



Presentation to  
BCSSA Summer Conference  
August 12, 2003



- *Action Schools! BC's motto...*  
providing **more** opportunities for **more**  
children to be **more** physically active **more**  
often



*Action Schools! BC* is a best practices physical activity model designed to assist elementary schools in creating individualized action plans to promote healthy living with two main purposes



Purpose #1: to implement and evaluate an initiative for increasing opportunities for more children to be more active, more often during the school day. This includes, but is not limited to, regularly scheduled physical education.



Purpose #2: capitalize on the best physical activity and education models, valuing available resources and therefore contributing to the development of a sustainable program model.



## **Vision:** Twofold

1. Physical activity is integrated into the fabric of our elementary schools and is maintained through partnerships with family and community
2. Long-term, measurable and sustainable health benefits are achieved



**Targeting Health Outcomes and Academic Performance. . .** is a response to the current crisis in children's health and concerns about academic achievement.

- 58% of youth (12-19) are not active enough for optimal growth and development

(Findings released in the 2001 *Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute's Physical Activity Monitor*)



- *Action Schools! BC* aims to decrease the incidence of obesity and tobacco use, and offset the risks of developing osteoporosis, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and a host of other chronic diseases
- Aims to create a sustainable program that can be implemented on a wide scale.



**Four Health Targets:** Program materials and school-based resources were developed and gathered based on four health targets:

1. **Healthy Heart** – cardiovascular fitness;



2. **Healthy Bones** – bone health;





**3. Healthy Self** – muscle fitness, positive self-esteem, tobacco use prevention and cessation, healthy weight, nutrition and academic performance;



**4. Healthy School** – inclusive, safe, and healthy school communities.





**Action Model** . . . provides a tool for schools to create individualized action plans that contribute to the health of children, as well as the overall health and well-being of the school community.

. . . aims to be a source of inspiration and practical resources.



**Six Action Zones:** *Action Schools! BC* promotes the creation of inclusive and diverse physical activity opportunities throughout the school day, and supports school initiatives to make healthy choices for children in six action zones. . .



**1. School Environment.** . . . makes healthy choices the easy choices for schools by creating safe and inclusive environments, and supporting active living policy;



**2. Scheduled Physical Education. . .** supports the curriculum goal to deliver 150 minutes of scheduled physical education per week (IRP, 1995);



**3. Classroom Action.** . . provides creative, alternative classroom physical activity ideas that complement scheduled physical education and support the curriculum;



**4. Family and Community.** . . fosters the development of partnerships with families and community practitioners to benefit from the wealth of resources available to promote and encourage active living;



**5. Extra-Curricular.** . . balances classroom action and physical education with a variety of opportunities for students, school staff and families to be physically active before and after school, and during lunch and recess; and



**6. School Spirit . . .** cultivates school spirit by encouraging physical activity and celebrating the benefits of active living for the whole school.



## Review of Unique Aspects

1. It integrates a systemic evaluation of health and academic outcomes and program materials that will provide evidence to support continued implementation of the program.



2. It has the potential to increase physical activity and healthy choices, therefore decreasing the risk factors amongst participants for the development of obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and osteoporosis.



3. It provides educators with the tools to create customized School Action Plans to assist them in the development and implementation of quality physical activity and education programs.



4. It capitalizes on the best existing physical activity and education models available, valuing available resources and contributing to the development of a sustainable program model.



5. It utilizes established relationships and generates new partnerships between teachers, school administrators, families and community health, recreation and sport practitioners.



6. It links community based programs with school based programs; and researchers with the government and BC Health Regions.



- **Questions:**

- 1. What ingredients are needed to increase physical activity and healthy choices, thereby decreasing the risk factors amongst participants for the development of obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and osteoporosis?



- 2. What components of a healthy child fitness program are more critical than others to sustain the program over time?
- 3. In what ways can, and will, your district implement *Action Schools! BC*?



## Funding Partners

Primarily funded by the BC Ministry of Health Planning and represents a partnership between government, researchers, educators, and the health, recreation and sport sectors.



## Funding Partners (continued)

The BC Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services and the 2010 Legacies Now Society are also providing financial support.



## ***Action Schools! BC* has two phases:**

- Phase 1 aims to enhance physical activity levels in a targeted population of Grade 4 and 5 elementary school children in 10 pilot schools across Richmond and Vancouver. (Started and will end as of June 2004)



- Phase 1 schools will provide a platform of evidence-based evaluation for Phase 2.
- Phase 2 involves full-scale implementation. Interested school districts can have access to the resources to implement *Action Schools! BC*



## Phase 1 Implementation

- To evaluate the health changes that occur in children following participation in the intervention, *Action Schools! BC* will compare results across 3 study arms and support designations



- 1) *Liaison*: With an external school facilitator who is available to support the program,
- 2) *Champion*: With a school champion (parent, teacher, counselor) to support the program internally,
- 3) *Usual Practice*: Usual school practice related to physical activity.



We have randomly assigned schools to these three groups based on their size, geographic location and ethnic diversity.

Children from all schools are evaluated in February and March, 2003 and again in May, June 2004 (14 months later).



- In addition, physical activity, cardiovascular health and psychosocial health will be assessed 4-5 times during the study interval within schools.
- At the end of the evaluation period the *Action Schools! BC* program will be offered to all schools.



***NB: Action Schools! BC Pilot In Progress until June 2004. □ As the pilot evolves so will the web page. □ Keep checking back @www.actionschoolsbc.ca***

**How are communities a part of Action Schools! BC?**

- **Tip:** See [Family](#) for more information about how families can assist and get involved.

**How can teachers get the community involved in their school?**

- **Tip:** See the list of Action Ideas in "Action Zone 4 Family & Community" included in [Pilot Handbook](#).

**How can the community get involved with schools? Try these links for:**

- [British Columbia Sport and Physical Activity Organizations](#), [BC Parks](#), [Vancouver Parks Board](#) (pilot district), [Richmond Parks Board](#) (pilot district)