Comprehensive School Health (CSH) is the model of school health service delivery that has been the foundation of the partnership between Peel Health and the Peel District School Board.

CSH is a health promotion model that engages school staff, students and parents in the identification of issues affecting their school communities’ health and wellness.

A Public Health Nurse assigned to families of schools can facilitate the identification of the issues and the development of a comprehensive plan to address them.

CSH has four components: Instruction, Healthy Physical Environments, Support Services and Social Supports. This report highlights health services which address or support one or more of these components. The goal of the CSH approach is to develop a plan which incorporates many programs, policies and services in all of the four components.

By addressing all facets of an issue using the components of CSH, effective and sustainable change can be seen in the health of a school community.

Peel Health would like to thank our partners in the Peel District School Board who work with us to ensure the healthy development of Peel’s children and youth.
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Section 1

School Board-Wide Services
Partnering for Health and Academic Success

Peel District School Board and Peel Public Health Partnership Committee

The partnership between Peel Public Health and the Peel District School Board was developed to ensure that students in Peel schools have the best resources, tools, and communication to grow into successful and healthy adults. The joint committee’s continued dedication and support towards programs that encourage healthy lifestyles and academic success is part of the reason students in Peel will contribute to the future well-being of their communities.

The Partnership Committee’s mandate is to provide a comprehensive health education program in Peel District School Board schools. The Partnership Committee engages in early problem-solving in order to provide a proactive approach to health issues as they arise with staff, students and their families. The committee reviews new initiatives and discusses strategies to enhance the importance of the relationship between a healthy lifestyle and its contribution to the success of students in Peel District School Board schools.

The Partnership Committee meets four times a year and consists of a number of members. Peel District Board representatives are the Superintendent of Education, the Co-ordinator of Health, Physical Education and the Arts, the Chief Psychologist or Social Worker, a Communications Officer, a School Support Officer, an Elementary Principal, Secondary Principal and Secondary Vice-Principal. Peel Public Health representatives include the School Health Team Supervisors, a Manager from each of the Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, Family Health, Communicable Disease Control and Environmental Health divisions.

Keeping In Touch with Peel Schools

Peel Public Health is Just a Phone Call Away

When any resident in Peel has a pressing health question or needs some advice on how to deal with a health problem, Peel Public Health is just a phone call away. Dialing 905-799-7700 will connect you to a registered nurse, public health inspector and registered dietitian. In 2005, approximately 1,300 school staff including teachers, principals and administrators called Peel Public Health with questions about specific diseases and conditions affecting children such as head lice, bullying, immunization and daily physical activity. In addition, school staff also called for information regarding the support and resources that are available to schools through Peel Public Health.

Peel Public Health also responded to calls from 4,000 parents of elementary-aged children and young teens. These parents sought advice on everything from booster seats to immunization and dental care. Older teens requested health information for themselves as well as for school projects on topics such as alcohol and drugs, sexual health and healthy eating.
School Health Profiler
An Award Winning Publication

Peel Health has been making headlines in Peel schools since the introduction of the School Health Profiler publication in the fall of 2001. Approximately 10,000 teachers across the Region of Peel receive the School Health Profiler every year; the Profiler offers teachers tools to promote health education in their classroom by providing them with health information, classroom activities and resources.

The School Health Profiler is an acclaimed publication that has won regional, national and international awards. Its success is attributed to the feedback and ideas received from Peel teachers. We will continue to strive to enhance this resource and provide support for those who work to encourage healthy lifestyle choices and behaviours in the classroom. Consider encouraging your staff to send questions for the Dear Public Health Nurse (PHN) column, or ideas for future articles by submitting them to healthlinepeel@peelregion.ca with Dear PHN in the subject area.

The School Health Profiler is written by Public Health Nurses, Public Health Dietitians, Education Specialists, Teachers, Child and Youth Workers, Community Members and Peel Police. Some of the published topics include physical activity, self-esteem, healthy nutrition, safe and peaceful playgrounds, puberty and stress.

Stay tuned for the arrival of the next School Health Profiler being delivered to you soon! Previous issues of the Profiler are also available for teachers, administrators and support staff to view and download online by visiting the Web site at schoolhealthprofiler.ca.

School Health Profiler Web site
Click Your Way to Health Resources

The School Health Profiler Web site was launched in the fall of 2005. Schools in Peel Region were presented with monthly calendars to heighten the awareness of the Web site as a valuable link to online resources. It is an easy place to find resources to support your teaching needs.

The School Health Profiler Web site, schoolhealthprofiler.ca, was designed for teachers. Focus groups were conducted with teachers to assess the site’s layout, design and ease of navigation. The advice and feedback was utilized to improve the Web site in preparation for the 2006-2007 school year. The new School Health Web site will assist Peel elementary teachers by providing up-to-date health and wellness information through articles, classroom activities and teaching tips. This information can be included in daily teaching and lesson plans and can be linked to areas of the Ontario curriculum.

The goal of the site is to become the first source on health-related curriculum for Peel elementary teachers. Look for information this fall on physical activity; healthy eating; bullying; dental health; tobacco; alcohol and substance abuse prevention; healthy sexuality and other school health related topics.
Peel Youth Speak Out - And the Survey Says

School Health Assessment Results

The results are in! Over 7,000 Peel students from grades 7 to 12 from the Peel District School Board and the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board participated in a survey on their health practices. The survey was completed in the spring and fall of 2005. This was the largest survey to evaluate health behaviours of children aged 12 to 19 ever conducted in Canada.

In May of 2005 the final report titled Gauging the Health of Peel’s Youth – A Peel Public Health Status Report, was made public and distributed to both boards and to schools in Peel. Some of the highlights from the survey indicated that:

• Alcohol is the drug of choice for teens and most start experimenting with it at an early age.
• Peel students think it’s easy to get marijuana if they want some.
• Peel’s youth are having sex and those who are, started young. They are also likely to have sex while high or drunk.
• Peel youth who smoke, started early.
• Many Peel youth skip breakfast at least four times a week.
• Many of our youth are not participating in regular vigorous physical activity.
• Peel youths’ perceptions of their weight are quite different than their measured weight.
• Females are less optimistic than males and are more likely to consider suicide.
• Bullying remains a significant issue for our youth.

This Peel-specific information is being used to develop strategies for dealing with health issues, both at the school level and in broader community campaigns.

The details of these findings are available in the full report which can be downloaded from our Web site peelregion.ca/health/health-status-report/studenthealth2005/index.htm.

Peel Youth Respond to the Survey Findings

Peel Youth were given an opportunity to hear and respond to the survey results through a Peel Public Health Youth Health Forum on Feb. 28, 2006. Teachers and students from the surveyed secondary schools as well students involved in the six secondary school Student Wellness Councils attended the forum.

The purpose of the forum was to communicate the School Health Assessment Survey results to the students and teachers and seek feedback and gain insight into appropriate youth friendly approaches to dealing with the health issues identified in the survey report. This was achieved through small group discussions on topics such as injury prevention; bullying prevention; dental health; tobacco; mental health; sun safety; body image; eating habits; physical activity; sexuality; reproductive and prenatal health; alcohol; marijuana and other drugs.

Students and teachers were enlightened by Pressure Points, a powerful film from Tin Box Productions. The film focused on pressures youth face today from the media, their friends and themselves. Participants were encouraged to share their learning and key messages with their school. Special thanks to Philip Pocock for hosting the Youth Health Forum.
Peel Takes a Proactive Approach to Communicable Diseases

School Boards Join Forces with Peel Health for Pandemic Preparedness

Peel Public Health has had a pandemic influenza plan since 2002. It is currently being revised based on national and provincial recommendations. We have also engaged stakeholders throughout the region to assist in the development of a regionally co-ordinated response. Pandemic key messages are posted on the Peel Public Health Pandemic Web site at peelpandemic.ca. Infection prevention and control strategies are the same for seasonal influenza and pandemic influenza. These strategies include educating staff and students about covering your cough and sneeze, staying home when you are ill, as well as promoting hand hygiene and yearly influenza immunization. Peel Public Health's Communicable Disease team and School Health team are collaborating on a hand hygiene program geared to the elementary school population. Future plans include a similar project for secondary schools.

Hand Washing is as Easy as ABC

Peel Public Health is working with schools to stop the spread of infections such as influenza, the common cold, and other communicable diseases. Hand washing is the single most important way to stop the spread of infections. Encourage students to wash with soap and water, or with alcohol hand-rub.

Peel Public Health will continue its efforts to assist schools with infection prevention by sending new hand hygiene posters to each school in December 2006.

Grade 7 Hepatitis B Vaccine Acceptance/Refusal Study

The hepatitis B vaccine is offered free of charge to all Grade 7 students in Ontario through school-based clinics. The provincial target is to immunize at least 95 per cent of eligible students against hepatitis B by the end of Grade 7. Although coverage in the Region of Peel remains high, at over 80 per cent, records indicate there has been a decline in vaccine uptake from 1994 to 2003 and an increase in the number of parents or guardians who do not wish to have their children vaccinated.

