

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENTAL OPPORTUNITIES



Introduction

The social environment in the school for health and physical activity promoting behaviours of its personnel is an important consideration for schools. This can include the availability of training and developmental programs that help enhance the activity behaviours of the staff and, potentially, through role modeling, of the students. This section explores the availability of health promotion programs, information, training, and certification available to school personnel. The data are analyzed by region of school locale, student population size, and other school demographics such as setting, type, language and general income distribution of the students' families. This analysis also compares trend data over time where possible and concludes with policy and program recommendations.

Availability of health promotion programs for staff

Schools can promote healthy living to both physical education staff and other faculty by offering a variety of supportive programs. Such programs might include those for healthy weight management, promoting and supporting active commuting, incorporating physical activity into everyday life, and so on. About 54% of all schools provide such programs, with 36% offering these to all staff members and 18% offering to physical education staff only.

Region Schools in Manitoba, Nova Scotia, and Quebec are more likely than other schools to indicate that they offer health promotion programs only to their physical education staff, while those in New Brunswick are more likely than those in other provinces to offer such programs to all staff.

Student Population Size Larger schools are more likely than smaller schools to provide health promotion programs to physical education staff only; indeed, 36% of the largest schools (those with 1000 or more students) indicate this, compared to only 10% of the smallest schools (those with less than 200 students). While there are generally few differences in terms of student population size and offering programs to all staff, the largest schools are significantly less likely than other schools to do so.

School Setting There are no significant differences among inner city, urban, suburban, rural, or schools in other locales in providing health promotion programs to staff.

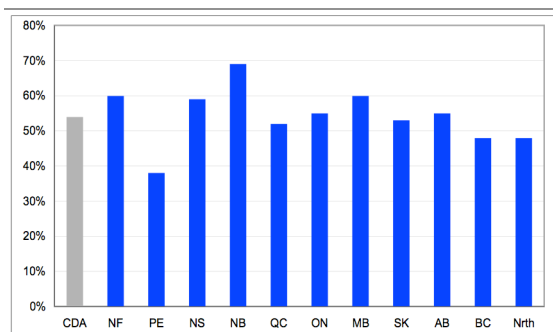
School Type Public schools are somewhat more likely than other schools to offer health promotion programs, both to physical education teachers only and to all faculty members.

Estimated Family Income There are no significant differences between schools in terms of the reported family incomes of students and offering staff health programs.

Language There are no significant differences among English, French, bilingual, or other language classification of schools in providing health promotion programs to staff.

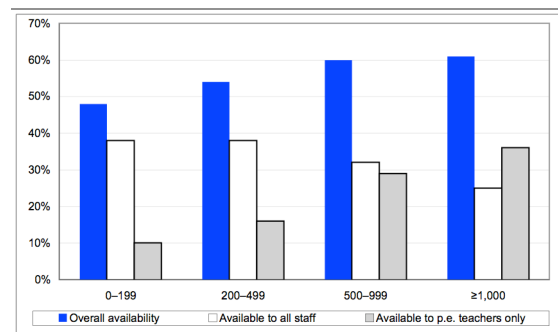
Trends There appears to be a considerable increase over the past 5 years in the proportion of schools that indicate that they provide staff with a health promotion program. However, it is important to note that this difference may be due to a slight change in the manner in which this question was asked (asked separately for *all staff* and for *physical education staff only* in 2006 but with no distinction in 2001).

