

Active Yukon Schools

**Physical activity
helps children do
better in school!**



Teachers can help students to have better:

- ✓ Learning,
- ✓ Self-confidence, and
- ✓ Health and Wellness

by incorporating Physical Activity into classrooms!



Location: Ross River

Photo credit: Jan Downing

Kids need 1 hour per day of physical activity, but 9/10 Canadian children do not get this.

Look inside for ideas to get kids active at school!

Physical Literacy in the classroom.....	2
Winter Walk Day: February 5, 2014.....	3
Cycle Smart Spring 2014.....	3
Everyone Jump: Free Resource.....	4
Spotlight on Finland and Play.....	4
Kids Recreation Fund.....	4
Feeding Active Bodies.....	5
Brain Breaks.....	5
Opportunities for Rural Yukon.....	6
Physical Activity and Mental Well-Being.....	7
RPAY Programs for Active Schools.....	8



Thank you to Yukon Government Sport and Recreation Branch for their generous funding through the Renewed Yukon Active Living Strategy!

A Conversation with Jeane Lassen about Physical Literacy

Jeane Lassen is the new voice for Physical Literacy in the Yukon. She is the Sport Yukon Physical Literacy Coordinator, as well as the Sport School Coach and Curriculum Support with the new Yukon Sport and Physical Literacy program at F.H. Collins Secondary School. Jeane is a Yukon weightlifter who placed 8th in the 2008 Summer Olympics and won the gold medal at the 2008 Pan-American Championships.



What is Physical Literacy?

Jeane: Physical literacy is the ability to move with competence and confidence in a wide variety of physical activities in multiple environments that benefit the healthy development of the whole person. It includes what we call the ABC's of physical literacy: Agility, Balance, Coordination and Speed. To become completely physically literate, children need to master fundamental movement skills which include running, jumping, throwing, catching, kicking and many, many more. Kids need to feel comfortable moving their bodies on land, in the air, in water, and – especially important for the Yukon – on snow and ice.

Why is it important?

Jeane: If children don't learn these basic skills, they're much less likely to be active when they're adults. Without physical literacy, kids tend to stop being active and turn to unhealthy choices during their free time. If you want children to be moving as adults, they need to start moving when they're very young.

It is just for gym class?

Jeane: It is definitely not just for time spent in physical education! Physical literacy can and should be part of all classrooms throughout the school day. Getting moving during the school day can lead to kids doing better academically, having better behavior, and can be part of the minimum of 60 minutes of physical activity every child needs every day.



How can teachers incorporate physical literacy into their classrooms?

Jeane: There are lots of fun ways to include some physical literacy activities into the school day – even in small spaces such as

classrooms! It's great to get both sides of the body working – this activates the brain – and to incorporate balance. Movement skills can be practiced with very little space. Try this one: Brainstorming with students the different ways they can move is a great way to get things started. Deliberately moving in the ways they have come up with can be done with a simple game of Simon Says. Have kids put their arms out to the side and slowly turn in a circle to make sure they are not in anyone's bubble. Then play Simon Says using the list of movements they have come up with. Get creative and have them pretend they're throwing snowballs at the chalkboard, dodging a bird that's got loose in the classroom, kicking a ball into the garbage can or catching a water balloon. Don't forget to say Simon Says!

Two great resources:

www.activeforlife.com

www.pegames.org/classroom

Coming Up: Winter Walk Day is February 5, 2014.

It's Winter! Don't Hibernate – Walk to School and Celebrate!

Walk to school or at school for daily physical activity, a healthier environment, safer streets, making friends and... having fun! Can't walk to school? Hold a Winter Walk Day during school. Walk to the local skating rink for a skate or hold a Winter Carnival in the school yard at lunch. **IT'S SIMPLE TO BE ACTIVE IN WINTER. HERE ARE SOME FUN IDEAS TO GET YOUR FEET MOVING:**