Peel Public Health will be conducting a Hepatitis B Vaccine Acceptance/Refusal Study to identify reasons why parents may be choosing not have their child immunized. The study will involve telephone interviews with parents or guardians of Grade 8 students who were offered two opportunities to receive the hepatitis B vaccine in Grade 7 and a third in Grade 8. Interviews will also be conducted with parents or guardians of students who have been immunized to later compare the information collected with those who chose not to be immunized. The interview is designed to collect information about knowledge and beliefs related to hepatitis B and the vaccine and to identify reasons why a parent or guardian decided to vaccinate or not vaccinate their child. In addition, the survey will also gather demographic information.

The interview takes 15 to 20 minutes to complete. It is voluntary, confidential and will help Peel Public Health develop appropriate strategies to deal with the refusal of immunization related to the hepatitis B School Immunization Program. With these results Peel Public Health will strive to increase hepatitis B
vaccine coverage among Grade 7 students in the Region of Peel. The study will extend from May to November of 2006 and results will be shared with the school boards upon completion.

**NEW!**

**Meningitis C Vaccine Programs for Children**

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has recently introduced new publicly funded immunization programs for the prevention of chicken pox, meningococcal disease, pneumococcal disease and pertussis. These vaccines are offered to infants and toddlers and are also available for school-aged children if missed in early childhood, with the exception of pneumococcal conjugate vaccine.

All students in Grade 7 are offered the meningitis C vaccine at school when they receive the hepatitis B vaccine. The meningitis C vaccine is also available free of charge through family physicians for youth 12 years of age and for those 15 to 19 years of age. The 2004-2005 school year vaccination rates for hepatitis B and meningitis C were 69.37 per cent and 25.94 per cent, respectively. Ontario residents are encouraged to receive the influenza vaccine annually from family physicians and free Peel Public Health immunization community clinics.

Pamphlets promoting the vaccines available to students were sent to 17,000 parents of Grade 9 students in February 2006. Parents were reminded that under Ontario law, students aged 14 to 16 are required to be immunized against tetanus and diphtheria and are simultaneously offered a vaccine against pertussis, meningitis C and chicken pox if needed.

**Tuberculosis in Peel**

Tuberculosis is a disease caused by the tuberculosis bacteria (TB). This bacteria usually infects the lungs (pulmonary TB) but it may travel through the bloodstream, affecting other parts of the body (extrapulmonary TB). Not all forms of TB are contagious. TB is only contagious if it is in the lungs or throat and the infected person coughs the bacteria into the air. It requires close, prolonged contact with the individual to inhale the bacteria. The bacteria are usually contained by the immune system and will not cause the person immediate harm. The person is not ill and not contagious. A TB skin test is the tool used to determine if an individual has been exposed to TB. Those with a compromised immune system are more likely to develop TB disease. To prevent TB infection from developing into TB disease, medication is available free of charge through Peel Public Health.

All active cases of TB in Peel are reported to Peel Public Health. Public Health Nurses in the TB Control Program visit individuals with TB. For those with contagious TB, an investigation is conducted, identifying people who were in close contact with the individual. Peel Public Health recommends that those in contact with the infected person follow up with their doctor for TB skin testing to determine if they were exposed to TB.

The number of cases of TB in school-aged children is low. The risk of exposure to staff and students in a school setting is minimal. Staff and students considered to have had prolonged close contact with an infected person will be notified in writing and recommended for TB skin testing. Peel Public Health Nurses provide on-site TB skin testing when a significant number of contacts are involved. Peel Public Health works with the school board, principal, vice principal, staff and students to ensure that the privacy of clients and schools is maintained.

Peel Public Health offers TB education to enhance the understanding of the disease and alleviate the concern of those involved. TB information can be accessed through pamphlets, fact sheets, education sessions or by visiting Peel’s TB Web site at peel-stoptb.ca.
Dental Health: We Have Something to Smile About

Dental health plays an important role in the overall health and well-being of a child. It is estimated that dental diseases result in as many as five million or more lost school hours per year. Dental diseases can contribute negatively to a child’s learning and development.

Tooth decay is the most common chronic disease to affect children. Research has found that the pain and infection associated with serious tooth decay can affect eating, speech, sleeping patterns and may lead to decreased weight gain. In turn, such factors can affect normal physical and mental growth.

Dental Screening in Schools

Dental diseases affect a number of children in Peel. One in three children in Peel has been affected by cavities. Through the school dental screening program, Peel Public Health’s dental hygienists screened a total of 46,827 children and identified over 7,000 elementary school children in urgent need of dental treatment during the 2004-2005 school year. Of the 247 schools screened in the region of Peel, 75 per cent of them received a high-risk dental rating. A high-risk rating is given when 10 per cent or more of children screened in a school were found to have dental conditions in urgent need of treatment. Peel Public Health thanks all participating schools for their co-operation.

Families whose children meet the eligibility criteria are able to access the Children in Need of Treatment Program, a funding program for essential dental treatment.

2 for 2 is what you do

During Dental Health month in April, Peel Public Health carried out a campaign in Peel schools to promote the importance of maintaining good dental health. Dental Educators promoted the message “2 for 2 is what you do: brush your teeth 2 times a day for 2 minutes each time.” All Grade 2 classes in selected schools received a lesson about the importance of taking care of their teeth. In addition, all the students received dental loot bags containing items such as a two-minute timer and brushing log to promote regular brushing.

The following schools participated in this campaign:

- Forest Glen
- Ellegale
- Caledon central
- Kingswood
- Pheasant Run
- Madoc Drive
- Arnott Charlton
- Silverthorne
- Cosair
- Ridgeview
"Keeping Smiles Bright in Peel"
A Teacher’s Dental Education Resource

Peel Public Health continues to promote the dental education resource kits for elementary school teachers. The Keeping Smiles Bright in Peel kit supports the Health and Physical Education curriculum.

The interactive kit comes in two series; a kit that targets kindergarten and Grade 1 and another kit for grades 2 and 3. Each kit contains an easy to use curriculum-driven binder of lesson plans and activities, videotapes, laminated materials, teeth and brush model, storybooks, a fun sing-a-long CD, poster and other great teaching tools. The Keeping Smiles Bright in Peel teaching kits are available in libraries at the following schools and school board offices on a loan basis.

Churchill Meadows P.S.  Fernforest P.S.
Havenwood P.S.  Lancaster P.S.
Meadowvale Village P.S.  Nahani Way P.S.
Peel School Board North Field Office  Peel School Board South Office
Peel School Board West Office

To access a kit, teachers should contact the schools directly.

Reaching Out to Parents

Parents play a vital role in shaping the health behaviours and beliefs of their children. Peel Health aims to support parents through education and information so they can make healthy choices and in turn role model these choices for their children.

Health Tips

Peel Health has created a series of brief school newsletter publications called Health Tips to help raise parents’ awareness of current health issues which may affect our children and youth. The health tips contain short facts about health-related subjects and offer practical tips for parents on how to promote healthy behaviours in their children. Some of the topics include head lice; bicycle safety; peer pressure; stress; physical activity; and puberty.

Both elementary and secondary schools will receive a computer CD containing all of the health tips which have been formatted with age appropriate graphics and lettering, along with a concise computer table of contents separated by topic area and age level.
Bullying Prevention Initiative Meets Provincial Mandate

Peel Public Health Bullying Prevention Initiative

Public Health Nurses (PHNs) are committed to working with schools on bullying prevention because of the impact bullying has on children's emotional health. The Bullying Prevention Initiative is a comprehensive school-wide program developed and facilitated by PHNs. It emphasizes a positive school climate and challenges bullying behaviour of all school community members. It is rooted in a collaborative partnership of school staff, students, parents and community members.

The initiative, originally developed within Caledon schools, uses the Comprehensive School Health (CSH) model and is based on international research and recommendations. It has been used with schools since 2002. This approach fulfills all the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care recommendations found in the document *Shaping Safer Schools: A Bullying Prevention Action Plan*.

A comprehensive approach to prevent bullying is effective because it focuses not just on individual behaviours but on the environments in which children interact. By implementing consistent and sustainable practices in the school communities, bullying can be prevented.

**Key Components of the Initiative:**

**Steering committee**: created to oversee the initiative and tailor it to the school's needs; members may include the Public Health Nurse, school administrator, staff, students, parents, police and community members

**School climate assessment**: identify what is working successfully and what needs to be addressed; this may be accomplished through the use of surveys, focus groups, interviews, and discussions

**Definition of bullying**: the basis of a consistent approach lies in the use of a shared definition of bullying by all members of the school community

**Policy**: specific 'anti-bullying' policies and protocols created to address bullying incidents in a consistent manner

**Adult education**: workshops for school staff and parents; ongoing information, communication and support

**Student education**: a consistent message for all students delivered in classrooms; monthly lesson plans have been developed that provide school-wide themes

**School-wide strategies**: activities to reinforce classroom education and skill development (e.g. assemblies and contests)

**School environment**: strategies to address safety on the playground, buses and throughout the school (e.g. Playground Activity Leaders in Schools)

PHNs are currently involved with the following schools on bullying prevention initiatives. All schools are at different points in the process – some have been involved for up to four years while others are in the first months. Every school is encouraged to incorporate the key components in a manner that best meets the needs of their unique community. For these reasons, the initiative will look different in every school.

