Community Action Plan Template

Tips for taking action on SAYCW *Thriving Youth, Thriving Communities Survey* results for Saskatchewan communities and schools

SAYCW
Saskatchewan Alliance for
Youth & Community Well-being

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About SAYCW

The Saskatchewan Alliance for Youth and Community Well-being (SAYCW) is an alliance of health, education and other community stakeholders dedicated to improving the health and well-being of the Saskatchewan population.

In 2019, SAYCW carried out the *Thriving Youth, Thriving Communities Survey* for students in grades 7 to 12 in participating schools across the province. The survey focused on the health and well-being of youth in Saskatchewan. SAYCW aims to support schools and communities in taking action at the local level based on survey results.

Background

The SAYCW *Thriving Youth, Thriving Communities Survey* was conducted in 162 schools in 19 school divisions and authorities across the province in 2019. SAYCW develops school and school division/authority specific reports that are distributed directly to each participating school / division / authority. SAYCW also develops a province-wide findings report that contains the results of all participants in the province together.

Any of these reports can be used to take action on youth health and well-begin in your community, whether or not your local school participated in the survey.

If you wish to know what reports exist in your area, please contact the SAYCW Research Officers or Project Manager (http://saycw.com/about/saycw-staff/).

Your Action Plan

This is your template for community action. It is meant as a starting point to think about the SAYCW *Thriving Youth, Thriving Communities Survey* data in your region, what areas your community would like to work on and benefit from, and what resources and steps you'll need to make it happen. Please read and reference this guide to learn how to make the most of your efforts to improve youth health and well-being.

Throughout the Community Action Plan Template you will find:

Tips:
These are helpful hints to improve your action or initiative. Follow-through on the tips may help your action to have a greater impact.

Support Resources:
These resources represent tools and information to support and supplement your action or initiative. For a full list of resources, see Appendix A.

Framework for Action

Healthy students are better learners, and better educated individuals are healthier.

Comprehensive School Community Health (CSCH) is an internationally recognized evidence based approach to support improvements in students' educational achievement while addressing school and community health. A CSCH approach is not intended to be more work, but rather it is a way of working that becomes everyday practice. It is not just about what happens in the classroom. Rather, it encompasses the whole school and community environment.

SAYCW recognizes Comprehensive School Community Health as a framework for actions and initiatives. As you work through the steps outlined in this Community Action Plan Template, notice that many of the reflection questions are based on the components of CSCH.

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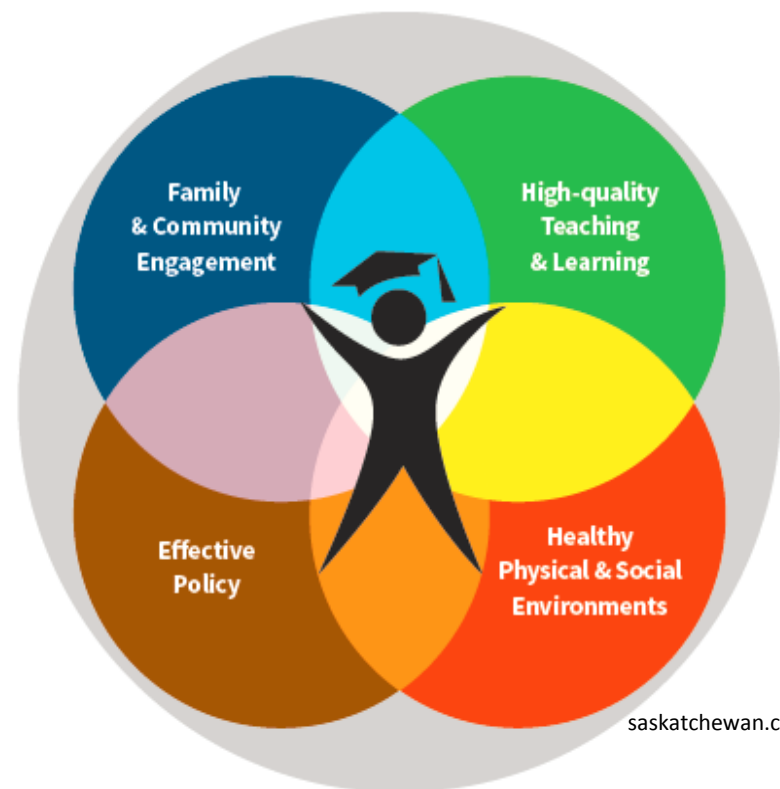
For more information about Comprehensive School Community Health, see Appendix B.

