



GUIDELINE	
Health promotion in schools	
Scope (Staff):	Community health staff
Scope (Area):	CAHS-CH, WACHS

This document should be read in conjunction with this [DISCLAIMER](#)

Aim

To provide nurses with a health promotion framework for working with schools to advocate for the health and wellbeing of children and young people.

Risk

Non-adherence to this guideline could result in missed opportunities to increase health and wellbeing outcomes across the school community.

Background

The World Health Organization (WHO) developed a framework for health-promoting schools during the 1990s and has continued to support this through their *Global school health initiative*.¹ The concept of the health-promoting school is international in its scope, with many countries around the world, including Australia, working on programs which support schools and their communities in better health actions. This model is used at local, national, regional and global levels. In Western Australia, the Department of Education (DOE), Child and Adolescent Health Services-Community Health (CAHS-CH), WA Country Health Services (WACHS) and the Western Australia Health Promoting Schools Association (WAHPSA) endorse this same model.

Schools play a major role in developing health knowledge, attitudes and skills, and influencing health behaviours. In addition, schools provide an opportunity to reach all children, regardless of socioeconomic background, ethnicity or geography.^{2,3}

There is evidence to support that students who are healthy and happy learn better and that improved educational outcomes have a positive effect on health outcomes for children and young people.⁴

The 2018 School-aged Health Service Review Report and Recommendations states that community health services for school-aged children, young people and their families are based on the principles of primary prevention. These principles underpin community health service delivery, and support the *Health Promoting Schools Framework* as a model for improving health outcomes for school-aged children and young people.⁵

Definitions

The terms health promotion and health education are often used interchangeably, however, they are different concepts which are defined below.

Health Promotion is the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health. It includes a combination of educational, organisational, economic

and political actions. In a school setting Health Promotion can be defined as any structured or planned activity undertaken to improve and/or protect the health of all school users, such as policies and environmental changes.⁶

Health Education comprises opportunities for learning, involving some form of communication designed to improve *health literacy*, including improving knowledge, and developing *life skills* which are conducive to individual and *community health*. In the school setting this would include activities such as the nurse working in collaboration with teachers on education sessions related to the health curriculum.⁷ Health Education is one component of Health Promotion.⁸

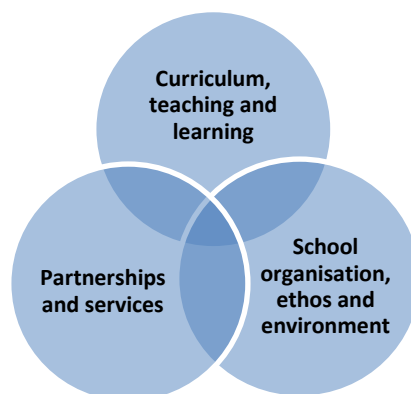
Key Points

- The use of the *Health Promoting Schools Framework* is encouraged when supporting school-based health promotion programs.
- Nurses are encouraged to work with school staff, and staff from other government or non-government agencies when appropriate, as part of a collaborative approach to developing health promoting behaviours in schools.⁹
- Nurses' knowledge of local and school specific health and wellbeing needs can assist schools with identifying school health promotion priorities.
- Nurses are encouraged to be familiar with the Department of Education's *Behaviour and Wellbeing* policies, which include the *Healthy Promoting Schools Framework* as a model for promoting health in schools.

A whole school approach

A whole-school approach brings together school leaders, students, staff, families and the broader community to work in partnership to support and promote the health and wellbeing of the school community. It integrates what is taught through the curriculum with the school's physical environment, culture, policies and procedures, and with partner organisations and the services they, and others, may offer.¹⁰ Whole of school health promotion programs are most likely to be effective when driven by the school as these programs will likely reflect the school's priorities and have the support to create sustainable change.¹⁰

The *Health Promoting Schools Framework* is a model which considers the broad health needs of all school community members (students, parents/caregivers, school staff and the wider community). These health needs are addressed collaboratively using a combination of strategies linked to the three interrelated components of the framework which is illustrated in the figure below: **Curriculum, teaching and learning**; **School organisation, ethos and environment**; and **Partnerships and services**.^{2, 3, 11}



Examples of how nurses can use the Health Promoting Schools Framework are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Strategies for implementing the *Health Promoting Schools Framework*

HPSF Domain	Sample action	Example CHN role in sample action
*Curriculum, teaching and learning	<p>Support classroom activities at the request of the teacher to contribute specialist nursing knowledge.</p> <p>Facilitate access to health related resources and information to assist teachers in delivery of teaching and learning.</p>	<p>Support relationships and sexuality curriculum using evidence-based Growing and Developing Healthy Relationships (GDHR) resources at the request of the teacher.</p> <p>Clarify contemporary drug issues with SDERA and provide reference information to teaching staff.</p>
School organisation, ethos and environment	<p>Identify health promotion policies within the school community.</p> <p>Encourage participation and engagement of students and staff in health promotion action.</p>	<p>Advocate for changes or development of health policy with school committees.</p> <p>Encourage the school to become a Mentally Healthy School with BeYou.</p>
Partnerships and services	<p>Be informed about external services, programs and resources which can add value to the health and wellbeing of students, staff and the broader school community.</p> <p>Be a key resource to school-based health and wellbeing committees.</p>	<p>Make a time to introduce yourself to relevant health and community organisations and network with these agencies to stay updated on new developments in health areas.</p> <p>Provide health information to families about external services and providers that can meet their needs.</p> <p>Encourage the school to organise an information session with the Cancer Council or the WA School Canteen Association for parents on packing school lunchboxes.</p> <p>Participate in school-based health and wellbeing committees.</p>

*Curriculum Support

The School-aged Health Services Review report⁵ identified the following key priority areas where nurses can contribute specialist knowledge within a classroom at the request of a teacher. These include:

- Mental health and wellbeing
- Healthy lifestyle – nutrition and physical activity
- Development and growth
- Relationships and sexual health
- Alcohol and other drugs.