**Caledon Schools:**
Alton
Belfountain
Herb Campbell
Credit View
Macville
Mount Royal

**Brampton Schools:**
Beatty Fleming

**Mississauga Schools:**
Mineola
Hillcrest
Britannia
Bullying Prevention Workshops and Family Nights

Every child has the right to learn in a safe environment. Bullying continues to be a key issue that has a detrimental impact on this right to be safe and on the overall school climate. Research supports that a systemic approach with parents, students, school staff and the community is the most effective way to prevent and stop bullying.

Public Health Nurses continue to offer parent and staff workshops entitled Bullying Hurts…Inside and Out. These interactive workshops are designed to establish a common language and understanding of bullying, and introduce strategies that can be implemented to prevent and reduce bullying at school, home and in the community.

Family workshops are offered to address how the family can help resolve and prevent bullying. Through facilitated activities, families are encouraged to talk together to reach a common understanding of what bullying is and how to deal with it.

The following schools participated in the workshops this year:

Parent Workshops:
- Allan A. Martin
- Kindree
- Morton Way
- Byngmount Beach
- Larkspur
- Sheridan Park
- Huntington Ridge
- Mineola

Staff Workshops:
- Larkspur
- Queen Elizabeth
- Mineola
- Springdale

Family Nights:
- Claireville
- Mineloa
- Hillcrest
- Willow Glen
School Wellness Committees Can Make a Difference

The goal of Comprehensive School Health (CSH) is to create healthy environments for children and to promote healthy lifestyles. This approach includes a variety of programs, policies, activities and services that occur in schools and surrounding communities. The CSH approach works best when everyone in the child’s life including parents, teachers and school staff is involved in role modelling and supporting healthy lifestyles choices.

There are no specific guidelines on how you implement or how you apply CSH. Each school’s approach to CSH will vary as it is based on each school’s individual health needs. Peel Public Health Nurses are available to support schools by building partnerships, creating programs and resources to assist staff in developing CSH initiatives. PHNs can be reached at 905-799-7700.

Student Involvement is Key in Comprehensive School Health

Having students participate on a school-wide health committee enables them to assist in making positive health changes in their school which leads to positive intellectual development. They may also develop valuable skills such as team work, negotiation, leadership, communication and program planning. Students can make a difference to themselves and their school community; it’s important to recognize their valuable contribution to creating a healthy school environment.

*Read below to see how some schools in Peel have taken on a CSH approach.*

Lisgar Middle School Promotes Healthy Eating

“*A school that creates a Healthy School Nutrition Environment is a school that promotes healthy eating through words and actions!***”


Lisgar Middle School has been standing by this quote since February 2003 with the support and dedication of grade 6 to 8 students, a school Guidance Counsellor and the Public Health Nurse who facilitated a session to identify student health concerns. A survey that was completed by parents and students identified nutrition, particularly snacks, as a concern. Based on the feedback received, the committee put together a comprehensive approach including a set of guidelines that would assist in creating a healthy eating environment. The committee continues to meet on a regular basis and is always looking for new creative ideas to get their message out on the importance of healthy lunches and healthy snacks.
Hillside Sr. Engages in the True Meaning of Friendship

As students enter their preteen and teen years, they face many challenges. One of which is building positive, trusting relationships. The relationships and friendships they choose can affect their self-esteem and decisions they make.

Grade 6 and 7 students of Hillside Sr. decided to explore the true meaning of friendship. The Guidance Counsellor, Behavioural Teaching Assistant and Public Health Nurse worked with the students to provide them the opportunity to participate in several interactive workshops. Using role play, the workshops focused on how to build trust and develop and nurture friendships.

Oakridge Receives Funding For an After School Program

Students at Oakridge Public School now have an opportunity to participate in a variety of after school games and activities thanks to the funding received from the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation. Student activities include introductory tennis lessons, swimming and a community park paint project. The after school program provides students who have had very little exposure to recreational games with activities and opportunities to enhance their physical health, learn new games, meet new friends and get to know their community better. The committee is continuing to build partnerships and create new initiatives such as a walking program and integrating physical activity into the classrooms.

Millers Grove Sets a Healthy Goal

Millers Grove Public School launched a Healthy School initiative focusing on healthy eating and snacks for the 2006-2007 school year. Teachers, students, parents, parent council and the school Public Health Nurse are currently in discussion on how to make this goal a reality. An assembly was held in June kicking off their Healthy School initiative where students were encouraged to participate in a Healthy Snack challenge by bringing in food items grown in the earth and/or on trees. Students received information on healthy snacks which they shared with their parents. The committee will resume again in September with plans to meet every two to three weeks.

McHugh School Health Committee Still Going Strong

Parents, school administration, teachers and the Public Health Nurse are what make up the McHugh School Health Committee. The committee has been working hard to organize the following activities:

- **Walk to School Wednesday** - Students walk to school every Wednesday, promoting physical activity, decreasing pollution and connecting kids to their community. Classes with the highest participation rate are rewarded the golden sneaker trophy and plaque.
- **CHAMPS** – *Children Helping Achieve More Physical Fitness in School* is a program that trains grade 4 and 5 students to lead games on the playground. This program also enhances student leadership and communication skills.
- **Hot Lunches** - Once a month the school offers a healthy lunch which is often a themed lunch. For example, during Black History month, the school offered Jamaican Patties. These lunches are always a huge hit with the students.

Other important activities and initiatives include: healthy snacks; bike rodeos; health tips in the monthly school newsletter; a Learn to Skate program; connecting with YMCA programs; Fun Fair, and recess equipment. The success of these programs is due to the commitment and dedication of the McHugh Health School Committee.
Health Can Be Promoted in So Many Ways

Parent/Teacher Information
Nights, Open Houses and Health Fairs are just a few ways that Peel Public Health can support you in promoting healthy lifestyles in your school. Below are highlights of ways that some of Peel schools are promoting health and well-being.

Sawmill Valley Public School
Sawmill Valley Public School hosted a Healthy Lunches, Healthy Snacks presentation conducted by Peel Public Health during Education Week. Set in a French café, the presentation had student volunteers taking orders and serving visitors with delicious pastries and warm beverages. Displays and resources were also available during Education Week for visitors to view and read on topics such as bullying, playground safety, hand washing, dental health, and sun safety.

Willow Glen Public School
Willow Glen Public School’s annual WillowFest took place on May 6, 2006. Hundreds of parents, teachers, children and community partners were invited to enjoy this fun-filled day of games, prizes, treats, community displays and resources. Other local community agencies including Mississauga Parks and Recreation and Peel Public Health were also invited to facilitate an interactive display on healthy eating and physical activity with great resources such as the Canada’s Food and Physical Activity Guide for families to take home. The children who visited the Peel Public Health display were asked to participate in a basketball game where the Peel Public Health Nurse asked them to shoot the ball into the net after they answered the question: What’s your favourite activity? The children each received a ball for participating in the game. Peel Public Health also donated various prizes toward the school’s fundraising auction.

Brisdale
The grade 1 and 2 students at Brisdale Public School were enlightened with a Health Fair. The Public Health Nurses provided displays and resources that educated the students on helmet safety, smoking prevention and physical activity. The health fair also highlighted the Playground Activity Leaders in Schools (P.A.L.S.) program which was implemented at Brisdale in September 2005.
Keeping Peel Students Safe

Bike Festivals Cycle into Peel Schools

During the 2005-2006 school year, schools in the Peel District School Board hosted a bike festival. The Grade 4 students received an education session presented by a Public Health Nurse on helmet and bike safety along with educating and assisting the students with helmet fitting. The students had the opportunity to participate in the ABC Quick Check to ensure proper head protection was used and that their bicycles met all safety requirements.

The students were also given time to practise their safe-riding skills which included straight-line riding, shoulder checks and the correct use of hand signals. At the end of the festival, students were provided with a complete helmet and bicycle checklist which was sent home for their parents to review.

The program has been evaluated and has been very well received by students and teachers. A teacher’s resource package is available to help teachers meet the Grade 4 curriculum expectations related to bike safety. Examples of resources distributed each year include a crossword puzzle, bicycle riding licenses and tattoos for the students at the festival. The complete curriculum resources for teachers can be found by visiting schoolhealthprofiler.ca.

Participating schools included:

Morton Way  King’s Mastings  James Bolton
Thornlodge  Britannia  Pheasant Run
McHugh  Churchill Meadows  Trelawny

Playing It Safe on the Playground

In the spring of 2006, more than 33,000 playground safety guides and stickers were distributed to kindergarten children in both Peel school boards. The parent guide focuses on keeping children safe at the playground by outlining how parents can help their children use playground equipment safely and by encouraging parental supervision. The feedback from parents has been very positive.

