

President's Message

Kellie Baker

Health Education has been defined as “any combination of planned learning experiences based on sound theories that provide individuals, groups, and communities the opportunity to acquire information and the skills needed to make quality health decisions” (2011 Joint Committee on Health Education and Promotion Terminology).

In keeping with this definition, the NLTA Health Education Special Interest Council is working to provide the teachers of Newfoundland and Labrador support in implementing planned learning experiences based on best and promising Health Education practice so that our school community (e.g., teachers, students, staff and families) can acquire not only the information, but also the *skills* (i.e., application of the information) needed to make quality health decisions. For example, we have a recently updated website, www.healthednl.com, where you will find tabs on “What’s New”, “Resources”, past “Newsletters” and learn a little bit more about the Council, our team and vision. You can also follow us on Twitter @NLTA_Health_Ed or even include us in your RTs or when you Tweet about what you are doing in your classrooms related to Health Education!

The WOW! (**World of Wellness**) newsletter is another way for us to reach our goals. Within this newsletter you’ll find some reflections from colleagues at various stages of their careers on ways in which they have successfully started (and sustained) a school year. Student and teacher mental wellness is the focus of

two other articles (submitted by teachers like yourselves, hint, hint) that provide ideas that you can implement in your school! As you read on for more of what’s in this WOW! newsletter consider submitting a Health Education related article. Submission guidelines can be found on our website: www.healthednl.com/submission-guidelines.

As I write this message, schools have just acknowledged Remembrance Day. Remembering those who have sacrificed their lives for others puts one in a particularly reflective mood. As I reflect on our young Council, I realize that it has been three years since we began this journey and that many people have been involved along the way. I would like to take this opportunity to send along a huge debt of gratitude to the dedicated individuals who have been a part of supporting this Council and its growth. Many hands make light work – and as such we are always looking for more to get involved. If you are interested in becoming involved in the Executive, please contact me at kelliebaker@nlesd.ca.

We are a new Council but we are gaining momentum. Welcome newcomers to our Council: Mr. Stephen Pike, Communications Officer, teaching in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, and Dr. Antony Card, Memorial University of Newfoundland. If you are not interested in being on the Executive but would like to lend your support, please consider becoming a supporter by contacting Chantelle Kelly (chantellekelly@nlesd.ca) so we can add you to our mailing list – but we won’t inundate you with email.

Enjoy the newsletter!

PHE Canada & PESIC 2017 National Conference Report

The National Physical & Health Education conference was held in St. John's this past May. Presenters and delegates from NL, other parts of Canada, the UK, Ireland, and Australia shared in this unique professional development opportunity. Members of the NLTA Health Education Executive found sessions to be informative and engaging supported by hands-on experiences presented by powerful speakers passionate about Health Education. Below is just a small sampling of our experiences:

- Hints for connecting with students such as welcoming them at the door in the morning in order to build community and positive class climate.
- The importance of Brain Breaks and other strategies for having students meet their desire to move as well as supporting the research connecting learning and movement. Here is just one link to quick and easy Brain Breaks: <http://brainbreaks.blogspot.ca/> (pen flipping, hand switching...)
- Egale Canada (<https://egale.ca/>) presented an insightful session on LGBTQ+ inclusive practices. This session supported a deeper understanding of the difference between gender identity and sexual identity and the importance of using inclusive language and practices in all settings.
- *Building Healthy School Communities* was presented by PHE Canada. This session provided a comprehensive, grass roots approach to combining the focus of the whole child and the school community.
- *Teach Resiliency: Mental Health and Well-being in Schools* (also PHE Canada) provided fabulous tools for teachers to use to keep themselves healthy, which in turn trickles down to the health of their students.
- *Physical Activity Inclusivity: How to Promote Movement for EveryBODY* was an insightful session that delivered practical strategies on how to promote physical activity in an inclusive way, for students of all body types and sizes. Conducted by academics and health professionals, health educators received a research-based view of the challenges and struggles weight bias presents for students' physical activity levels, and they learned about positive ways to talk about, model, and teach about physical activity. One of the session leads was one of the founding members of this Council, Dr. Erin Cameron, who at the time was at the School of Human Kinetics and Recreation, MUN.



