the "teacher" and a lever, which the instructor uses to help children identify and reflect on their own feelings and the feelings of others. The emotional literacy taught in the program lays the foundation for safer and more caring classrooms, where children are the "changers". Across Ontario, school boards are choosing Roots of Empathy as a strategy to enhance their focus on mental health and well-being, including bullying prevention, character education, inclusion and parent engagement.

Launched as a pilot in the 2017/18 school year, Roots of Empathy reached almost 400 students from JK to Grade 7 in seventeen classes at thirteen schools in Grey Bruce. Trained instructors included staff from the Bruce Grey Catholic District School Board, Kikendaasogamig Elementary School, Kids & Us, Youth and Family Services and community volunteer. We will be hosting another Roots of Empathy instructor training this September to support the growth of the program across schools in Grey Bruce.