A playground display along with colouring sheets and stickers also compliment the playground guides. The display provides key messages for safe play which has been successful at parent-teacher open houses and kindergarten registrations.
Emerging Leaders in Peel

Every school strives to provide their students with a positive environment in which to learn. Leadership is an essential building block for the academic and professional future of children. When children are involved in activities that promote team building, communication, creative thinking, decision making and conflict resolution skills they are empowered to become leaders, making a difference for themselves and their surrounding communities.

Child-to-Child
Empowering Youth

Imagine:
• Grade 5 students working together on a plan to get the whole school involved in cleaning up the school playground.
• Grade 7 students who are passionate about addressing violence in their local neighbourhoods.
• Students raising money to help a needy family.

Schools thrive on students who are empowered and passionate about making a positive difference in their communities. Child-to-Child is a youth led program that believes in empowering children to be agents of change. The program offers them an opportunity to develop leadership, communication and decision-making skills. Child-to-Child engages students in a process that helps them to identify and express issues that are important to them; it allows them to be heard and to take action.

Adopted by Peel Public Health in 1998, the Child-to-Child program is offered in several schools in Peel.

Hillcrest Public School

Hillcrest Public School decided to introduce Child-to-Child to four Grade 6 classes this year. Two of the classes decided to tackle the issue of bullying by developing an anti-bullying message through skits which they performed during an assembly and an open house.

The other two classes concentrated on the environment and school cleanliness. One class took on the responsibility of cleaning up the school classrooms as well as the schoolyard and contacted community partners to provide additional recycling bins and garbage cans. The other class decided to save a tree in their schoolyard by removing the concrete placed on top of it and created a garden and lawn space for the students to enjoy.

By working together in a fun and creative way, students are empowered to make decisions, take action and become leaders as agents of change.
Playground Activity Leaders in Schools

The Playground Activity Leaders in Schools (P.A.L.S.) program continues to expand every year since the pilot began in 2003. Over 140 schools throughout the Region of Peel now have implemented the P.A.L.S. program in their schoolyards. The objective of the P.A.L.S. program is to promote physical activity, reduce bullying behaviour and provide students with a leadership opportunity.

Students in grades 4 to 6 are trained to act as playground activity leaders for the primary grades during recess break. School staff then supervise the program with the ongoing support of a Public Health Nurse.

A Public Health Nurse trains staff and students to implement the program in their school. Training covers communication skills, conflict resolution, leadership qualities and fair play. The leaders receive a handbook and learn a variety of games to assist them to plan and organize fun and safe activities on the playground.

This year, the P.A.L.S. program held a supervisor’s reunion in the fall at Larkspur P.S. in Brampton and Whitehorn P.S. in Mississauga. The event included fun exercises allowing input and evaluation of the program as well as an opportunity for supervisors to meet each other and share the successes of P.A.L.S. in their schools. Over 50 supervisors in attendance provided valuable feedback that will help improve the program in the years to come. Special thanks to both Larkspur and Whitehorn for providing space to hold the reunion.

Peel Public Health provided two P.A.L.S. supervisor training sessions to prepare supervisors for implementation of the P.A.L.S. program. Thank you to Karen Waller, teacher at Kings Masting Public School for hosting and co-facilitating a session.

Feedback received during the P.A.L.S. pilot indicated that P.A.L.S. leaders want more games they can teach on the playground. Starting in 2006, Peel Public Health provided two copies of the P.A.L.S. Games Book* to all schools in Peel actively running the P.A.L.S. program. These books provide ideas for tag/team relay games, skipping, yogi, ball games, as well as indoor and winter games. These books will be provided to new schools that implement the P.A.L.S. program.

*funded in part by Peel Heart Health Network
Families and Schools Together

Families and Schools Together (F&ST) is a program offered to schools in partnership with the Peel District School Board, Family Services of Peel and Peel Public Health. This research-based initiative aims to strengthen family bonding, promote children’s success in school and enhance community togetherness.

The initial eight weeks of this structured program invites selected families to dine together and participate in activities one evening a week for the eight weeks. The program then continues with F&ST Works which allows parents in the program to take ownership and plan monthly outings, maintaining group unity.

Roberta Bondar becomes a F&ST School

Roberta Bondar Public School’s first F&ST night was on May 4, 2006. Team members completed a two-day training session in preparation for the program’s implementation. A dedicated team consisting of a Peel Public Health Nurse, parent volunteer, school staff and volunteers from a local high school facilitated and implemented the program at the school.

The F&ST program had 10 families attend weekly where they enjoyed and benefitted from quality family time and a warm and friendly school environment. Families and team members had the opportunity to celebrate the program’s accomplishments at the F&ST graduation night. Families received diplomas and affirmations, providing a sense of closure for the first phase of the program.

Both the F&ST families and F&ST teams anticipate the program to grow and continue its success.

Active Children, Active Learners

Daily Physical Activity positively impacts students’ mental and social well-being by improving self-esteem and their readiness to learn. Encouraging students to be active every day can contribute to an ongoing commitment to leading active healthy lives. With the introduction of Daily Physical Activity in schools we hope to see improvement in academic performance in addition to the many health benefits they will receive.
Paint a Heart Healthy Playground
Hopscotch, Four Square, Foot Hockey, Basketball

Nine more Peel schools have had their tarmacs painted and now thousands of students are enjoying a new interactive playground and an informative gym highlighting key heart health messages. This was made possible by the partnership between Peel Public Health, the schools and the Peel Heart Health Network.

This program aims to provide an opportunity for students to participate in fun, interactive games during recess and before and after school to gain insight into the importance of making healthy choices. Schools can select the type of games they would like painted on their tarmac such as four square, hopscotch, foot hockey, line tag and basketball keys. Inside the gym, the students will see paintings of Ticker, the Peel Heart Health mascot and the Heart Health messages such as Keep Moving, Eat Healthy, Don’t Smoke and Don’t Bully, It Hurts!

Schools who have successfully implemented the P.A.L.S. program may apply to have their playground painted.

The following is a list of the 2005-2006 schools that have participate in this program:

| Springfield | Madoc       | Herb Campbell |
| Kings Mastings | Credit Valley | Mineola      |
| Eastbourne  | Vista Heights | Belfountain |

Keep Moving with Daily Physical Activity (DPA)
DPA is NOW Mandatory

It’s here! On Oct. 6, 2005, the Ontario Ministry of Education mandated that school boards ensure that all elementary students, including students with special needs, have a minimum of 20 minutes of sustained moderate to vigorous daily physical activity (DPA) each school day during instruction time.

Peel Public Health has partnered with the Peel District School Board (PDSB) to provide support in the implementation of the Ministry of Education DPA policy in all PDSB schools come September 2006. A committee was established with representatives from Peel Public Health, 17 elementary school teachers and the board-level Health and Physical Education Curriculum Co-ordinator. The committee organized training in-services for lead teachers from PDSB elementary and middle schools, and offered support to the schools through resources, equipment and mentors. Peel Public Health supported the in-services by providing access to physical activity resources, DPA prizes and assistance with evaluating the implementation plan in May and June. Stay tuned for another in-service provided by Peel Public Health this fall.
Turn Off the Screens and Turn On to Physical Activity and Reading

Peel Public Health collaborated with Mississauga, Brampton and Caledon Parks and Recreation departments and public libraries to develop the Turn off the Screens pilot project. A total of 16 schools participated in this pilot, 12 of which were from the Peel District School Board.

Turn off the Screens week ran from March 31 – April 7, 2006 and was designed to raise awareness of the importance of physical activity and reading. Participating children and their families were challenged to turn off their TV, computer or game screens and choose activities that promoted physical activity or reading. Approximately 7,500 students pledged to turn off their screens for that week and record their activities on a daily activity log. Schools received a package containing curriculum resources and suggested school-wide activities to facilitate the schools’ participation in Turn off the Screens week.

The participating schools planned activities such as:

- Kick-off assemblies
- PA announcements
- Poster contests
- Library Bingo/Scavenger hunts
- Story book costume parades
- Neighbourhood walk/talks
- Puppet shows
- School visits from Regional and/or City Councillors
- School-wide energizer breaks
- Author visits
- Plays/skits
- Classroom reading zones
- Drop everything and read days

Most schools organized a family night, supported by the Public Health Nurse and other community partners, that offered events and programs for families to enjoy together.

Evaluation is currently underway with the initial feedback being overwhelmingly positive for ongoing support for Turn off the Screens week.

