



School Health

Durham Region Health Department
Health & Social Services Committee
September 7, 2023



Ontario Public Health Standards

- The [Ontario Public Health Standards: Requirements for Programs, Services, and Accountability \(OPHS\)](#):
 - Specify the mandatory health programs and services provided by boards of health.
 - Identify the minimum expectations for public health programs and services.
- As per the OPHS, the board of health shall examine the complex interplay between individual, family, school, and community/societal factors to develop programs and services to reduce burdens associated with substance use and mental health.



Ontario Public Health Standards - Guidelines

- The OPHS and its Guidelines provide direction to boards of health:
 - [Substance Use Prevention and Harm Reduction Guideline.](#)
 - [Tobacco, Vapour and Smoke Guideline.](#)
 - [Mental Health Promotion Guideline.](#)



What is a Healthy School?

- A comprehensive approach to health in order to affect individual health behaviours and to improve the environments where children, staff and parents live and learn.



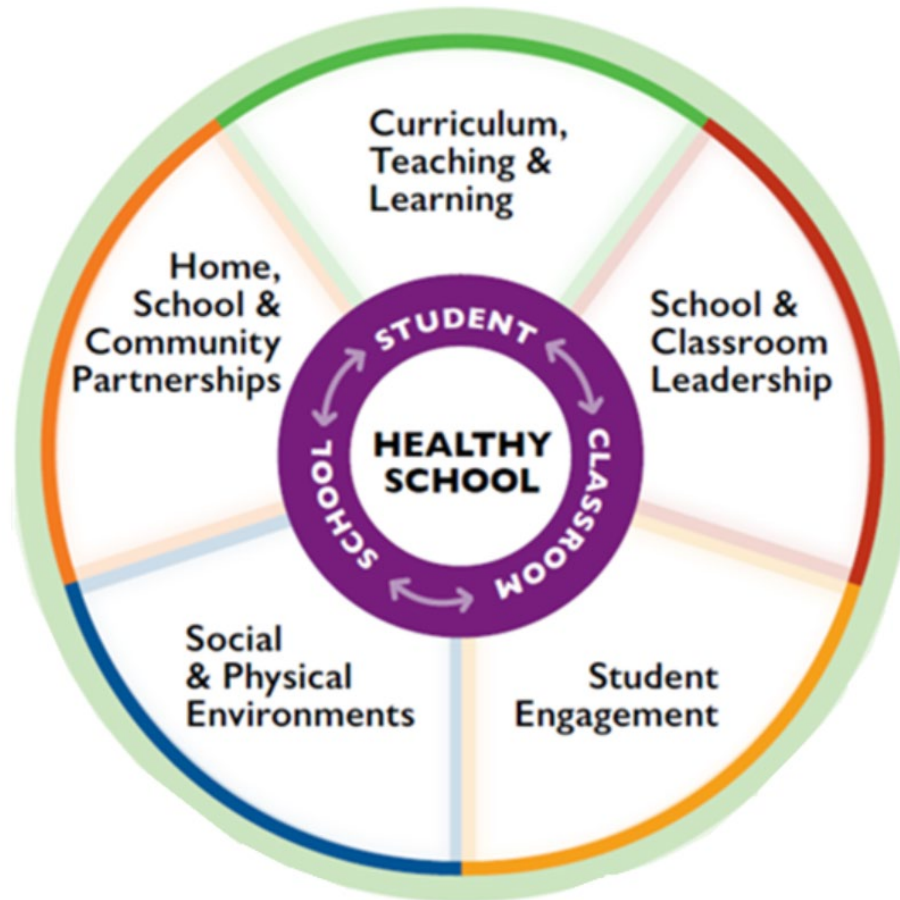


Comprehensive School Health

- An internationally recognized approach to supporting improvements in students' educational outcomes while addressing school health in a planned, integrated, and holistic way.
- This whole-school model builds capacity to incorporate well-being as an essential aspect of student achievement. Actions address four distinct but inter-related components that comprise a comprehensive school health approach:
 - Social and physical environment
 - Teaching and learning
 - Healthy school policy
 - Partnerships and services



Foundations for a Healthy School





Durham Region Health Department Approach

School Health
Action Teams

Youth
Engagement
Initiatives

Curriculum
Support

Parent Council
Meetings

Safe School
Committees

ISPA
vaccinations

Vision
Screening



Local Trends

- Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUHS) - a population survey of Ontario students in Grades 7 through 12.
- According to OSDUHS, from 2009 to 2017:
 - There was a significant decrease in the rate of early alcohol use among Durham Region secondary school students.
 - There was no statistical difference in the trend of early alcohol use between Durham Region and the rest of Ontario.
 - There was a significant decrease in the rate of past year alcohol use among Durham Region students.
 - In 2017, Durham Region students reported similar rates of trying alcohol, cannabis, and cigarettes, when compared to Ontario.
 - In 2017, students' daily use of e-cigarettes was lower than provincial rates.



Local Trends – cont'd

- Between 2017 and 2019, past year e-cigarette use doubled among Ontario students in Grades 7 to 12.
- Among high school students, consuming cannabis edibles increased significantly from 2017 to 2019.
- Since 2009, there was a significant increase in the rate of fair to poor self-reported mental health among Durham Region students.
 - There was no statistical difference in the trend of fair to poor self-reported mental health between Durham Region and the rest of Ontario.
- From 2015 to 2017, there was a significant increase in the rate of fair to poor self-reported mental health in Durham Region students.



Initiatives in Schools

- Work to address substance use risk and protective factors to prevent substance use or delay the age of initiation of substances.
- [“Not an Experiment”](#) escape room activity.
- Brief Contact Interventions (BCI) for educators.
- [Durham Youth Drug Awareness Conference](#).
- Collaborate with school board mental health leadership teams.
- [School Mental Health Ontario](#) materials and resources.
- Implement TAMI (Talking About Mental Illness).
- Participate on school board mental health and well-being committees.
- Promote and support educators with implementing [School Mental Health Ontario](#) materials and resources.



Questions

Becky Wall, RN, BScN

Program Manager,
Population Health Division

Durham Region Health Department

T. 905-441-7711 ext. 3255

becky.wall@durham.ca