STEP 1: Form a Team

Family and Community Engagement is an important component of Comprehensive School Community Health. Forming a team and using a partnership approach will expand your talent and resource pool, increase the sustainability of your action or initiative, and develop a sense of shared responsibility.

Having youth involved contributes to greater acceptance of the action or initiative.

- Think about who would be interested and able to help you with your action or initiative.
- What partnerships already exist? How might you go about getting new partners on board?
- Do the partners around your table represent a wide variety of stakeholders? What groups are represented? Some groups to consider include:
  - Students and youth
  - Parents
  - Education sector
    - Superintendents/teachers/counselors
    - Other schools in your division and other school divisions
  - Health sector
    - Local health networks
  - Non-profit, community based organizations
  - Local businesses
  - Arts communities
  - Faith communities
- In what ways are you going to engage youth?
- Who might be a good person or group to facilitate the planning phase? Are they already present, or should they be invited to join?

Youth involvement will help your action to succeed and make sure that it is well received by all members of your community.

The Joint Consortium for Comprehensive School Health includes a Youth Engagement Toolkit. (http://www.jcsh-cces.ca/index.php/resources/youth-engagement)

It's important to make sure that your gatherings and meetings are held in a location that is accessible to all who wish to collaborate (e.g., wheelchair accessible, child-friendly, free / inexpensive.)

STEP 2: Review and Assess

Before identifying areas for action, take some time to review the information available to your team.

Did your school participate in the SAYCW *Thriving Youth, Thriving Communities Survey*? If so, refer to your school level report. If your school did not participate in the survey, please refer to the level of report available to you: school division / authority or provincial level reports (http://saycw.com/survey-and-findings/thriving-youth-thriving-communities-survey-2019-results/).

The reports have evidence to inform your action or initiative. The following questions would help you to assess the report:

- Who has read the *Thriving Youth, Thriving Communities Survey* report?
- Do those who have read it understand it? If not, what support is needed?

SAYCW Research Officers can provide support to further understand the Thriving Youth, Thriving Communities Survey reports. (http://saycw.com/about/saycw-staff/)

- What do you see when you look at the report?
- Are there findings that were surprising?
- What areas of the survey report stood out for you?
- Did some results confirm anything you already knew about your school or community?
- Are there any clear gaps that should be considered?

It is also worthwhile to consider the current context in your school and community.

- What is already happening in your school or community to support the health and well-being of youth in this age range (Grade 7-12)?
- What could be done to make your community an even better (healthier) place for youth?
- What are youth in your community interested in?
- What other sources of information do you have to consider?

The Joint Consortium for School Health has a Healthy School Planner which includes a free tool to assess the health environment and identify wellness priorities in school community settings. Consider completing the Foundation Module of the Healthy School Planner. (http://www.jcsh-cces.ca/index.php/resources/tools-toolkits)

STEP 3: Brainstorm Areas for Action

Once you have reviewed your survey report(s) and assessed the current context in your school or community, brainstorm with your team about areas for action.

- What areas do you think would have the greatest impact if you were to act on them at this time?
- Consider whether the actions you have thought of would have a lasting impact, or would fulfill an immediate need but not change future behaviour, environment, or awareness.
- Look around the room and consider what kinds of action is feasible with those present – could the action you are considering involve youth, health and education sectors, parents, etc.?
- What resources are available (financial, human-power, administrative supplies and support, etc.)?
- What actions or initiatives seem to generate the most excitement amongst team members?
- Think about some potential obstacles that could stand in your way and whether or not your group feels prepared to overcome them.