Congratulations to the following participating schools for a successful week of turning off their screens:

- Alton
- Belfountain
- Burnt Elm
- Caledon East
- Cherrytree
- Credit Valley
- Dunrankin
- Elmcrest
- Herb Campbell
- Shelter Bay
- Sir Wilfrid Laurier
- Whitehorn
School Community Action Partnership

For four years the School Community Action Partnership (SCAP) committee has been fostering collaboration between public health and the boards of education to address the issues of health and physical education. This committee exemplifies community partnership with representatives from Peel Public Health, the Peel District School Board, and the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board. The members of this committee are committed to working together to organize and deliver an annual teacher in-service called Active Children, Active Learners. The goal of the in-service is to bring together elementary generalist and Health and Physical Education Specialist teachers to increase awareness of the importance of regular physical activity for students, to network and to motivate them to implement regular physical activity at school and share their knowledge with colleagues.

On Oct. 4, 2005, 37 teachers from both school boards attended the in-service at San Lorenzo Ruiz Catholic School. Session topics included highlights of parks and recreation programs and services, active community fundraiser programs, daily physical activity ideas and cross-curricular links with literacy and numeracy. A special thanks to San Lorenzo Ruiz for hosting this event.

The next Active Children, Active Learners in-service is scheduled for the upcoming 2006-2007 school year.

Safe and Active Routes to School

Peel Safe and Active Routes to School (PSARTS) is a program that can be integrated as part of the health, safety, physical education and environmental curriculum by making physical activity a part of each child's daily routine.

The PSARTS mission is to help students:

• Walk to school in groups as part of a healthy lifestyle
• Develop interpersonal skills by building relationships with other children who participate in the program
• Make environmentally friendly choices by choosing to walk, bike, and blade to school instead of using fuel-dependent vehicles
• Develop street-safety skills

“Children who walk or bicycle to school show improved concentration, enhanced memory, learning and creativity and improved mood for up to two hours after being physically active. More active children also exhibit higher test scores, less frequent disruptive behaviour and improved memory.” (Action for Healthy Kids, 2004)

Morton Way Public School’s Walk and Roll program is a true leader in promoting walking to school with their students. This year, Morton Way Public School has been awarded the International Walk to School Award which recognizes excellence in walk to school programming internationally.

A Public Health Nurse is available to do presentations to parent councils and staff if a school is interested in participating in a walking to school program.
Supporting Students to make Healthy Choices

Smoking Isn’t Cool
(K-5 Toolkit)

It may not always be easy to make health topics interesting to students. However, Peel Public Health can help by giving teachers ideas about how to educate students about tobacco. The K-5 Tobacco Toolkit makes the learning fun and interactive with an educational, interactive display that is designed to illustrate the harmful effects of smoking. This smoking prevention toolkit uses a hands-on approach through a variety of materials including a pop-up display, the Tar Jar (a year’s worth of tar), Mr. Gross Mouth (a model of a smoker’s mouth), a cloth body with velcro organs, activity booklets for each student and additional teaching resources. Due to the popularity and demand for this kit, Peel Public Health is currently in the process of developing additional toolkits for the 2006-2007 school year.

Smokes and Ladders
A Tobacco Prevention Resource Game

In January 2006, Peel Public Health introduced the new Smokes and Ladders tobacco prevention game for Grade 3 teachers across the Region of Peel. The game assists Grade 3 teachers in fulfilling the Ontario Health and Physical Education Curriculum, Grade 3 Healthy Living strand and Substance Use and Abuse expectations by encouraging students to make an educated decision not to smoke. This game was developed based on the well-known board game Snakes and Ladders. The objective of this new resource is to help students understand issues surrounding the dangers of smoking and exposure to second-hand smoke, and also to help them develop strategies to deal with situations where tobacco is involved.

These resources are available free of charge and can be requested by contacting Region of Peel - Public Health at 905-799-7700.
Healthy Sexuality

The Healthy Sexuality Program, together with individuals and groups, helps to promote a sexually healthy community in Peel. Peel Public Health offers a variety of services such as free healthy sexuality clinics that provide confidential, non-judgmental services for clients of all ages. Clinic services include testing, treatment, education related to birth control options, suspected pregnancy, the emergency contraceptive pill and sexually transmitted infections including anonymous HIV testing. Referrals are made to other agencies or health services as required. Counselling on pregnancy options, sexuality, sexual orientation, dating and relationships is also available.

Public Health Nurses are available from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to respond to sexual health related questions, provide counselling and education at 905-799-7700 or via e-mail at healthlinepeel@peelregion.ca. After business hours, callers with a touch tone phone can listen to recorded messages on a variety of sexual health topics.

Fun, interactive clinic tours are also available and can provide students with an opportunity to receive accurate sexuality information and have their questions answered by a health professional. Tours can be tailored to the needs and interests of the group.

Changes In Me
A Resource for Educators on Puberty and Adolescent Development

Changes In Me: A Resource For Educators On Puberty And Adolescent Development is an educational unit that adheres to Ontario Ministry guidelines and supplements the existing Health Education curriculum. It includes student-centred activities for the classroom, handouts, visual-aids, evaluation tools, a video and a list of useful resources. It is designed to assist educators when they teach puberty and sexuality education.

All educators in the region of Peel have access to a limited number of kits that can be reserved at the Healthy Sexuality clinics in Mississauga and Brampton. The Sexuality Education Specialist with Peel Public Health completed 26 teaching kits that were distributed to schools in the Peel District School Board (PDSB) during the 2002-2003 school year and an additional 34 kits that were distributed during the 2004-2005 school year. Currently, there are 60 elementary schools in the PDSB housing the Changes In Me resource.

Over eight teacher-training workshops were held for PDSB teachers with additional sessions scheduled for the 2006-2007 school year. Those requiring further information about the Changes In Me educational unit, or looking to reserve a kit for classroom use can call Peel Public Health at 905-799-7700.
Healthy Eating = Healthy Learning

Being Active, Eating Well
A Resource for Action in Peel

Peel Public Health responded to the school community’s need for more support in fostering healthy eating and physical activity environments by creating the Action Kit. The kit helps to prevent childhood obesity in the Region of Peel by improving the eating and physical activity behaviours of children and youth in school communities.

During the 2005-2006 school year, Garthwood, Ruth Thompson Middle and Mountain Ash Public Schools piloted this initiative. This involved:

- Setting up a health committee comprised of students, staff, parents and community members
- Assessing both the assets and needs of the school community using the Comprehensive School Health Model
- Developing and implementing an action plan with support from public health and resource materials
- Receiving an in-service on the project components
- Participating in the evaluation and celebration of their successes

Several creative and sustainable healthy eating and physical activity initiatives have been implemented in the pilot sites:

- Morning a la carte snack program
- Milk and breakfast program
- Healthy eating curriculum supports offered to teachers
- Theme days (e.g. Whole Wheat Wednesdays, Fruity Fridays)
- Translations of printed materials
- Healthy eating and physical activity promotion at school-wide events (e.g. fashion show, family walks, open houses)

The Action Kit has a new name! It is now called Being Active, Eating Well - A new Resource for Action in Peel. The new look and name is as a result of the feedback received from the pilot schools. Thank you to the schools who participated in the pilot phase.

The new and improved Being Active, Eating Well resource will be accessible to all elementary schools in the fall of 2006.
A Matter of Balance
A Community Forum on Child Obesity Prevention

On Nov. 2, 2005, Peel Public Health hosted a forum to offer communities the ideas and inspiration to help role model healthy behaviours that reduce the risk factors of childhood obesity. Modelled after the Balanced School Day timetable, the forum was a hands-on way for participants to see how simple ideas can grow into effective ways to help prevent childhood obesity; prevention requires a balance in healthy eating, regular physical activity and a positive body image.

Two schools shared their local success stories:

• Thomas Street Middle School talked about its popular running club. The school wanted to offer fitness-related activities that would engage and involve students, staff and parents. The program does not focus on competition and has given students the opportunity to regularly try new activities. For instance, in 2004 Thomas Street had 10 teams participate in the Mississauga Marathon.

• Michael Walmsley, principal at Treeline Public School, highlighted the successful approach they had taken in initiating the Balanced School Day timetable.

Representatives from several Peel District schools attended the forum to come up with their own commitments to childhood obesity prevention. Visit peel-obesity.ca/community to learn more about these school-specific commitments.

Discover Healthy Eating!
Teacher Workshops

Discover Healthy Eating is an instructional resource for elementary school teachers that meets the expectations of the Ontario Curriculum for nutrition, physical activity, body image and dental health.

In March 2006, two teacher workshops were hosted in co-operation with Great Lakes Public School in Brampton and St. Raymond School in Mississauga. Approximately 40 teachers from both the Peel District School Board and Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board attended the interactive workshops. The feedback was very positive; attendants appreciated the activities, the case studies, the resource package and the Discover Healthy Eating CD.

Visit our Web site at peelregion.ca/health/eating/htmfiles/healthy-eating.htm to download grade-specific lesson activities and handouts. Call Peel Public Health at 905-799-7700 for more information or to book a workshop.
Community Food Advisor Volunteer Program in Demand

In 2006, the Community Food Advisor Program recruited additional volunteers to train and certify in order to provide community-based healthy eating education sessions to community groups throughout the Region of Peel.

