

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

FROM: Christopher Mackie, Medical Officer of Health

DATE: 2014 October 16

SUMMARY INFORMATION REPORT FOR OCTOBER 2014

Recommendation

It is recommended that Report No. 061-14 re Information Summary Report for October and the attached appendices be received for information.

Key Points

- Healthy Communities and Injury Prevention Team continues to provide input into the development of the Ontario Cycling Strategy.
- Eating breakfast is associated with positive academic outcomes; however, literature shows that as children get older breakfast consumption declines. Be Brighter with Breakfast has increased breakfast consumption by 6% over the past two years in participating schools.
- Middlesex County Schools participate in Farm Safety Days. A Public Health Nurse (PHN) has been trained as an Assistant Coordinator by the Progressive Agriculture Foundation for Farm Safety Days in Middlesex County.
- The Healthy Living Champions Award, offered to schools in Middlesex-London, complements the comprehensive healthy schools approach used by PHNs on the Child Health Team. In the 2013-14 school year, 53 schools received the award.
- The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care requires Health Units to implement the NutriSTEP preschool screen. Staff members have developed an implementation plan.

Background

This report provides a summary of information from a number of Health Unit programs. Additional information is available upon request.

Ontario Cycling Strategy

In January 2013, the Board sent correspondence to the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) in support of an Ontario Cycling Strategy ([Report 004-13](#)). Most recently, MTO released [#CycleON Action Plan](#) identifying two key commitments that align with two of the five strategies in the Ontario Cycling Strategy:

1. Invest \$10 million over three years to help municipalities improve cycling infrastructure
2. Provide stakeholder partners with funding to develop and enhance cycling skill training programs.

Evidence shows that appropriate infrastructure is essential to increasing cycling participation and improving cycling safety. As well as infrastructure improvements, cycling skills training, bicycle handling and knowledge of the rules of the road as per the Highway Traffic Act are also key strategies to improve safe cycling practices. The Health Unit will be supporting these two commitments and recommending that the second commitment be broadened to educate both drivers and cyclists.

Be Brighter With Breakfast

The Young Adult Team launched the Be Brighter with Breakfast initiative in Middlesex-London in 2012-2013 school year. Be Brighter with Breakfast is aimed at increasing breakfast eating patterns among secondary school youth. During the first year of implementation, students in grade 9 reported a 3% increase in breakfast consumption while the second year indicates an additional 3% of youth having breakfast prior to coming to school. During the 2013-2014 school year, intentional education about breakfast was provided to

the grade 10 students in participating schools. Activities that occurred during the 2013-14 school year included:

1. Boost your Brain with Breakfast Social Media initiative targeted at secondary school parents
2. School wide youth engagement activities related to breakfast (e.g. breakfast grams, Iron Chef Competition, Vegetable and Fruit Carnival, The Amazing Vegetable and Fruit Chase)
3. 8 cross curricular lesson plans related to breakfast are now available on the Health Unit [website](#).

Progressive Agriculture Farm Safety Days

[Progressive Agriculture Safety Day](#) provides education and training to make farm life safe and healthier for children, families and the communities. Farm Safety Day in Middlesex County is a yearly event held in the school setting with a focus on educating 8-13 year old children on several safety issues. Safety topics are not only farm related but are based on the community needs. Approximately 200-250 students and teachers are reached yearly. Middlesex County Farm Safety Day has been a yearly event for over 13 years and is currently lead by The Middlesex Federation of Agriculture Farm Safety Committee takes a lead role along with several community partners including the Middlesex-London Health Unit. A PHN acts as a Liaison between the Federation and the schools and assisting with planning and coordinating the actual event. She also acts as the Assistant Coordinator to ensure there are the trained individuals on sight for the day of the event. For more information on Farm Safety Days please visit [Progressive Agriculture](#) online.

Healthy Living Champions Award 2013-2014

The [Healthy Living Champions Award](#) (HLC) engages elementary school communities in Middlesex-London to create opportunities for children to be active, make healthier food choices and be in a supportive school environment that makes it easier for them to embrace healthy living. The Award complements the comprehensive Healthy Schools work carried out in City and County schools. The Award is an effective way to move schools toward being healthier places to learn and play.

During the 2013-2014, the Award process was redesigned to support on line documentation and electronic submission of the Award by all schools. In addition, and based on stakeholder feedback, the Award was also revised to include a mental well-being component. Of the 53 schools that were successful in receiving the Award, 32 received Gold, 15 received Silver and 6 received Bronze. Each school will receive a plaque and a monetary incentive to recognize their achievement. Funds received by schools are used to create a more supportive environment through the purchase of resources to encourage physical activity or food literacy. The financial support of London Life – *The Key to Giving*, Thames Valley District School Board, London District Catholic School Board and the Middlesex-London Health Unit is gratefully acknowledged.

NutriSTEP

The NutriSTEP Preschool Screening tool is a 17-item questionnaire designed for parents to assess their child's eating habits and identify nutrition risk. Integrating this tool into our community has been added to the requirement of the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care accountability agreement. The dissemination of this tool in Middlesex-London will contain both a universal and targeted approach. The universal approach is built upon the use of [Nutri-eSTEP](#). This tool will be promoted to parents and caregivers of children 3 to 5 years of age across Middlesex-London. The Nutri-eSTEP platform sits on the Dietitians of Canada website. At present, the working group is exploring a process to collect local metrics via Nutri-eSTEP. The targeted approach includes the distribution of paper copies of the tool to parents of 3-5 year olds. Health Unit staff and volunteers will administer the tool, provide a score, and share related information and appropriate referrals as needed. The screen will be promoted and made available by the PHNs in select schools and daycares. A copy of the NutriSTEP Preschool Screen is attached ([Appendix A](#)).



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