PHE Canada & PESIC
2017 National Conference
Rock Solid Foundations...Energizing Futures

EPS Canada & PESIC
Conférence Nationale 2017
Un avenir énergétique ... fondé sur le roc

Prioritizing the *Health Education Dialogue*

Trent Langdon

More and more each school year, we see heightened pressures on teachers to meet curriculum outcomes (within limited timeframes) in content-heavy subject areas. Consequently, true opportunities for personal and social development for our students are being squeezed out of instructional times with the expectation that learning will take place during infrequent or 'non-core' subject timeslots (or during school-wide and extra-curricular events).

Though the intention is to infuse learning throughout the curriculum, there needs to be a realization that ample time has to be devoted to teacher-student-class dialogue on life choices, prevention, problem-solving, and social education. These discussions must be content-rich and not considered as an 'add-on' or 'filler' item. It is only through dedicated time within the school day and quality curriculum development that this can occur.

In their book, *Fostering Resilient Learners: Strategies for Creating a Trauma-Sensitive Classroom* (ASCD; 2016), Kristen Souers and Peter Hall set the stage with a thought-provoking comment on our class compositions referencing: "our mandate to educate every child who walks through our doors, including the hungry, the angry, the anxious, the lonely, the tired, and the trauma-affected (p. 10)." Though this statement has many additional

implications related to student support services and overall school needs, it drives home the essential nature of structured health-related instruction.

Within our country, our society is experiencing unprecedented health challenges (and question marks) as never seen before. I offer you a few examples:

- the impending legalization of marijuana
- widespread use and abuse of prescription medications
- the needs of an expanding community of sexual minority groups
- threats related to recreational drug use (i.e. Fentanyl)
- stress regulation and students that are ill-equipped to deal with school and life events

It is during these times that we need our teachers / educators to continually champion and reinforce the foundation of all learning; that the holistic development of our students requires an emphasis on the basics of personal life skill development and health knowledge.

It is in this light that I would like to acknowledge the vision of the executive and membership of the Health Education Special Interest Council of the NLTA. As referenced, there are many battles and challenges ahead; however, great empowerment and action comes from a group of like-minded professionals and their willingness to invoke change.

WOW! Looks Forward to Hearing From You

Teachers of health education and community partners are encouraged to promote and share information that supports health curriculum and overall school health. Submission ideas may include:

- Lesson plans
- Highlights of health initiatives at your school
- Highlights that showcase

health education at your school

- Resources & services available
- Partnerships
- Healthy living projects
- Funding opportunities
- Current health education information

In an effort to provide information that is current, evidence informed, based on promising and best health practice, consistent with

Health Education curricula and NLESD policy, the NLTA Health Education Special Interest Council Executive has developed **WOW! Submission Guidelines**. The guidelines are followed closely when creating the newsletter. If you are interested in submitting a piece please visit www.healthednl.com/submission-guidelines to review the WOW! Submission Guidelines.

Welcome to Comfort Cove – Please Enjoy Your Stay

A safe and cozy haven hidden from the stormy seas, *Comfort Cove* is an initiative that has been implemented by classroom teacher and Music Specialist, Angela Dawe, at Brother Rice Junior High School who found herself needing a quiet place during the school day to rejuvenate. It is designed to be a quiet outlet for students and staff members who may live with anxiety or who may simply need a withdrawal from the sensory overload that can sometimes be inherent in the intermediate school. It is currently housed in the music room and open to students every day at lunchtime.

As with most schools, Brother Rice has a wide array of activities available to students who wish to engage with their peers and their environment during the school day. These include, but are not limited to, lunch-time intramurals in the gymnasium, outdoor play, dance troupe, computer use in the LRC, innovative projects such as a MakerSpace, leadership team, etc. and many adolescents enjoy the level of social interaction and engagement that such activities provide. Through collaboration with students, it was recognized that there is a portion of the school population that would like to avail of more restful opportunities to calm their minds and who seek less stimulation.