HEALTH PROMOTION PROGRAMS
Trends, 2001-2006



2001 & 2006 Survey of physical activity in Canadian schools, CFLRI

HEALTH PROMOTION PROGRAMS
By student population size



2006 Survey of physical activity in Canadian schools, CFLRI

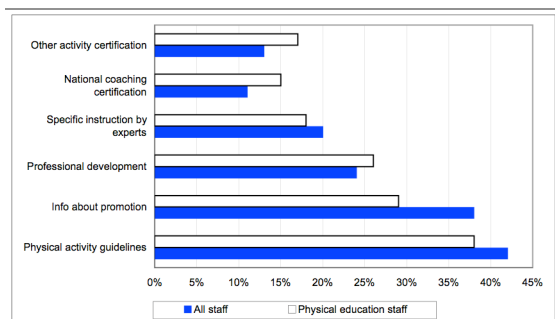
Availability of physical activity resources for staff

Schools can assist staff in encouraging and supporting students to be more active by providing their staff with training and resources, such as physical activity guidelines, information on methods of promotion, opportunities for professional development, specific instruction from recognized experts, and various types of certification. In terms of information, physical activity guidelines are a frequently offered resource to staff, with 42% of schools offering these to *all staff* and 38% offering them to physical education staff only. Approximately two out of five (38%) schools offer information how to promote physical activity through various media (including workshops, in-services, videos presentations) to all staff, while 29% offer this to *physical education staff only*. Regarding professional development, close to one-quarter (24%) of schools provide opportunities for ongoing professional development on active living or physical education by trained personnel to *all staff*, while a similar amount (26%) provide such opportunities to *physical education staff only*. Outside expert instruction (by instructors and other types of fitness professionals) on how to promote active living is available to *all staff* at one in five schools, and to *physical education staff only* at an additional one in five schools. Certification programs appear to be much less accessible, with only 11% of schools offering national coaching certification to *all staff* (15% to physical education staff only), and 13% offering other types of physical activity or sport certification to *all staff* (17% to physical education staff only).

Region Schools in Alberta, British Columbia, and Ontario are more likely than other schools to provide physical activity guidelines to *all staff*, while schools in Nova Scotia are less likely to do so. Schools in Manitoba, Newfoundland, and Nova Scotia are more likely to provide such guidelines to their *physical education staff only*. Alberta and British Columbia schools are more likely to provide promotional information to *all staff*, while Nova Scotia schools are again less likely to do so. Schools in Manitoba and Nova Scotia are more likely to provide this information only to their *physical education staff*.

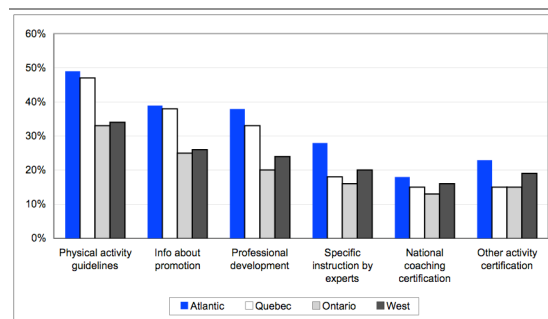
Schools in Alberta and British Columbia are more likely than other schools to offer opportunities for professional development to *all staff*, while schools in Manitoba are less likely to do so. Schools in Manitoba and Nova Scotia are more likely than other schools to provide such opportunities to their *physical education staff only*, while schools in British Columbia and Saskatchewan are less likely to do so. New Brunswick schools are more likely to indicate the availability of instruction by outside experts to *all staff* members, while Manitoba and Nova Scotia schools are more likely to indicate that such instruction is available to their *physical education staff only*.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY RESOURCES
All schools



2006 Survey of physical activity in Canadian schools, CFLRI

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY RESOURCES
Physical education staff only



2006 Survey of physical activity in Canadian schools, CFLRI

Availability of physical activity resources for staff (cont'd)

Region (cont'd) Manitoba and Saskatchewan schools are more likely than other schools to offer coaching certification programs to *all staff* members, and Manitoba schools, alongside New Brunswick schools, are also more likely than others to offer these programs only to *physical education staff*. Schools in Saskatchewan are more likely to offer other types of certification to *all staff*, while schools in Manitoba are more likely to offer these other types of certification to their *physical education staff only*.