- Get the whole school involved by posting student-made posters around the school
- Allow students who travel to school by bus to walk the school perimeter or arrange for an alternate drop-off with adult supervision to allow the students to walk to school
- Make a We WALK in Winter banner and display it prominently
- Post announcements in the school newsletter or on the bulletin board
- Air announcements on the school's PA system
- Encourage students to write about their winter walk experiences in articles or poems or even raps
- Invite local dignitaries to join you on your winter walk day: mayor, councillor, police constable, and public health nurse
- Alert your local media and get the community involved
- Hand out our winter walk stickers to participating students
- Hand out hot chocolate to walkers as they arrive at school
- Have a friendly challenge between classes or even another school
- Reward classes with the 'golden snow boot' award – an old boot spray painted gold
- Have the students challenge the teachers to walk in winter and track progress on the school bulletin board. Join www.ontherightpath.ca!
- Wear funky hats or decorate snow boots

From: <http://www.saferoutestoschool.ca>



Cycle Smart Coming Spring 2014



For the past three years, RPAY – in partnership with the Yukon Youth Conservation Corps (Y2C2) – has been providing bicycle safety training to Yukon elementary school children. Last year, 900 Yukon kids were involved. Cycle Smart is coming back in spring 2014. It is offered to all Whitehorse-area Grade 4 and 5 students, as well as other interested classrooms and grades. Cycle Smart will also tour to as many Yukon communities as possible. Cycle Smart teaches children why and how to wear a helmet, the basic rules of the road – which are practiced on-bike on the playground – and how to check their bikes for ride-ability. If you would like **Cycle Smart to come to your school or classroom**, or if you would like **resources to support teaching bicycle safety yourself in your class or school** contact schools@rpay.org.

Photo credit: Jenyfer Neumann



Jump in with the rest of the nation...

Order Everyone Jump TODAY!

Everyone Jump is a FREE school-based diabetes awareness and prevention program that teaches students in grades 1 through 6 about the importance of regular physical activity and healthy eating to prevent type 2 diabetes. The program includes:

- **A Teacher's Program Manual** with lesson plans linked to the Health and Physical Education, Language and The Arts curricula
- **A music CD** to help students remember diabetes prevention messages through fun songs and lyrics
- **An Educational Challenge** providing students with an opportunity to demonstrate what they've learned about diabetes
- **A chance to win great prizes** such as celebration concerts or an Ophea Prize Pack which includes resources and physical activity equipment for the classroom or school!

Everyonejump Kids changing diabetes



For more information visit www.everyonejump.ca

Spotlight on Finland and Play

Finnish students have the highest scores in the world, according to the "Program for International Student Assessment (2006). Their high school graduation rate is 93% (compared to 78% in Canada) and two-thirds of students will continue to college. What does it do differently? One key element, according to a September 2013 Public Radio International interview, is the emphasis on recess and play. Children in Finland get an average **of 75 minutes of recess per day**. How does that compare with your school?

Finnish children receive a 15 minute break after every lesson.
"Reintroduce recess in every

classroom" is the one key tip, according to Pasi Sahlberg, author of *Finnish Lessons: What can the world learn from education change in Finland*. "The more you provide opportunities for children to have physical exercise, play, move, climb up and down, swing... the more they will learn...." From the American Play Advocacy Movement: "Play makes children smart. It grows dendrites in the brain and neuroscience can prove this."



Adapted from interview at: <http://pri.org/stories/2013-09-03/secret-behind-finlands-super-smart-school-kids-recess#>
<http://www.elephantjournal.com/2013/11/theres-no-homework-in-finland-how-finnish-schools-are-trouncing-the-us-education-system-with-more-recess-fewer-tests-infographic/>

Kids Rec Fund

Teachers – do you know of children in your classes that could use financial support to participate in sport and recreational activities? The Kids Recreation Fund (KRF) provides families who need financial assistance with an opportunity to apply for up to \$400 for each of their children every year.

<http://sportyukon.com>



Feeding Active Bodies

Providing a supportive nutrition environment makes it easier for students to make healthy choices and develop healthy behaviours that can be maintained throughout adulthood. A school environment that supports healthy food choices will enable students to put their health and nutrition education into practice.

5 easy ways schools can make the healthy choice the easy choice.

1. Model healthy eating behaviours and include healthy eating messages in lesson plans.
2. Offer a variety of healthy choices in breakfast/lunch programs, vending machines, cafeterias, and concession stands.
3. Choose to participate in healthy fundraisers. Avoid fundraisers that revolve around unhealthy food choices such as chocolates,

pizza or cookies.

4. Avoid using food as a reward in the classroom. Rewarding students with food encourages overconsumption and can contribute to students having an unhealthy relationship with food.

