

# Comprehensive School Community Health

## ***What is Comprehensive School Community Health?***

The framework for Comprehensive School Community Health (CSCH) is internationally recognized for supporting improvements in students' educational outcomes while addressing school community health in a planned, integrated, and holistic way. CSCH enhances what already happens in the classroom and motivates the whole school community through actions that encompass four integrated components providing a strong foundation for school community health:

- High Quality Teaching & Learning
- Healthy Physical Environment
- Supportive Social Environment
- Community Engagement & Partnerships

The intent is to harmonize actions in all four components to support and inspire children and youth to realize their full potential as learners and as healthy, productive members of society. As a result, the health of the community as a whole may also be strengthened.

## ***What does Comprehensive School Community Health Do?***

Comprehensive School Community Health:

- recognizes that healthy children and youth learn better and achieve more;
- understands that schools can directly influence students' health and behaviours;
- encourages healthy choices, and promotes students' health and well-being;
- incorporates health and wellness into all aspects of teaching and learning;
- links and aligns health and education issues and opportunities;
- thrives with the participation, support, and engagement of families and the whole community.

## ***Why do we need Comprehensive School Community Health?***

In the school, CSCH facilitates improved student achievement and positive behaviours. CSCH encourages and supports the development of children and youth in becoming physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually healthy for life.

The goals of CSCH are:

- to promote health and wellness;
- to provide equitable opportunities that address disparities and contribute to academic success;
- to intervene to assist vulnerable children and youth;
- to help support those who are already experiencing poor health;
- to prevent specific diseases, disorders, and injury.

Research has shown that CSCH is an effective way to embrace the interdependence between health and educational outcomes that last a lifetime.

**Health and Education are interdependent; the equation is a simple one:**

**Better Health = Better Learners**

## Different Terminology - Same Ideas

The term “*Comprehensive School Community Health*” is used in Saskatchewan. In other jurisdictions the approach may be known as “*Comprehensive School Health*”, “*Health Promoting Schools*” or “*Coordinated School Health*” and its four integrated components may be expressed in different ways; however, the underlying concepts are the same as they are all based on the World Health Organization’s *Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion* (1986).

<b>When We Say</b>	<b>We Mean</b>
<b>High-Quality Teaching &amp; Learning</b>	<p><b><i>High-Quality teaching and learning includes:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provincial curricula and related resources that are culturally relevant and developmentally appropriate.</li> <li>formal learning experiences and informal learning opportunities that support a sense of personal competency, self-efficacy, and social responsibility;</li> <li>a wide range of opportunities to learn, practice, experience, and demonstrate understanding, confidence, and motivation for a healthy balanced life; and,</li> <li>planned professional and informal learning opportunities for school and community participants to strengthen CSCH.</li> </ul>
<b>Healthy Physical Environment</b>	<p><b><i>A safe and healthy physical environment includes:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the school building and grounds, routes to and from the school, and materials and equipment used;</li> <li>policies, procedures, and regulations regarding the health and safety of children and youth, (e.g., air quality, nutrition, physical activity, pandemic planning, recycling, etc.); and,</li> <li>access to and inclusion of well-balanced nutritious food, opportunities for physical activity, universally available extra/co-curricular activities, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Supportive Social Environment</b>	<p><b><i>A supportive social environment includes:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a positive impact on student learning;</li> <li>a welcoming, caring, and inclusive environment;</li> <li>high quality relationships and leadership among and between staff, students and community in the school environment;</li> <li>relationships that influence and are influenced by the family, cultural perspectives, and the entire community;</li> <li>support for formal practices such as policies, rules, and extra-curricular opportunities that support all four areas of health and well-being (i.e. mental, emotional, physical and spiritual); and,</li> <li>informal role modelling, peer support, leadership, nurturing families, and communities.</li> </ul>
<b>Community Engagement &amp; Partnerships</b>	<p><b><i>Community engagement and partnerships support and promote:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>student, staff, and community learning, health, and well-being;</li> <li>reciprocal relationships that share resources and services within the school community; and,</li> <li>the context, awareness, development, and appreciation of the peoples of Saskatchewan.</li> </ul>

The CSCH approach promotes health within and beyond the school through collaborative school community partnerships, encouraging values, skills, behaviours, and supportive environments that foster a healthy community for children, youth, their families, and neighbours.