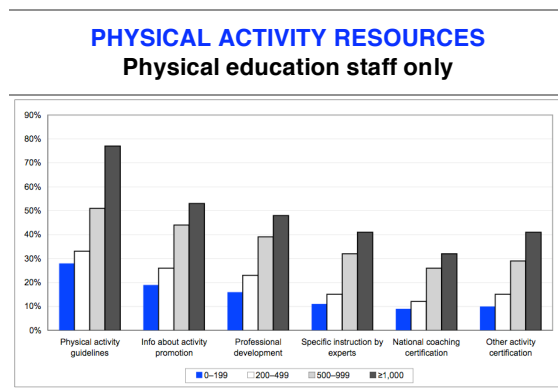
Student Population Size Larger schools are more likely than smaller ones to provide guidelines for physical activity, information on promoting activity, opportunities for professional development, instruction by outside experts, coaching certification, and other types of certification to their *physical education staff only*. The largest schools (those with 1,000 or more students) are also more likely to offer coaching certification programs to *all staff* members.

School Setting and type There are no significant differences among inner city, urban, suburban, rural, or other schools or between public and non-public schools in providing physical activity resources to staff.

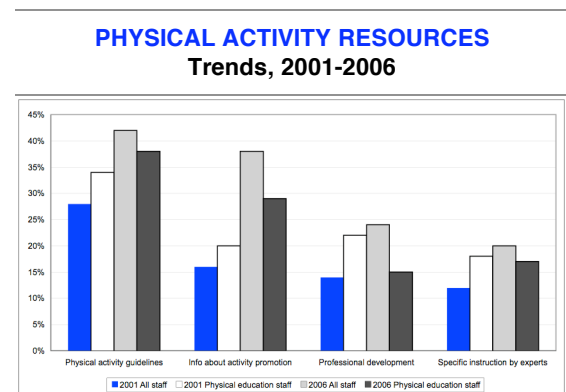
Estimated Family Income There are no significant differences between schools who provide physical education resources to staff by the estimated family incomes of attending students.

Language There are few significant differences between schools in terms of language when examining the availability of physical education resources, with the exceptions of French schools being less likely than English or bilingual schools to provide *all staff* with information on how to promote physical activity, and being less likely to offer opportunities for professional development to *all staff*.

Trends Similar to the availability of health promotion programs, the proportion of schools indicating that resources and training opportunities are available for *all staff* has increased substantially over the past 5 years whereas the availability for physical education staff solely has stayed fairly stable. The pattern that appears in 2001 where larger schools are more likely than smaller schools to provide training and developmental opportunities to physical education staff only persists in 2006.



2006 Survey of physical activity in Canadian schools, CFLRI



2001 & 2006 Survey of physical activity in Canadian schools, CFLRI

Summary of section

In Canada, the provision of programs and training development varies widely in schools.

- 54% of schools provide school personnel with health promotion programs: 36% offer these to all staff members and 18% offer to physical education staff only.
- 42% of schools offer physical activity guidelines to all staff and an additional 38% offer them to physical education staff only.
- 38% of all schools offer information how to promote physical activity through various media to all staff, while another 29% offer this to physical education staff only.
- 24% of schools provide opportunities for ongoing professional development on active living or physical education by trained personnel to all staff, and 26% more provide this to physical education staff only.
- Outside expert instruction (by instructors and other types of fitness professionals) on how to promote active living is available to all staff at 20% of schools, and to physical education staff only at another 19% of schools.
- 11% of schools offer national coaching certification to all staff, while 15% offer to physical education staff only; 13% offer other types of physical activity or sport certification to all staff, while an additional 17% offer to physical education staff only.

There is considerable regional variation among schools providing these types of programs and training for their staff. Generally speaking, larger schools are more likely than smaller schools to provide programs and training for their personnel.