Peel Public Health provided two separate morning and evening sessions of volunteer training regarding healthy eating, food shopping, preparation, storage and safety. The training incorporates healthy recipe cooking sessions and demonstrations.

Peel Public Health thanks TL Kennedy Secondary School in Mississauga for providing the space required to conduct the evening training sessions. The Family Studies room and the kitchen facilities provided an optimal teaching and learning forum where trainees practised their skills for three hours each Thursday evening from January to June 2006.

Peel Community Partners Breakfast for Kids

Peel Public Health continues to support the Peel Community Partners Breakfast for Kids (PCP BFK) sites located at both Peel District School Board and the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board.

Robert F. Hall Secondary School

Robert F. Hall Secondary School
Alternative Education site in the Caledon Community Complex partnered with the PCP BFK. A Public Health Inspector and Public Health Dietitian provided a training session on food safety and nutrition to participants at the site. Following food safety and nutrition guidelines, students prepared their own breakfasts each day before classes.

This initiative increased the nutritional intake of the youth as well as provided them with valuable life skills training and education. Peel Public Health will continue to provide information and/or training to this site each semester as new students go through the nourishment program.
Body Image Workshop for Teachers

On Feb. 27, 2006, approximately 20 teachers from the Peel District School Board attended a workshop entitled Body Image Issues for Adolescents: Making a Difference in Your Classroom and Your School. A curriculum resource package was provided and each teacher received a complimentary copy of Every BODY Is A Somebody a facilitator's guide produced by the Body Image Coalition of Peel. This topic is of great importance given the degree of body image dissatisfaction among young people in Peel schools. In the 2005 survey Student Health Status Report: Gauging the Health of Peel Students in grades 7-12, conducted by the Region of Peel Public Health, nearly 54 per cent of students labelled themselves as either too fat or too thin, and only 39 per cent felt comfortable with their size. More workshops are scheduled to begin in 2007.

Body Image Coalition of Peel Hosts Ellyn Satter

Ellyn Satter, internationally recognized authority on childhood nutrition and feeding, presented a workshop for parents entitled Solving Childhood Feeding Problem on May 4, 2006 at the HJA Brown Education Centre. This free, evening seminar sponsored by the Body Image Coalition of Peel was attended by 130 local parents who received help and encouragement to deal with common feeding problems. This is a timely topic given that the results of a 2004 Ipsos-Reid survey conducted for the Region of Peel - Public Health found that 48 per cent of parents were concerned about their children’s eating habits. The Body Image Coalition of Peel wishes to thank the Peel District School Board for generously donating the use of the board room for this event.

Peel wishes to thank Peel District School Board for generously donating the facilities used to host this event.
Your Students, Your Environment

Peel Schools Are Helping Clean the Air!

Students and teachers in Peel schools are participating in 20/20 The Way To Clean Air and helping their schools and the community save energy and help clean our air. This environmental program encourages students and their families to reduce home energy use and vehicle use by 20 per cent. The purpose of the program is to teach children about the impacts of their daily activities on air quality and help them and their families conserve energy and reduce the risks of smog and climate change in our community.

The 20/20 Way to Clean Air program offers each student a copy of the EcoSchools Planner. This planner provides practical, hands-on activities and simple tips that assist students and their families in reducing energy use at home, and on the road. The Planner helps students make the connection between what they learn in the classroom and their everyday behaviours.

The program links to the science and technology component of the Ontario Curriculum. It is particularly relevant to teachers giving lessons on resource and energy use, environmentally friendly transportation, atmospheric science, health education and the environment in general. Schools participating in the program will receive the following resources or incentives:

- Chance to win a school presentation on “Clean Air” delivered by a Clean Air Champion (Olympic and National Team athletes)
- An attractive wall hanging and chance to win a pizza lunch (winner drawn monthly) for participating classrooms
- 20/20 school banner for each school that has at least three participating classrooms
- A free EcoSchools Planner for every participating student

Visit the 20/20 Web site at toronto.ca/health/2020/about.htm.
Peel EcoFair
A Celebration of Stewardship in Peel Schools

On May 24, 2006, over 100 students from nine Peel schools gathered together at the fourth annual Peel EcoFair to communicate, motivate, and celebrate 10 environmental action projects that they have been undertaking in their communities. These projects all help to improve watershed health and embody the EcoFair slogan: “What we do on the land is mirrored in the water.”

Over the past four years, 37 different groups of students, representing 24 Peel schools, have presented their projects at the annual Peel EcoFair. Examples of some of the projects include:

- Water quality monitoring
- Schoolyard naturalization
- Waste audits and reduction
- Water efficiency auditing
- Woodlot and wetland restoration
- Backyard and vermi composting
- Air quality monitoring
- Recycling
- Energy conservation
- Pesticide-free gardening
- Environmental drama
- Idle-free zones at school

Students at Peel EcoFair present their projects to one another as well as an assigned expert in a related field, thereby giving young people an important opportunity to improve their public speaking skills. Most students thrive in this role because they are talking on topics they know and care about. Project displays remain on site in the Peel EcoFair tent as part of the Peel Children’s Water Festival, attended annually by approximately 10,000 people.

Grade 4 – 12 students from any school or youth group in Peel are eligible to apply to attend the Peel EcoFair if they are undertaking some form of environmental action. Case studies of past EcoFair projects and other event information is available at peel-ecofair.ca.

Peel EcoFair Participants:
Whitehorn Public  McHugh Public  Mountain Ash Middle
Northwood Public  Tomken Road Middle  Ruth Thompson Middle
Queen Elizabeth Senior Public

Several schools have continued to support ongoing environmental action projects within their school community:
Creditview Public  Edenwood Middle  Fallingbrook Middle
Glendale Public  Hickory Wood Public  Hillside Public
Thomas Street Middle  West Acres Public
Peel teachers undertaking any form of water education can now access a new teaching resource. Launched on World Water Day, March 22, 2006, The Peel Water Story is available in every school library in Peel.

In 2005, The Peel Water Story resource was pilot tested in six schools including:

Allan A. Martin Senior Public       Maple Wood Public

Twenty eight schools participated in a training workshop to highlight the key components of The Peel Water Story resource.

This locally relevant and teacher-targeted resource was developed by the Region of Peel’s Public Works department, which provides municipal water and wastewater services for the more than one million residents in Peel.

The Peel Water Story is a multi-media resource consisting of a book, a CD-ROM, and a comprehensive Web site. Cross-curricular by design, teachers in all grades, kindergarten through Grade 12, will find materials that support their program.

Included in this resource are:

- A (curriculum connected) narrative history of water and water systems in Peel
- An online GIS mapping tool that allows you to map your school and surrounding water systems
- Downloadable water activities that are curriculum referenced
- Case studies of Peel schools’ environmental action projects that improve watershed health
- A guide to school environmental action projects
- A list of water education resources, including field trips and school presentations

By including the school, community and water supply, every school’s water education can be more meaningful. To learn more, visit peelwaterstory.ca today!
Peel Children’s Water Festival

Since 1996, the Peel Children’s Water Festival has provided an environmental education experience to over 55,000 Peel elementary school students. Through the use of more than 50 interactive activity centres, students in grades 2 to 5 have the opportunity to learn about:

• Physical and chemical properties of water
• The role of water in ecosystems and human health
• Treatment processes for Peel’s drinking water and wastewater
• Interactions between people and water
• The importance of conserving and protecting our water sources

Information about registration for the 2007 Peel Children’s Water Festival will be made available to all Peel elementary schools in January 2007. For more information, visit peel-waterfestival.ca.
Section 3

Secondary School
Secondary Students Lead the Way to Wellness

Secondary Schools Take on a Comprehensive Approach

Peel Public Health is piloting a secondary school strategy using the Comprehensive School Health (CSH) model. The CSH model aims to promote healthy lifestyles and create healthy environments for students. This approach includes a variety of programs, policies, activities and services for schools and surrounding communities. The CSH approach works best when everyone in the child’s life including parents, teachers and school staff is involved in role modelling and supporting healthy lifestyles choices. Each school’s approach to CSH will vary as it is based on the school’s individual health needs.

The Peel Public Health Nurses support schools by building partnerships, creating programs and resources to assist staff and students to develop CSH strategies. Other relevant theories and frameworks in health promotion, peer education, youth participation, engagement and developmental assets will help guide the implementation of the strategy.

Working in partnership with the selected secondary schools, we identify and act upon the many health issues facing adolescents, their parents and school communities. Staff wellness and community involvement are other key components of the initiative.

Recommendations for expanding the number of schools and developing materials and supports to implement school-wide strategies are the next steps to the pilot phase.

Student Wellness Committees Champions for Health

The Secondary School Wellness Initiative completed its second year at three Peel Secondary Schools: Clarkson, Harold Brathwaite and West Credit. Using a CSH model, the pilot consists of school Student Wellness Councils comprised of students, staff advisors and a Public Health Nurse. The Wellness Councils worked in collaboration with school administration and staff to identify and act upon a number of health issues facing students including tobacco use, nutrition, alcohol and drug use and self-esteem. All three schools were recipients of a $1,000 Smoke-Free Ontario high school grant to support student initiated tobacco control projects in their schools.