In recent years, class sizes at the intermediate level have been increasing and the composition of a typical class has also experienced changes. Students find themselves surrounded by very diverse learners, each of whom have differing academic, social and sensory needs. *Comfort Cove* recognizes this need and seeks to provide all students and staff with a safe and relaxing environment to detach from the busyness of the regular school day during unstructured time.

Comfort Cove provides students with and without diagnosed exceptionalities a safe, quiet place to rejuvenate, read, reflect, and/or rest. It is also a place to learn how to practice meditation, visualization, self-

regulation, basic yoga poses and to learn new day-to-day coping skills. Through visuals, articles, projected images and text, students are learning skills outside of the immediate curriculum that directly relates to their mental and social well-being. Many students are living with anxiety on a daily basis. There is a wide gamut, from nervous behaviours, to panic attacks, to withdrawn personalities, to those who cannot bear to eat in the cafeteria, to irregular attendance, and everything in between and more. *Comfort Cove* is a place that is a safe haven for those that need an escape from the everyday.

It is the vision that *Comfort Cove* will eventually have a dedicated space apart from the Music Room. This dedicated space would then have the potential to become an alternative space for teachers and administration to meet with students experiencing difficulties with academics, focus, behavioral challenges, stress, bullying, etc. It can also provide a neutral, safe place to implement and enhance restorative justice practices.

Comfort Cove is currently equipped with age appropriate sensory tools, brain teasers, logic/crossword puzzles, journal prompts, alternative seating, yoga mats, and supplies for simple art activities and meditation. It has been a welcomed addition to the school community as a positive place to meet the needs of our diverse population. *Comfort Cove* received an Educator's Innovation Award in Spring 2017 and will be expanding its resources this fall.

Healthy School Communities National Forum

Kim Crocker

On November 1-4, 2017, I travelled to Ottawa, Ontario on behalf of the NLTA Health Education Special Interest Council for the Healthy School Communities National Forum. This two-day event was filled with inspiring keynote speakers, a variety of breakout sessions, and opportunities for social networking. Valuable take away information was presented in areas of Mental Health, Resiliency, Comprehensive School Health initiatives, Outdoor Play, and Stress Management techniques. Some of my favorite sessions are expanded on below.

School Community Wellness: JCSH – The Positive Mental Health Toolkit

Katherine and Susan presented the Positive Mental Health Toolkit as a way to promote positive mental health practices and show perspectives in the school environment. Through Comprehensive School Health, all four components are in place to create a system of change, leading to healthier learners. This toolkit was launched in 2012 and contains modules filled with videos, written components, and strategies that provide a means of enhancing healthy school environments for students, educators, and staff members. This toolkit also works in conjunction with the Healthy School Planner as a means of evaluation. This resource consists of five modules including: (1) Introduction to Positive Mental Health; (2) School Connectedness; (3) Resiliency in School Environments; (4) School Team Environments; (5) Assessing Comprehensive School Health.

www.jcsh-cces.ca/index.php/resources/tools-toolkits (all toolkits)

www.jcshpositivementalhealthtoolkit.com (Mental Health Toolkit)

The Social Ecology of Resilience: Families, Schools, and Communities

Keynote – Dr. Michael Ungar

Dr. Ungar is an absolutely incredible speaker. His keynote was on the topic of resiliency and how to make connections with students in a meaningful way, one step at a time. Dr. Ungar is a social worker who has many incredible experiences in his private practice. The moral to his stories were similar in nature, being that we need to allow children to fail early in life, while they still have a fairy godmother to help them (references were always made to the Cinderella story). Many of his keynotes are available on YouTube.