Discussion, Implications and Recommendations

Participation of school personnel in health promotion programs at school may have an important impact on students, particularly with few qualified physical education teaching specialists being responsible for physical activity delivery. Research described in this section indicates that 54% of all schools in Canada provide such programs, with 36% offering these to all staff members and 18% offering to physical education staff only. Research has shown that health promotion programs have a positive effect on school employees by:

- improving employee recruitment, morale, retention, and productivity; and,
- reducing risk related behaviours and factors, illness, work-related injuries, absenteeism, compensation and disability days, and health care and insurance costs.²³

In addition to the benefits listed above, school health programs can also contribute to the health of students through school employees who are able to demonstrate or role model health promoting behaviours to students. The Directors of Health Promotion and Education (in press) in the United States suggest a number of actions when establishing or enhancing health programmes for school employees.^{24,23} For example,

- Obtain support by school district administrators;
- Establish a varied team (administrators, unions, community, etc.) in the development of the program and identify an individual to coordinate the program;

- Collect pre- and post-program data to evaluate the program;
- Develop a plan with measurable goals and objectives, timelines, budget, responsibilities, and evaluation measures;
- Promote awareness of the program;
- Initiate the program;
- Offer incentives to motivate the program;
- Identify and allocate resources (financial, staff, etc.) to implement the program; and,
- Adapt the program based on evaluation.

The social environment in the school for health and physical activity promoting behaviours of school faculty and staff, promoted through personnel training, is also an important consideration for schools. A review of published research, theory, and practice, by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the United States suggests recommendations for school and community programs when promoting physical activity to youth. In this review, one recommendation stresses the importance of appropriate training for school and community personnel in the area of physical activity so that they are adequately able to provide proper and appropriate instruction for skill development and convey the importance of lifelong activity. Indeed, research has shown that training can have a positive effect on quality, as physical education specialists teach longer lessons, spend increased time in skill development and provide more moderate and vigorous physical activity than regular classroom teachers.²⁵ Clearly the use of physical education specialists is an important issue and is discussed further in another section of this report. However, data from this section of the report reveal that only about one-quarter of schools in Canada provide opportunities for professional development to staff. Even fewer provide expert instruction. Research from the U.S. has shown that school staff that work collaboratively with outside facilitators can assist in developing action plans and implement health promotion activities.²⁶ The development of a quality school health promotion program for students can be hindered by a lack of teachers' pre-service and in-service training and professional development.²⁷

This lack of training is also apparent when it comes to providing school personnel in Canada with certification for coaching. The efficacy or confidence of the coach can affect their own attitudes and behaviours as well as those of the athletes under their supervision.²⁸ Coaching education programs can play an important role in the confidence building of the coach. In Canada, this type of program is offered through the Canadian Coaching Association's National Coaching Certification Program (see http://www.coach.ca/eng/certification/nccp_for_coaches/index.cfm) which holds its objective of creating positive sport experiences. This program is in the midst of changing from a theory-based program to a 'competency-based approach', keeping in mind the type of coach and environment in which they coach. Data in this section indicate that roughly 15% of schools offer national coaching certification or other types of physical activity or sport certification to their personnel.

Increased awareness of mentoring programs to assist school personnel in professional development and training that are currently available may be useful to schools. Canadian examples include the:

- Canadian Coaching Association's Online Mentoring Program for women coaches (see <http://www.coach.ca/eng/women/mentor/index.cfm>) which is intended to provide a forum for female coaches to exchange ideas with experienced coaches.
- Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance's (CAHPERD) online mentoring program to physical and health education teachers and 'ask the expert program' (see <http://www.cahperd.ca/eng/about/join.cfm>).

Moreover, teachers can be encouraged to observe more experienced teachers in order to receive "hands-on" experience in specific strategies for activity and sport and to get direct feedback from these experienced individuals. In addition, CAHPERD also provides workshops on issues relating to physical and health education, quality school health, intramural recreation, dance, and school sport to schools and boards, education ministries, and parent councils (see http://www.cahperd.ca/eng/physicaleducation/qdpe_workshops.cfm). They also provide pre-service training regarding Quality Daily Physical Education (see http://www.cahperd.ca/eng/physicaleducation/qdpe_service.cfm).