In February 2006, members of each Wellness Council created and starred in a video used to communicate the issues highlighted in the Student Health 2005: Gauging the Health of Peel’s Youth, School Health Assessment Survey results at Peel Public Health’s Youth Forum held at Philip Pocock Catholic Secondary School. Peel Health appreciates the staff at Philip Pocock for hosting this event.
Clarkson Secondary School

The Student Wellness Council at Clarkson Secondary hosted several fun and interactive displays in their cafeteria over the lunch period. These included the Peel Public Health anti-tobacco youth group called “extinguish,” tobacco advertising display and contest, a tobacco trivia wheel and Lung Association display, and a healthy living wheel during Peer Activity Leaders in School Awareness Week. The students also completed a Workshop Basics training session, then planned their own tobacco advertising workshop and arranged for guest speaker Laurie Gallant (Esophageal Voice Instructor) to present the harmful effects of tobacco use.

The Council also created a fun anti-smoking activity for Hillside Senior Public School Grade 6 students on decision-making skills and tobacco use. The school placed sixth in the Ontario-wide Second-Hand Blows Contest, which raised awareness on the effects of second-hand smoke. The topics they presented for the Youth Health Forum and video were tobacco use and bullying. The students also presented their work to Parent Council, recruited and selected new Council members and designed a logo for a wellness shirt.

Harold Brathwaite Secondary School

The Wellness Council at Harold Brathwaite organized a host of wellness activities at the school on topics such as motivation, cancer, tobacco and AIDS awareness. In early December, the Council invited motivational speaker Andy Thibodeau to speak to the grade 9 and 10 students. He encouraged them to get their hands up and participate in class, in school and in life!

The Council also held a number of school-wide fundraisers, including an AIDS red ribbon campaign with the proceeds going to the Peel HIV/AIDS Network and the Canadian Cancer Society Daffodil Campaign, where the school raised over $2,000. In addition, the Student Wellness Council, in conjunction with the Staff Wellness Council hosted two wellness weeks at the school, one in each semester. They focused on topics including nutrition, body image, drug and alcohol use and physical activity. During Tobacco Awareness Week in May, students handed out Quit Smoking and Don’t Start Smoking goodie bags and invited Peel Public Health and the Lung Association to set up displays in the cafeteria during lunch hours to educate students and staff about the harmful effects of tobacco.

West Credit Secondary School

Activities at West Credit included an Anti-Smoking Week in April. Wellness Council students organized a student-led tobacco awareness display and tobacco trivia game over the lunch hour. The Peel Public Health Nurse assisted by providing a number of interesting tobacco related visuals and information for the students. Other activities included a school-wide tobacco poster contest. The top three entrants won a gift certificate to Square One Shopping Centre and all participants were invited to a celebration pizza party. In May, the Council also organized a school Wellness Hike and picnic to Rattlesnake Point in Milton. The Wellness Council staff advisors were busy throughout the year arranging wellness activities for school staff, including yoga and baking.
Empowering Students to Make Healthy Choices

Party in the Right Spirit


A total of 134 students and 42 teacher advisors, representing 26 high schools from both the Catholic (10) and Public (16) school boards, attended the free, one-day conference.

Party in the Right Spirit provides an opportunity for both students in graduation committees and members of student council to learn ways to promote a safe graduation for their peers in a fun and interactive manner.

The agenda for the day included greetings from the Medical Officer of Health and a presentation from the keynote speaker Keith Hawkins – an international motivational speaker who focused on the importance of responsibility, student leadership and making good choices. The students also attended interactive workshops on social host liability, impairment and healthy decision-making. A special session for teachers and principals shared best practices on planning safe graduation celebrations which ran concurrently to the student workshops. In the afternoon, students reconvened to strategize and design a plan on the best way to promote and disseminate the information they learned in their workshops to the rest of their respective graduating classmates.

The Party in the Right Spirit conference is considered to be a valuable tool that high schools use to empower youth to make informed choices.

Don’t Drive High

According to the 2005 Ontario Student Drug Use Survey, the percentage of drivers reporting using cannabis and driving is higher than the percentage reporting drinking and driving.

In 2005, Peel Public Health developed a sixty-second advertisement for movie theatres that targets young people with the message: “Marijuana messes with your head. Don’t drive high.” The advertisement was shown in theatres in the region of Peel from Nov. 18, 2005 to Jan. 2, 2006 and again from Feb. 3 to March 20, 2006. The campaign also included postcards with optical illusion brainteasers that repeat the message and direct youth to the campaign’s Web site dontdrivehigh.ca. Visitors to the Web site can view the advertisement and access helpful information about marijuana and marijuana-impaired driving. Peel Public Health is currently developing the second phase of its Marijuana Use and Youth campaign.

Helping Teens

During the 2005-2006 school year, each school in the Peel District School Board (PDSB) with Grade 9 students received a teaching kit entitled Helping Teens to Make Healthy Decisions About Sex and Relationships. This comprehensive teaching unit includes detailed lesson plans for teachers, examples of available birth control methods, student-centred activities, a video, overheads and a list of useful resources. The kit meets Ontario Ministry guidelines and supplements existing curriculum in health education. The Sexuality Education Specialist with Peel Public Health has designed the unit to assist staff in teaching sexual education to secondary students. It offers an integrated approach to sexuality,
one that places priority on accurate information concerning sexuality, encourages students to form
healthy relationships and to increase their decision-making skills.

A teacher-training session was provided in the fall of 2005 and workshops are planned for PDSB
teachers during the 2006-2007 school year. Each PDSB secondary school currently has a Helping
Teens kit at their school and will be receiving an additional kit in the fall of 2006. Should you
require further information about the Helping Teens teaching kit, please call Peel Public Health at
905-799-7700.

Healthy Sexuality

The Healthy Sexuality Program, together with individuals and groups,
helps to promote a sexually healthy community in Peel. Peel Public
Health offers a variety of services such as free healthy sexuality clinics
that provide confidential, non-judgmental services for clients of all ages.
Clinic services include testing, treatment, education related to birth
control options, suspected pregnancy, the emergency contraceptive pill,
and sexually transmitted infections, including anonymous HIV testing. Referrals are made to other
agencies or health services as required. Counselling on pregnancy options, sexuality, sexual
orientation, dating and relationships is also available.

Public Health Nurses are available from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to respond to sexual health related
questions, provide counselling and education at 905-799-7700 or via e-mail at
healthlinepeel@peelregion.ca. After business hours, callers with a touch tone phone can listen to
recorded messages on a variety of sexual health topics.

Fun, interactive clinic tours are also available and can provide students with an opportunity to
receive accurate sexuality information and have their questions answered by a health professional.
Tours can be tailored to the needs and interests of the group.

AIDS Awareness Week
Nov. 28 – Dec. 1, 2005

AIDS Awareness Week occurred the last week of November 2005, ending with
World AIDS Day on Dec. 1. Learning about AIDS, a presentation/workshop
hosted in collaboration with the Peel District School Board, the Region of

Students participating in this event worked in small groups, with a Peel
Public Health staff, developing action plans and discovering ways to plan
an AIDS awareness event in their school.

Additional resources regarding AIDS provided by Peel Public Health include:

▷ Anonymous HIV testing is available at Peel Public Healthy Sexuality Clinics free of charge.
▷ Support: pre and post test counseling, support and education are available through the clinics.
▷ Prevention and Information: Peel Public Health offers workshops and information sessions to
community groups and agencies.
▷ Peel Works Needle Exchange Program: Peel Public Health operates a needle exchange program
aimed at preventing the spread of blood-borne diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, in the injection
drug use community through the collection of used needles, distribution of clean needles and
equipment, provision of containers to dispose of needles and referrals to information, support
and treatment.
Smoke Free Ontario Initiative Supported by Provincial Funding

The 2005-2006 school year saw several exciting changes and the launch of new tobacco control initiatives in many secondary schools across the Region of Peel. In May 2005, the Ministry of Health Promotion announced their new Smoke-Free Ontario strategy which included a significant investment in youth tobacco prevention. Peel Public Health received $31,000 towards this aim. This strategy involved forming Youth Action Alliances (YAA) across Ontario in addition to providing secondary schools with $1,000 in funding to support anti-tobacco projects.

Student-initiated tobacco control activities that were developed in 20 schools from the Peel District School Board that received funding included health fairs, commercials and movies, poster contests, a tobacco awareness calendar, presentations to younger students, in-school ad campaigns and the invitation of guest speakers.

The following schools received a $1,000 grant to fund student lead tobacco control initiatives:
- Chinguacousy S.S.
- Humberview S.S.
- Port Credit S.S.
- Gordon Graydon Mem. S.S.
- Rick Hansen S.S.
- Mayfield S.S.
- Erindale S.S.
- Mississauga S.S.
- Lincoln Alexander S.S.
- West Credit S.S.
- The Woodlands S.S.
- John Fraser S.S.
- Bramalea S.S.
- Harold M. Brathwaite S.S.
- T.L. Kennedy S.S
- Turner Fenton S.S.
- Central Peel S.S.
- Peel Alternative North S.S.
- Meadowvale S.S.
- Clarkson S.S.