Any requests to provide curriculum support on topics outside these areas must be discussed with the line manager prior to attending a class. The teacher is responsible for session planning and overall content and should always be present in the classroom when the nurse is involved.

Nurses will use only approved resources identified in HealthPoint under:

- [Resources, school health](#) and
- [External links and resource.](#)

The development of additional **whole-of-session** PowerPoint Presentations is not supported. A presentation can take several hours to develop and over reliance on PowerPoint can be unengaging for learners and diminish effectiveness. As an alternative nurses could speak to particular slides in a presentation a teacher has prepared, or develop a small (3 or 4 slide) PowerPoint Presentation on the appropriate CAHS-CH or WACHS template which identifies themselves, makes a key point and provides information on where students can get further information. **All PowerPoint Presentations require line manager approval prior to delivery.**

Other options for providing information and engaging young people include:

- Props - Bring an example of what you are talking about to share and engage with the group.
- Q&A – Provide an opportunity for a question and answer session; or, link the teacher with suitable guest speakers to present in the class setting or participate in a panel of experts to answer student questions.
- Videos – Use a quick video from endorsed sites to increase audience interest.

Further information to support work

Health Promoting Schools Framework Toolkit

This Health Promoting Schools Framework (HPSF) Toolkit provides guidance on effective and evidence-based health promotion activities to support health promotion work in schools. The health promotion activities address the three domains of the HPSF for the five priority health areas.

The Toolkit recognises that the nurse is not responsible for implementing health promotion activities individually, but will work with their schools in identifying appropriate health promotion activities that meet the needs of the school which the school community can implement.

School Health Audit

An audit tool is available from the [WA Health Promoting Schools Association](#) to help assess the school environment and how it supports participation in healthy eating, mental health and wellbeing, physical activity and sun safety. It is listed in the resources at the end of this guideline. It also helps to identify areas that could be improved to encourage healthier behaviour. The audit can be adapted to address other health priority areas such as tobacco control; safe environments; sexual health and wellbeing; alcohol and other drug use.

The audit aims to prioritise measurable and attainable goals that can provide the basis for developing and implementing health initiatives. The information collected from this survey will be useful in a number of ways. It can be used to:

- identify existing health and wellbeing strategies within the school
- identify school health priority action areas
- identify potential barriers and enablers to implementing health promotion initiatives
- provide pre and post-intervention data for use in evaluation of actions.

References

1. World Health Organization (WHO). Health promoting schools: a framework for action. Geneva: WHO; 2009.
2. International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE). Achieving health promoting schools: Guidelines for promoting health in schools. Saint-Denis, France: IUHPE; 2009.
3. Western Australian Health Promoting Schools Association. Health Promoting Schools Framework: WAHPSA; 2019 [cited 2019 15 Dec]. Available from: . <http://wahpsa.org.au/about-us/>
4. Faught EL, Gleddie D, Storey KE, Davison CM, Veugelers P. Healthy lifestyle behaviours are positively and independently associated with academic achievement: An analysis of self-reported data from a nationally representative sample of Canadian early adolescents. PLoS ONE. 2017;12(7):e0181938.
5. Child and Adolescent Health Service. School-aged Health Service Review - Report and Recommendations. Perth: 2018.
6. Rainburger B. Contemporary Health Promotion in Nursing Practice. Second ed. Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning; 2017.
7. World Health Organization. Health Promotion Glossary. Geneva 1998.
8. World Health Organization. Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion. Geneva: WHO, 1986.
9. International Union of Health Promotion and Education. Facilitating Dialogue Between the Health and Education Sectors to Advance School Health Promotion and Education. France: 2012.
10. State of Victoria (Department of Education and Training). Victorian School Nursing Program Guidelines. Melbourne: State of Victoria (Department of Education and Training); 2019.
11. International Union of Health Promotion and Education. Promoting Health in School: From evidence to action. France: 2010.

Related policies, procedures and guidelines

The following documents can be accessed in the **Clinical Nursing Manual** via the [HealthPoint](#) link, [Internet](#) link or for WACHS staff in the [WACHS Policy](#) link

School-aged health services

School-aged health services - primary

School-aged health services - secondary

The following documents can be accessed in the [Department of Education Policies](#)

[Behaviour and wellbeing](#)

Related CAHS-CH resources

The following resources can be accessed from the [CAHS-Community Health Resources](#) page on HealthPoint


Health Promoting Schools Framework Toolkit

MOU between DOE, CAHS and WACHS for the provision of school health services for students attending public schools: 2020-2021

Related external resources

[WA Health Promoting Schools Association \(WAHPSA\)](#) - WAHPSA advocates and supports a whole school approach to health and wellbeing. The main health areas covered are Food and Nutrition; Physical Activity; Mental Health and Wellbeing; Health and Safety (Sunsmart, Injury prevention; Relationships and sexual health education). They also provide a **school health audit tool** that can be used to assess the school environment and how it supports participation in healthy eating, mental health and wellbeing, physical activity and sun safety.

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with a disability.

Document Owner:	Nurse Co-Director, Community Health		
Reviewer / Team:	Clinical Nursing Policy Team		
Date First Issued:	December 2014	Scheduled Review Date:	14 May 2023
Last Reviewed:	14 May 2020 (Amendment/s: November 2020)		
Approved by:	Community Health Clinical Nursing Policy Governance Group		
Endorsed by:	Executive Director Operations	Date:	14 May 2020
Standards:	NSQHS Standards:  1.7, 1.27		
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