

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

FROM: Bryna Warshawsky, Acting Medical Officer of Health

DATE: 2013 February 19

HEALTHY LIVING CHAMPIONS AWARDS FOR 2011-2012

Recommendation

It is recommended that Report No. 020-13 re “Healthy Living Champions Awards for 2011-2012” be forwarded to the Thames Valley District School Board, the London and District Catholic School Board, the Conseil scolaire de district des écoles catholiques du Sud-Ouest, the Conseil scolaire Viamonde and participating private schools.

Key Points

- The Healthy Living Champions Award embraces the concept of Comprehensive School Health as it relates to physical activity and healthy eating.
- Through the Healthy Living Champion Committee, the process involves community partners in the development, funding and implementation of the Award in elementary schools.

Background

The Healthy Living Champions (HLC) Award was introduced to elementary schools in Middlesex-London in 2007. This Award recognizes elementary schools in London and Middlesex County for their commitment to promoting physical activity, healthy eating and related safety measures. It is based on the Ministry of Education’s ‘Foundations for a Healthy School’ framework and addresses the components of Comprehensive School Health which include: 1) High Quality Instruction and Programs; 2) Healthy Physical Environment; 3) Supportive Social Environment; 4) Community Partnerships. To be eligible for the Award, a minimum of 5,000 points must be achieved in each of the healthy eating and physical activity strategies with a minimum total of 15,000 points.

School Participation

For the 2011-2012 school year, 73 elementary schools in Middlesex-London (see [Appendix A](#)), representing various socioeconomic and geographic areas, were successful in receiving the Award; this represents a participation rate of over 50% of elementary schools. Thirty-nine (39) of these schools were from the Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB), 26 from the London District Catholic School Board (LDCSB), 2 from the Conseil scolaire de district des écoles catholiques du Sud-Ouest, 2 from Conseil scolaire Viamonde and 4 were private schools. Forty-seven (47) schools achieved the Gold level (25,000+ points), 21 achieved the Silver level (20,000 + points) and 5 reached the Bronze level (15,000 + points).

Recognition

This year, all successful schools received a monetary reward in accordance with their level of achievement, as well as, physical activity equipment and plaques with seals to display in their schools.

Programming Related to Healthy Living Champions Awards

With leadership from their Public Health Nurse, the HLC Award encourages schools to promote and engage in healthy eating and physical activity initiatives. Included with the Award's criteria is a list of activities that schools can choose to engage in, such as: "Milk Madness", "Outrageous Oranges", non-food item fundraising, intramural physical activities, and staff role-modeling. Schools can also develop their own creative strategies such as "Helmet Safety Campaigns", "Growing Vegetables", and "Flash Mob Dances".

Funding

The HLC Award program is fortunate to receive financial support from four sources:

- London Life – The Key to Giving (\$5,000);
- Thames Valley School Board (\$2,000);
- London District Catholic School Board (\$1,000);
- Middlesex-London Health Unit – The Health Unit provided \$4630.20 to purchase sports equipment which was divided among the winning schools to support efforts in increasing student physical activity during intramurals, classroom outdoor activities, etc.

The funds received for the program were used to provide a cheque for each school reflecting their level of achievement.

Future Steps

The HLC Committee is responsible for overseeing this initiative. The Committee is chaired by a Public Health Nurse from the Child Health Team and its members include public health nurses, a registered dietitian and representatives from the TVDSB and the LDCSB. Modifications to the Healthy Living Champions Award are made annually. This year changes simplified the Award documentation/application process for the 2012/2013 school year and point allocations were adjusted to encourage a more comprehensive approach (e.g., an approach that included role modeling and peer leadership programs). The Committee continually strives to make the award more comprehensive and allow for greater flexibility in addressing other health topics. A survey was conducted in March 2012 with participating schools. The results showed that the schools were very supportive of the award and student leadership opportunities.

Conclusion

The Healthy Living Champions Award continues to engage 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 continues to create partnerships between schools and community agencies and is an effective way to move schools toward being healthier places to learn and play.

This report was prepared by Ms. Roxanne Emery and Ms. Denise Walsh, Public Health Nurses, and Ms. Sue Schnurr, Acting Manager, Child Health Team.



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This report addresses the following requirement(s) of the Ontario Public Health Standards: Chronic Disease Standard 3 and 11, Child Health Standard 4, 5 and the Foundational Standard.