For more information on how students can become a part of the extinguish initiative, and how schools can apply for the tobacco control high school grant for the 2006-2007 school year, call Peel Public Health at 905-799-7700.
Peel Youth “extinguish” Tobacco - Youth Action Alliances

The Smoke-Free Ontario Strategy enabled the Region of Peel to hire 14 high school-aged students from Brampton and Mississauga to work as Peer Leaders within two Youth Action Alliances. Their goal is to use peer-to-peer education to prevent youth from starting to smoke, reduce second-hand smoke exposure and to help youth to quit smoking. This new funding has provided the opportunity to have an even greater impact on tobacco prevention by focusing on both the school and the community. As a result, our previous Smoking Isn’t Kool initiative has now merged under a new youth tobacco initiative called extinguish. In the 2006-2007 school year, Peel Public Health plans to launch extinguish chapters throughout middle schools in Peel, and unveil the new extinguish Web site.

In April 2006, extinguish introduced the Make it Your Ex campaign which encouraged youth to make the tobacco industry their ex-girlfriend or boyfriend. This campaign allows youth to experience a day without smoking by trading in their cigarettes for merchandise such as gum and gift cards. The purpose of the exchange is to show youth the financial impact of smoking by highlighting all the things they could buy if they spent their money on products other than tobacco. The Peer Leaders also created an interactive game to quiz participants on how smoking impacts their health and the tobacco industry’s marketing tactics.

The following schools participated in this campaign:

Turner Fenton S.S.        Mayfield S.S.        Clarkson S.S.
John Fraser S.S.         Lincoln Alexander S.S.  Erindale S.S.
Your Students, Your Environment

Peel EcoFair
A Celebration of Stewardship in Peel Schools

On May 24, 2006, over 100 students from nine Peel schools gathered at the fourth annual Peel EcoFair to communicate, motivate, and celebrate 10 environmental action projects that they have been undertaking in their communities. These projects all help to improve watershed health and embody the EcoFair slogan: “What we do on the land is mirrored in the water.”

Over the past four years, 37 different groups of students, representing 24 Peel schools, have presented their projects at the annual Peel EcoFair. Examples of some of the projects include:

- Water quality monitoring
- Schoolyard naturalization
- Waste audits and reduction
- Water efficiency auditing
- Woodlot and wetland restoration
- Backyard and vermi composting
- Air quality monitoring
- Recycling
- Energy conservation
- Pesticide-free gardening
- Environmental drama
- Idle-free zones at school

Students at Peel EcoFair present their projects to one another as well as an assigned expert in a related field, thereby giving young people an important opportunity to improve their public speaking skills. Most students thrive in this role because they are talking on topics they know and care about. Project displays remain on site in the Peel EcoFair tent as part of the Peel Children’s Water Festival, attended annually by approximately 10,000 people.

Grade 4 to 12 students from any school or youth group in Peel are eligible to apply to attend the Peel EcoFair if they are undertaking some form of environmental action. Case studies of past EcoFair projects and other event information is available at peel-ecofair.ca.

Peel EcoFair Participants:
West Credit SS    Lincoln Alexander SS    Mississauga SS
North Peel SS     Rick Hansen SS         The Woodlands SS
Streetsville SS   

Partnering to Improve the Health of Students
The Peel Water Story
A Water Curriculum Resource for Peel Schools

A River Through Time
WITH A PICTORIAL OVERVIEW OF WATER AND WASTEWATER TECHNOLOGIES

Peel teachers undertaking any form of water education now have access to a new teaching resource. Launched on World Water Day, March 22, 2006, The Peel Water Story is available in every school library in Peel.

This locally-relevant and teacher-targeted resource was developed by the Region of Peel’s Public Works department, which provides municipal water and wastewater services for the more than one million residents in Peel.

The Peel Water Story is a multi-media resource consisting of a book, a CD-ROM, and a comprehensive Web site. Cross-curricular by design, teachers in all grades, kindergarten through Grade 12, will find materials that support their program.

Included in this resource are:
• A curriculum-connected narrative history of water and water systems in Peel
• An online GIS mapping tool that allows you to map your school and surrounding water systems
• Downloadable water activities that are curriculum referenced
• Case studies of Peel schools’ environmental action projects that improve watershed health
• A guide to school environmental action projects
• A list of water education resources, including field trips and school presentations

By including the school, community and water supply, every school’s water education can be more meaningful. To learn more, visit peelwaterstory.ca today!

Peel Water Story – Field Test Participants 2005

Heart Lake S.S. North Peel S.S.
The Woodlands S.S. Peel District School Board Outdoor Ed Field Centres
Community Partnerships
Working Together for Youth

Meadowvale Community Partnership

The Meadowvale Community Partnership (MCP) has been going strong for eight years with the support of dedicated individuals and groups from various facets of the community who are working together for the youth in Meadowvale. Members currently consist of representatives from the Peel District Board of Education, Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board, Peel Regional Police, The Dam Youth Drop-in, Peel Public Health, Mississauga Council and Community Services, the Peel Peace Campaign, various church organizations, social service agencies and members of the community.

The MCP believes that young people are a vital part of the community and that we have a responsibility to ensure their safety, well-being and development. The group is committed to encouraging and facilitating community partnerships that foster sharing of information and resources; increasing awareness of issues related to youth; advocating on behalf of youth; supporting and empowering youth; and promoting a safe, healthy community.

Monthly meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month at Edenwood Middle School from 5:30 - 7 p.m. (except for July and August).

MCP Accomplishments:
• Parenting with a Difference presented by Jane Hoy
• Keeping our Youth Safe Panel Presentation
• Anti-Bullying Presentation presented by Dr. Debra Peplar
• Healthy Active Child Day
• Anti-Bullying Conference in partnership with the Canadian Safe School Network
• Youth Violence Awareness Forum at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic SS
• Youth Resource Fair at Meadowvale Town Centre

Malton Youth Network

The Malton Youth Network is a committee comprised of local agencies and individuals who meet every two months to share information and collaborate on activities and events targeting youth who live in the Malton community. This year the Malton Youth Network focused on the following activities:

The Lincoln M. Alexander Secondary School Inclusion Project – a program directed towards at-risk students as a result of school suspension.
• The Peel Police Youth Intervention and Monitoring Program
• Malton Stewardship Day
• Peel Peace Campaign
• Malton Environmental Stewardship Program

Youth Education and Safety Program

The Youth Education and Safety Team (Y.E.S.) is a group of youth who work with a co-ordinator from Brampton Safe City and a Region of Peel Public Health Nurse to develop safety events or initiatives to educate their peers or members of the general public about youth safety issues.

Each year, the co-ordinator recruits 45 youth, aged 14 to 18 years old, in three groups of 15, to participate in up to 60 hours of safety-focused training and community service activities. The activities that the groups completed this year were a Body Image/Self-Esteem Survey, a Web site called Teen Scene Investigation (TSI)! and a group presentation on drugs and alcohol, bullying and self-esteem for a youth violence focus group organized by Councillor Gael Miles. Additionally, a health and safety trivia board game was created based on the Jamaican game of Ludy.

Youth Net Peel
By Youth for Youth

Youth Net is an empowering mental health promotion program by youth for youth. They strive to increase awareness and decrease the negative stigma regarding mental health issues.

Youth Net also aims to make present mental health services more youth appropriate, facilitate early intervention for mental illness and help youth develop connections with a safety net of professionals and a support net of peers.

The primary way in which Youth Net achieves its goals is by hosting discussion groups that are one and a half hours in length with eight to 12 youth participants. This school year, Youth Net hosted 38 focus groups at Lincoln Alexander Secondary School and offered volunteer work with their Youth Advisory Council through secondary school, college and university student placements.

Youth Net is a collaborative project of the Canadian Mental Health Association Peel Branch and other community agencies including Peel Public Health, funded by the United Way of Peel Region and an Ontario Trillium Foundation grant.
Square One Youth Centre

The Square One Youth Drop-in Centre (SOYC) is a great place for youth to go after school. Located in the Square One Shopping Mall, the centre’s mission is to provide a venue and opportunities for youth to realize their full potential. Some activities and programs the youth centre offers include Leadership Training, Resume Writing, Girl Talk, Movie Night, Sports and Recreation and Retail Training, which includes a co-op program.

As a fully-funded organization, the SOYC has a steering committee that assists in developing a strategic direction and discusses a variety of issues that will assist the youth coming to the centre. A Health Promotion Officer from Peel Public Health sits on the committee and provides the SOYC feedback from the public health perspective and assists them in making community connections.

For more information, please visit creditvalley.com/community/square_one/youthcentre.htm.
Partnering to Improve the Health of Students