





# Executive Summary

[Heart Healthy Schools \(HHS\)](#) is a program designed for elementary schools that aims to improve health outcomes by introducing students to ways of leading healthier lives. This program was developed by the Heart and Stroke Foundation of New Brunswick (HSFNB) in 2015, and is therefore exclusive to this province. The program focuses on four main themes:

Discover Water

Joyful Movement

Rest & Recharge

Explore Vegetables & Fruit

Combined, these behaviours are important for healthy development of children and youth, and play an imperative role in the prevention of chronic diseases such as heart disease and stroke.

Understanding that every school is unique, the program allows each school to personalize the program to fit their specific needs, with help from a program coordinator. Schools will dedicate one week, any time in the school year that fits their calendar to highlight each important behaviour. During this week, posters that are provided in the welcome package will be hung up, and schools are encouraged to also add upcoming activities to their announcements and parent communications. Schools will incorporate activities that reinforce the theme week message through experiential learning such as role playing, taste testing, growing, and exploring habits in a way that emphasizes fun for their health.



***HHS gives you all the resources you need to be able to participate easily and tie it in to your school curriculum seamlessly. There's no reason not to do it!***

- School Champion



# Always Improving

The Heart and Stroke Foundation of New Brunswick is dedicated to providing programs that continue to meet or exceed best practice.

Last fiscal, a review of the literature and best practices indicated that number-based messaging and tracking of health behaviours were no longer recommended; instead favouring learning through experiential, exploratory activities. As a result of these findings, the program shifted away from the “5-2-1-0” messaging and introduced theme weeks to help students get curious about healthy habits to support their growing minds and bodies. Further, the message of “0 Sugar Sweetened Beverages” does not lend itself to the moderation approach that Canada’s Food Guide supports. Post-pandemic it was also determined that it was important to include a mental health piece. The updated program theme weeks are as follows:

**5 Fruits and Vegetables → Explore Vegetables & Fruits**

**2 Hours or Less of Screen → Time Rest & Recharge**

**1 Hour of Physical Activity → Joyful Movement**

**0 Sugar Sweetened Beverages → Discover Water**



Students blowing bubbles to learn new deep breathing techniques as a part of their Rest & Recharge theme week.

In addition to program modifications, HHS also welcomed a new website platform. Although exciting to have a new streamlined website for our users, the website launch was delayed resulting in a later start up time. Despite these initial hiccups, this website will be a major improvement moving forward!

***“We felt that whenever we had a question or request, it was immediately taken care of by your staff. We appreciated that very much.” - School Champion***

Thirdly, new window decals were sent out with the cheques at the end of the year, for schools to show off their participation to visitors and students. This was in lieu of the large banner that had been provided in previous years. Schools will now receive a window decal each year they participate, and add to the collection!



## Money Matters

This year, the program was sponsored by Saint John LNG, New Brunswick Nurses Union, and the Fundy Community Foundation. The program was also successful at receiving two grants from TELUS, and the Reinsurance Group of America.

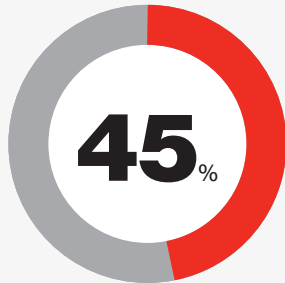
With the help from these grants, and our sponsors, an online chat room/forum was created for the school champions. This function will help instill a sense of community for the champions and will allow them to share successes, ideas, and challenges directly. Having this functionality into the website has been something that has been requested by our champions in recent years. Funding was also utilized to support the development of a new module focused around living a smoke/vape free lifestyle called “Experience Clean Air”. Other new collateral such as updated posters were also created for the coming year to keep the program fresh.

The program came in just under budget, and spent \$29,542.50 in total.