Teach Resiliency: Mental Health and Well-being in Schools

After presenting statistics on the mental health of teachers, the Teach Resiliency website was shown and navigation was demonstrated. This is a fabulous resource for any teacher experiencing defeat with their mental health. As of course, teachers can't teach students to be healthy if they aren't healthy themselves.

www.porticonetwork.ca/web/teach-resiliency

The Healthy School Communities National Forum was attended by delegates nationwide. Participants included educators, public health professionals, recreation leaders, physical education specialists and generalists, as well as administrators who all gathered information on the development of the whole child in a healthy school community. Check out www.healthednl.com for more session details, or search #HSCForum2017.

This end of unit Health Education project can be used as a platform for making similar assessment pieces at any grade. Originally designed for Grade 5 and refined over the years by Greg Woolgar and Kellie Baker, it also supports recently updated NL Health Education Curricula which focus on units titled "All About Me".

NOTE: When printing, keep in mind that the first two pages are formatted for 8½ x14 paper whereas the last two pages are formatted for 11x17 paper in order to have enough room for the body outlines.

ALL ABOUT ME: END OF UNIT PROJECT

This is a chance for you to show what you have learned. But more than that, this a chance for you to learn even more about yourself!

On the sheet that has the outline of a body:

- Use the white space outside of the boxes to colour and decorate.
- You can also lightly shade the inside of the boxes after you have written/drawn in them.
- Use the white space on the inside of the boxes to write and/or draw the following:

Part 1: Me on the Outside

Find two pictures. One of you when you were younger and one of you now. Glue/tape photos (or draw photos) of you into the labeled boxes. Write a three or four word caption under each picture describing the scene (e.g., Boat to Bell Island). Also write how old you were when the pictures were taken (e.g., Age 2).

Part 2: Me on the Inside

Neatly write one paragraph about the kind of person you are now (do a rough draft first).

Things to think about:

- Are you calm, timid, energetic, sociable...?
- Do you like to be around a lot of friends or would you rather be with a few good friends?
- Do you find it challenging to speak in front of a crowd or do you like to entertain others?
- What are the things you value?
- Anything you would like to say about who you are on the inside that others may not necessarily see about you on the outside!

You can include photos or drawings in this section if you wish.

Part 3: My Interests

Draw or add photos of some of your interests. Write a caption for each. If you decide you are responsible enough, you can also bring in medals, trophies...when you give your presentation.

Part 4: My Strengths/Talents

Let the world know about your strengths and talents. Use photos, drawings, (with captions explaining what is happening) or colourful creative lists.

Part 5: My Short Term Goals

Write a goal you wish to accomplish by the end of grade __. Tell why you chose that goal.

Part 6: My Long Term Goals

Write about what you want to accomplish as you mature and get older.

You will present your final product to the class to showcase who you are

This isn't bragging; it's an opportunity to share who you feel you are!

All About Me Health Project Rubric

Student: _____ Date: _____ Total: ____ /20

	4 – Excellent	3 – Good	2 – Approaching	1 – Not Yet Demonstrating
Demonstrates understanding of goal setting (i.e., long term are beyond elementary; short term are by end of year)				
Demonstrates understanding of the concepts of strength & talents				
Demonstrates understanding of the concepts of hobbies & interests				
Demonstrates understanding of the concept of inner self				
Demonstrates care and pride in their work (e.g., appropriate legibility, best of their ability, creativity attempted...)				

HEALTH PROJECT – ALL ABOUT ME

Me on the Outside:
Picture
(drawn or photo)
of when you
were younger
with caption

Me on the Outside:
Picture
(drawn or photo)
of when you
were older
(close to now)
with caption

Me on the Inside:
Who are you now?
• name
• age
• calm/timid/energetic...
• friends
• likes/dislikes
• things you value
• strengths/things that
you still need to
work on

Short Term Goals:
By the end of
Grade 5

Long Term Goals:
As you
mature/get older

Strengths/Talents:
Pictures
(drawn or photo)
with captions
or colourful
creative lists
Separate this into 4
equal areas
Use the heading
above

Interests/Hobbies:
Pictures
(drawn or photo)
with captions
or colourful
creative lists
Separate this into 4
equal areas
Use the heading
above

One Favourite:
Number or animal
or...
Creative &
Colourful