Review relevant *Online Toolkits* prepared around various survey themes, and take note of any actions or initiatives that seem to fit for your team or ideas. (http://saycw.com/resources/toolkits/)

Actions or initiatives that address more than one survey theme (e.g., learning and mental health) are likely to be more effective.

How can you strengthen actions or initiatives by considering Comprehensive School Community Health (CSCH)? We recognize that communities' interest and ability to take action will vary greatly. We therefore encourage you to consider a variety of types of action, requiring different levels of engagement and resources, and to scale these up to include different components of the CSCH Framework to ensure the greatest impact possible.

Refer to the example, **APPLE a DAY,** on page 8 to see what we mean by "scaling up".

APPLE a DAY – A School-based Breakfast Program

An example of scaling up your action or initiative using components of Comprehensive School Community Health

- The school office has a bowl of fruit and granola bars available in an accessible location for students to stop by and take from during breaks. The bowl is replenished each day, as needed.
- The cost of the food is covered in part by a grant, and in part by a local business who sponsors the program by providing a monthly donation.
- School staff make the program a positive one by driving away the stigma associated with taking free food, including encouraging students to use the service for any reason (forgotten lunch, too busy for breakfast, extra hungry that day) and publicly use the service, themselves.

CSCH Component Employed: Healthy Physical and Social Environment

- The school partners with a local grocer to provide low-cost breakfast items.
- The school coordinates with public health nutritionists or dietitians from the health authority or other knowledgeable community partners once a month to engage students in preparing healthy breakfast options during home-economics class or another appropriate time.
- Youth learn about healthy food choices and are engaged in preparing the menu, budgeting and cooking.
- The breakfast is served to those who wish to partake before school or during the first break in the day.
- On days when breakfast is not prepared, a bowl of fruit and granola bars is available at the school office.

CSCH Components Employed: Healthy Physical and Social Environment; Family & Community Engagement; High Quality Teaching and Learning

- Interested parents are invited to help purchase food, serve food, and clean up. They are welcome to bring along their pre-school aged children who may wish to partake in the food preparation and clean-up.
- The school/community group involved (health authority, parents, school, youth) form a council to create a "healthy food policy" for the school that includes considerations such as vending machines, cafeteria, fundraisers, incentives and rewards, etc.

CSCH Components Employed: Healthy Physical and Social Environment; Family & Community Engagement; High Quality Teaching and Learning, Effective Policy

Based on themes in the SAYCW Thriving Youth, Thriving Communities Survey: The nutrition section of the report indicates the number of students who do not eat breakfast regularly, and the sleep section indicates the proportion of students who struggle to stay awake during class.

STEP 4: Outline Your Plan of Action

It is helpful to **outline (describe) your plan.** Write out a detailed description of your activities and what you plan to accomplish.

- Outline the planned activities and timeline.
  - What actions will be taken, when, and by whom?
- Who will be involved, and who is expected to benefit?
- Describe the intended impact.
  - Who will be impacted?
  - What do you hope will change?
    - In the short term?
    - In the long term?
- How will you make sure that the action or initiative is sustainable long enough to have the desired impact?
- How will you measure "success"? Keep in mind that creating new partnerships where there were none before (especially between sectors, across generations, and among different groups) can be a positive result in itself.

Think about the outcome you would like to see and then make a list of the things that would have to occur/change to make that happen. Things that could change include: physical environment, social environment, partnerships or services, attitudes or knowledge, resources, etc.

STEP 5: Rally Your Resources

With your plan in hand, it's time to rally resources. It is helpful to **outline your budget** and other needed resources.