"Rewarding children with unhealthy food in school undermines our efforts to teach them about good nutrition. It's like teaching them a lesson in the importance of not smoking and then handing out ashtrays and lighters to those who did the best job at listening."

Marlene Schwartz, Ph.D., Co-Director of the Yale Center for Eating and Weight Disorders, 2004.

5. Offer healthy food and drinks during celebrations to:
 - teach students that healthy foods can be "fun foods"
 - support the healthy eating lessons being taught in the classroom
 - promote dental health
 - demonstrate that the school

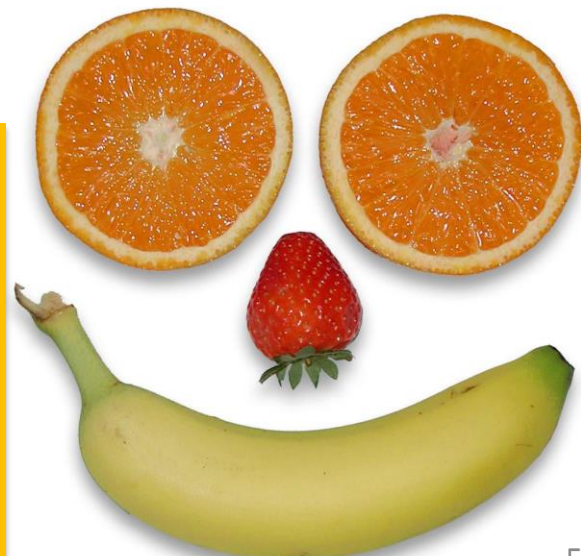
values the health of its students
•encourage students to try new, healthy foods

Don't students have the right to choose whatever they want?

Students need to be supported in developing skills to make wise choices. Healthy eating choices, like other healthy lifestyle choices, require knowledge and support to become lifelong habits. Making healthy choices available and appealing as well as competitively priced and promoted will help achieve that goal.

For more information on how you can provide a supportive nutrition environment at your school, or for additional healthy eating resources: Contact Kim Neufeld, Community Dietitian, Health Promotion Unit. Email Kim.Neufeld@gov.yk.ca or Call 456-6160, or toll-free at 1-800-661-0408, ext. 6160.

Take a Brain Break! Brain breaks are refreshing to both students and teachers. Regularly incorporating short movement activities into the instructional day not only allows children to get their 'wiggles' out, but energizes them and increases their ability to focus on the next learning activity as well. **They take a couple of minutes, and need almost no preparation or extra materials. Try for a Brain Break every 25-30 minutes!**



Opportunities for Rural Yukon

Rural Healthy Eating Active Living (RHEAL) Leaders Program

The RHEAL Leader program provides short-term contracts for rural leaders to deliver active living programs in their communities. Contracts are three months long and are based on \$20 per hour for up to 120 hours, with additional funds available for other program costs. RPAY reviews applications for funding several times per year.

Webinars for Rural Yukon Leaders/Practitioners in After-School Time Period (ASTP) Programs and Recreation

To support training needs of rural Yukon leaders in recreation and in After-School Time Period (ASTP) programming, RPAY has developed a list of on-line learning opportunities that may be of interest to rural Yukon practitioners. Through generous funding from the Yukon Territorial Government's Sport and Recreation Branch through the Renewed Yukon Active Living Strategy, funding may be available for rural Yukon leaders for online learning opportunities that have fees. For more information, go to www.rpayschools.org



Photo credit: Nlaye Ndasadaye Daycare



Photo credit: Caroline Sparks

Winter Active for Life

There is no better place to enjoy winter than the Yukon!! We get it – so let's take advantage of it!

Through cross-country skiing and snowshoeing we get the chance to *Rip the Roof off Winter*, get outside and learn the FUNdamentals of being WinterActive. In partnership with Cross Country Yukon (CCY), RPAY provides opportunities for all Yukon rural community schools to start and maintain WinterActive cross country ski and snowshoeing programs in the school, both during and after class.

Available are 2 key components of any program: equipment and leadership. Communities can borrow ski and snowshoe equipment from the RPAY/CCY Ski Lending Library free of charge for the season. Instead of a library card, groups simply take out a CCY affiliate membership.

Through the CCY/RPAY partnership communities also have access to the RHEAL Leader Program. This program provides funding for invaluable leaders who have the energy, skills and ability to get kids excited about being outside, learning a new activity and/or give them another chance to hone their ski or snowshoe skills.