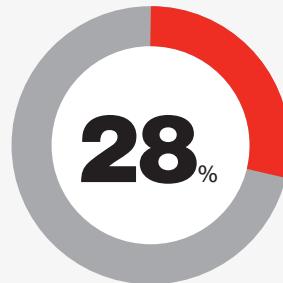


# On Target

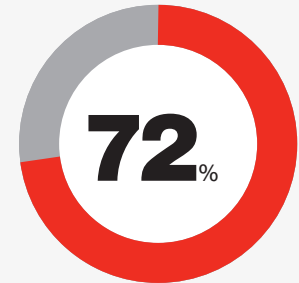
This year, the registration goal was 50 schools, 58 schools ended up registering, exceeding the goal at 116%. It was also predicted that the program would see almost 8000 students participate, and this goal was exceeded by 185% by welcoming 14,409 students to the program, with 7,103 of those being new (accounting for a new cohort of kindergarten students, and new schools).



**New Schools**



**French Districts**



**English Districts**

A full breakdown on number of students, and school districts can be found in Appendix A: Target Breakdown, these targets were set based on previous registration numbers, and per capita values.



**95 SCHOOLS HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN THE PROGRAM SINCE 2015**



**OVER 25,000 STUDENTS HAVE BEEN REACHED SINCE 2015**



**MORE THAN \$60,000 HAS BEEN REINVESTED BACK INTO SCHOOLS THROUGH GRANTS**



**THIS YEAR, SCHOOLS COMPLETED 153 WEEKS OF MISSION-RELATED ACTIVITIES**



***Following the Heart Healthy topics gave the school monthly topics that extended into lessons, activities, assemblies, and extra-curricular learning.***

- School Champion

## Wrapping it up

At the end of the HHS program, schools submit a final survey used to inform annual improvements; the survey has both qualitative and quantitative questions. Schools stated that since the program, they have implemented some long-term changes such as:

- **scheduling in daily brain breaks**
- **planning physical activity breaks**
- **incorporating new fruits and veggies into the cafeteria menu**
- **adding in water reminders for students to stop and take a drink**



Students taking a water break, adding in fruit for flavour!

Based on feedback from the schools, more 'free of cost' activities were added into the guidebook for the upcoming year.

A program goal is to receive a 4/5 rating for each of the theme weeks, and 7/8 quantitative measures met this goal. Although the Rest & Recharge week was still found to be exciting amongst the kids, it did not reach our goal. Additional fun activities will be incorporated into the Rest & Recharge week for next year and it is anticipated this will meet the program goal next year.



Below are the specific ratings for how the champion felt the level of engagement was for students in their school out of 5, with 5 being very enthusiastic:

**Explore Vegetables & Fruits: 4.4**  
**Joyful Movement: 4.6**  
**Discover Water: 4.2**  
**Rest & Recharge: 3.8**



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***Students really loved this. The program was very easy to implement and worth it to see the students so engaged.***

- School Champion

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Below are how useful the champion felt like these topics were to the educators out of 5, with 5 being very useful:

**Explore Vegetables & Fruits: 4.7**  
**Joyful Movement: 4.7**  
**Discover Water: 4.7**  
**Rest & Recharge: 4.5**



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***Involving our students and staff in this comprehensive health program has made for a more positive learning and working environment for all!***

- School Champion

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**APPENDIX A: TARGET BREAKDOWN**

<b>Heart Healthy Children and Youth F23</b>			
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Yearly Target</b>	<b>% to target</b>
<b>Number of Schools Registered in District</b>			
Anglophone South	22	11	200.0%
Anglophone West	12	11	109.1%
Anglophone East	3	6	50.0%
Anglophone North	5	5	100.0%
District Scolaire Francophone South	8	7	114.3%
District Scolaire Francophone South North West	4	4	100.0%
District Scolaire Francophone Sout North East	4	6	66.7%
<b>Total Schools</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>116.0%</b>
<b>Number of Students</b>			
Anglophone South	5575	1790	311.5%
Anglophone West	2238	1790	125.0%
Anglophone East	513	1320	38.9%
Anglophone North	1133	545	207.9%
District Scolaire Francophone South	3297	1245	264.8%
District Scolaire Francophone South North West	964	390	247.2%
District Scolaire Francophone Sout North East	689	700	98.4%
<b>Total Students</b>	<b>14409</b>	<b>7780</b>	<b>185.2%</b>