- Identify how much funding you'll need.
- Provide a breakdown of how you plan to spend the money based on the activities you've laid out in your action plan.
- Consider resources that may already exist in your group:
    - Financial resources
    - Meeting space
    - Administrative supplies and support
    - Communications/media support
    - Grant-writing experience
    - Availability (time to do tasks)
    - Transportation
- Don't forget to seek out funding from various sources, if needed.

If you don't have funds available for certain needs, try partnering with a local business or organization that sells what you need, or that could sponsor a group or activity. For example, partner with a local food store or restaurant to provide food for your meetings, or a school or business to lend you space to meet.

SAYCW created the *Thriving Youth, Thriving Communities Grant* to positively impact youth health and well-being in Saskatchewan by supporting health promoting actions and initiatives at the school and/or community level.

Information about the grant is available on the SAYCW website: http://saycw.com/resources/grant/.

Don't forget to consider the costs associated with planning and meetings, such as snacks and transportation for those for whom that is a barrier (e.g. youth too young to drive, and students or fixed-income participants).

STEP 6: Take Action!

With your plan in hand and your resources secured, you're ready to take action! Your well-thought and well-designed action plan will guide you through the implementation process.

- Assign the roles and tasks to the team members and stakeholders in a participatory manner.
- Use the action steps/strategies to organize everyone's daily tasks.
- Invite all stakeholders to participate in the action and create an atmosphere that fosters continued participation by students.
- Make sure all participants are aware of the action values and rules.
- Monitor the action and keep record of your daily accomplishments.
- Make it possible for participants to give their feedback on the action at any time.
- Put a notebook or post a flipchart close to the place that action is taking place and encourage your participants to give feedback on the action.

- Create school and community buy-in through an official announcement of the action (i.e., advertise the action).

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STEP 7: Celebrate, Reflect and Evaluate

SAYCW believes in sharing lessons learned. Your experience can help other schools or communities working to make a positive impact on youth health and well-being. Communicating can also be a great way to celebrate success, acknowledge and thank your partners, and build support for future actions and initiatives.

Consider how to communicate with:
- Youth, partners, stakeholders, community
- Non-supporters (to persuade them of the value of the work)

Identify the communication vehicles you plan to use and the resources needed (type of media, skills, funds, time).

Refer to the outline of your plan. Reflect on:

- What did you set out to do? How did you do it? Who was involved?
- What challenges and opportunities did you run into along the way? How did you handle them?
- What changes did you see as a result of your action or initiative?
- What lessons did you learn?
- What do you plan to do next?

Be creative! You can share your story about your action or initiative in many ways:

Talk about it:
- School announcements
- Assemblies
- Presentations at conferences
- Parent-teacher nights
- Parent / school community council meetings
- Staff meetings
- Community gatherings

Write about it:
- Newsletters
- School / Division websites
- Staff notices
- Local newspaper
- Award nominations

Show it:
- Videos
- Signage or banners
- Photo stories, photo displays, slideshows
- Bulletin board displays
- Collages

Appendix A - Additional Resources

Information on Community Well-being:

- SAYCW *Thriving Youth, Thriving Communities Survey* Province-wide Findings: http://saycw.com/survey-and-findings/thriving-youth-thriving-communities-survey-2019-results/

Frameworks for Thinking about Action on Youth Health:

- Comprehensive School Community Health
  See Appendix B and
  https://pubsaskdev.blob.core.windows.net/pubsask-prod/85649/85649-2199-12F-2014_CSCH_2_pager_2014_en.pdf

Youth Engagement:

- Ideas for youth engagement using the Youth Engagement toolkit: http://www.jcsh-cces.ca/index.php/resources/youth-engagement

Ideas for Planning and Action:

- A Model for Getting Started
  https://ctb.ku.edu/en/toolkits
- SAYCW Online Toolkits
  http://saycw.com/resources/toolkits/

Funding:

- SAYCW *Thriving Youth, Thriving Communities Grant* http://saycw.com/resources/grant/

Comprehensive School Community Health

What is Comprehensive School Community Health?