To start or further support your XC Ski or Snowshoe program contact Jan Downing at jandowning1@gmail.com or 867-633-2111. Remember this site: <http://www.rpayschools.org/winter-active-for-life.html> for valuable links to start a WinterActive Program in your school.

Physical Activity and Mental Well-Being

by Paula Pasquali and Marie Fast

Positive emotions, passions so engrossing that “time flies”, close relationships, a sense of purpose or meaning, and everyday accomplishments are the building blocks of mental well-being. The building blocks of well-being can be found or created in physical activity and recreation activities – teachers have a great opportunity to promote the mental well-being of their students.

Positive emotions: We are at our best when we experience three positive emotions for every negative emotion. Positive emotions that pack the biggest punch are: joy, gratitude, serenity, interest, hope, pride, amusement, inspiration, awe and love. Talking about and savoring three good things that happened during a day, or a game, can help increase the quotient of positive emotions. Visit www.yukonwellness.ca/hopeandhappy.php for tips on how to increase positivity.

Engaging in our passion: We are at our best when we use our core strengths of character – the two to five strengths that define each of us as a person. Listen to young Yukoners speak about their passions for being active and other activities – you’ll be inspired! www.yukonwellness.ca/videos.php.

Relationships: We are social beings – our connections with others feed our minds, hearts and souls. Teamwork, camaraderie, coaching, and mentoring through sport and recreation build

relationships and mental well-being. One of the best ways to deepen relationships is to listen actively and respond authentically as someone shares a positive experience with you.

Meaning: Belonging to and serving something bigger than ourselves gives meaning and purpose to our lives. Using sports and recreation activities to fundraise for a good cause, like Run for Mom, help connect us to others and a greater good.

Accomplishments: Setting goals and working hard to achieve them is good for our mental health, even if it doesn’t always increase our positive emotions! Having a growth mindset – a way of thinking that values effort and persistence over natural abilities or talent – keeps us engaged, optimistic, and improves performance. To learn more about the growth mindset and achievement, go to www.yukonwellness.ca/talentisoverrated.php and www.yukonwellness.ca/achievementmatters.php.

When it comes to your own mental well-being and the mental well-being of others, think **PERMA** – Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Accomplishments!

Marie Fast is Clinical Manager, Mental Health Services

Paula Pasquali is Executive Director of Pathways to Wellness

www.yukonwellness.ca



Photo credit: Heather Grantham

Programs for Active Yukon Schools

ParticipACTION Teen Challenge is a national program that challenges youth aged 13-19 to get active and overcome the physical inactivity crisis. Through the Teen Challenge, Teen Physical Activity Grants of up to \$500 are available to support a local program or event. For more information, contact sogoactive@rpay.org.

Action Grants for Active Yukon Kids

Thanks to generous funding from the Yukon Government Sport and Recreation Branch through the Renewed Yukon Active Living Strategy, in Fall 2013 RPAY was able to provide 56 Action Grants totalling almost \$60,000 to 11 communities as well as Whitehorse. Classroom Action Grants (up to \$500) are to help get kids active during the school day. After School Action Grants (up to \$2000) are to help kids get active during the after-school time period of 3-6 pm.

Menu of Healthy Living

Workshops is a guide to show you some of the workshops we can offer your school or community. Most are free! They are fun, interactive, and can be modified to suit your group's interests! www.rpaymenu.org

On the Right Path is a fun, motivational walking program where students can virtually walk the historic 525 Km Overland Trail between Whitehorse and Dawson City. You can join as an individual, as a classroom, or as a school, and you can challenge other groups or individuals. Get active walking while kids learn history.

www.ontherightpath.ca



Thank you!

Active Yukon Schools is supported and generously funded by the **Yukon Government Sport and Recreation Branch** through the **Renewed Yukon Active Living Strategy**.



For more information contact RPAY Recreation and Parks Association of the Yukon

Tel: 867-668-3010

Toll free: 1-866-961-WALK (9255)

Fax: 867-668-2455

Email: schools@rpay.org

Email: rpayukon@gmail.com

Mail: c/o 4061 4th Avenue,
Whitehorse YT Y1A 1H1



[@RPAY1](https://twitter.com/RPAY1)



www.facebook.com/goRPAY

www.rpayschools.org