The framework for Comprehensive School Community Health (CSCH) is internationally recognized for supporting student success while addressing school community health in a planned, integrated and holistic way. Health, education and other sectors must work together, sharing a common vision, to successfully implement CSCH. A successful CSCH program supports student success and motivates the whole school community to take action.

CSCH encompasses four integrated components:
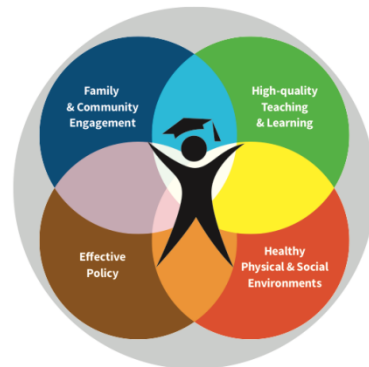
What does Comprehensive School Community Health do?

CSCH provides a common foundation for families, students and communities to work together to support students' full potential as learners and become responsible and healthy community members. Each child, in each school, in each of our communities deserves to be healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged.

Comprehensive School Community Health:
- facilitates improved student learning;
- responds to students' needs;
- encourages and supports healthy options, and promotes students' health and well-being;
- supports an inter-agency approach; and
- thrives with the participation, support and engagement of families and community.

Why do we need Comprehensive School Community Health?

Research has shown that CSCH facilitates improved student learning and supports their well-being. CSCH encourages and supports the development of children and youth in becoming physically, mentally, spiritually and emotionally safe and healthy.

The goals of CSCH are to:
- promote health and wellness while preventing specific diseases, disorders, and injury;
- intervene to assist children and youth in vulnerable circumstances and/or are experiencing poor health; and
- provide equitable opportunities that address disparities and contribute to the success of children and youth.

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Health and education are interdependent; the equation is simple:
Better Health = Better Learners

Different Terminology – Same Ideas

The term "Comprehensive School Community Health" may be known as "Comprehensive School Health", "Health Promoting Schools" or "Coordinated School Health," and its four integrated components may be expressed in different ways; however, the underlying concepts are the same as they are all based on the World Health Organization's Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (1986).

When We Say	We Mean
High-Quality Teaching & Learning	**High-quality teaching and learning includes:** • provincial curricula and related resources that are developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive; • place-based learning experiences that support a sense of personal competency, self-efficacy and social responsibility; and • a wide range of opportunities to learn, practice, experience and demonstrate understanding, confidence, and motivation for a healthy and balanced life.
Safe and Healthy Physical & Social Environments	**Safe and healthy physical and social environments include:** • access to and support for healthier options; • a welcoming, caring and inclusive environment; • healthy relationships among and between staff, students and community; • responsive and inclusive leadership of staff, students and community; • relationships that influence and are influenced by families, cultural perspectives and the community; • strategies to use the school building and grounds, materials, equipment and the routes to and from the school to enhance well-being of staff, students and community; and • informal role modelling, peer support, nurturing families and safe communities.
Family & Community Engagement	**Families and communities are engaged when:** • efforts are aligned to promote student, family, staff and community health and well-being; • School Community Councils and First Nations Education Authorities are involved in school improvement plans; • school leadership values cooperation, effective interpersonal communication and shared decision making; • schools, families and communities engage in on-going discussions and shared efforts to promote and support the health and well-being of staff, students and community; and • reciprocal relationships share resources and services within the school and community.
Effective Policy	**Effective policy development is characterized by incorporating:** • protocols for collaboration on policy development and related protocols and practices for health and well-being; • on-going evaluation and monitoring of needs and effectiveness of efforts to improve well-being; • promising practices that enhance health and well-being; and • clear practices, procedures, protocols and regulations regarding health and safety of children and youth, (e.g., nutrition, anti-bullying, physical activity, pandemic planning, recycling, air quality).

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https://pubsaskdev.blob.core.windows.net/pubsask-prod/85649/85649-2199-12F-2014_CSCH_2_pager_2014_en.pdf