YOUTH
PLANNING
BOOKLET

Canada.ca/school-health-grant

Healthy Living

To promote and protect the health of canadians through leadership, partnership, innovation and action in public health. —Public Health Agency of Canada

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

We would like to thank and acknowledge the youth who are seeking out this guide in their efforts to impart a positive impact on their communities. Your commitment to health, well-being, and your community is greatly appreciated.

The purpose of this guide is to help students develop their initial ideas for a project or grant application, and then expand on these ideas and put them into action. Although this guide was originally developed for the **Public Health Agency of Canada's School Health Grant for Youth**, it can also be used to help youth plan for other types of funding opportunities or projects.

You can use the following information and ideas to direct your project, keeping in mind that what is presented in this document is not an exhaustive list of possibilities. You are highly encouraged to use your own experience, creativity and skills, and conduct your own research in the development of your project.

2 PROJECT IDEAS

These ideas all originated with the School Health Grant for Youth in mind. Therefore, much of this guide's examples are related to the youth grant's four priority areas: substance use and related harms, mental health and well-being, healthy eating and nutrition, and physical activity.

If you are using this Booklet for a project outside of the School Health Grant for Youth, you may wish to consider other priority areas to meet the specific needs of your school and/or community. Use this list to help you with the brainstorming process. Note that many of these activities can be done in-person or virtually.

+ Organize a "come out and play" intermural sports program or virtual race.

+ Identify and fill a gap in intermural and school sport programs in order to create more opportunities for physical activity.

  › Start a martial arts workshop or learn-to-dance collective, or find a way to promote another sport that is under or unrepresented in your school.

+ Invite community members with lived and living experience with substance use to your school to speak with students on preventing substance-related harms.

+ Start a peer-meeting group for students who may be struggling with isolation or feelings of loneliness, or who may generally benefit from peer support.

+ Organize a themed poet night, for example 2SLGBTQI+ mental health.

+ Start an inclusive sports program that is accessible for youth with disabilities.

+ Teach your peers about healthy eating and **Canada's Food Guide** through activities such as a cooking workshop, interactive discussions or presentations, or a healthy eating campaign on a particular food guide topic (for example, making water the drink of choice).

+ Increase the availability of foods aligned with **Canada's Food Guide** at your school by designing and implementing a food program, such as a school garden or healthy snack pantry.

+ Fill the need for a new club or social group. This should fit the needs for students at your school.

  › Start a gender & sexuality alliance, writing club, photography club, nature club, etc.

+ Organize a virtual game night within your school or community to reduce feelings of isolation or loneliness and to help build social connections.

+ Organize a book exchange or regular book club that promotes the mental health benefits of reading.

+ Organize a program on substance-related harms, focused on ensuring the availability of life-saving tools like naloxone kits in your school and surrounding community.

  › Consider inviting a local pharmacist, first responders, or St. John Ambulance to give a presentation on how to effectively recognize and respond to a suspected overdose.

+ Organize a workshop that counters common misconceptions and stereotypes about substance use and people who use drugs, to provide a safe space for reducing stigma.

+ Start an arts-based group or paint night for youth.

+ Host a body positivity presentation.

+ Host a guided meditation event that educates students on the benefits of mindfulness.

+ Organize a nature walk in your community. This could be a recurring event, or you could invite a local organization or individual to do a guided walk.

+ Organize a Geocaching or similar event in your community with prizes.

+ Conduct a research project on vaping in your school and how it affects students.

Need help organizing your thoughts while brainstorming your project? See **Appendix A**.

Need help figuring out how to expand an idea? Don't worry, we've got you covered— please see three more detailed examples in **Appendix B**.

Know your project topic but need help getting started?
See **Appendix C** for useful projects lists and tracking ideas to help your team stay on track.

3 PLANNING YOUR PROJECT

Planning is the biggest part of your project and will take the most time. It encompasses several stages from coming up with an initial concept, to brainstorming, to organizing each step before it is finally time to put plans into action. In the appendices of this guide, you will find a few more project ideas, templates and guidelines for brainstorming, organizing, and keeping track of the tasks at hand.

For the purposes of your project, you also may need to acquire space or resources from other organizations. While you may need to rent or purchase some things, you can likely access some of these resources for free through your school or community organizations. Reach out to your school administration and/or community organizations (for example, local community centres, local businesses, libraries, etc.) or your school office to see what they may be able to offer.

Tips for writing a letter or email to community organizations:

+ Reach out in advance, as soon as possible.

+ Know who you are writing to and address them by name.

+ Introduce yourself and describe your project. If you have received a grant or other funding opportunity you have been selected for, you can introduce it here.

+ Outline your goal and how the organization can help you achieve it. Include any project timelines and/or deadlines, if necessary.

+ Be polite but clear on when you require a response from the organization.

+ Offer to highlight the organization as a sponsor for your project.

4 GOVERNMENT OF CANADA RESOURCES AND TOOLS

When planning your project, we encourage you to use existing Government of Canada resources, such as the ones listed below. You may find these resources useful in developing your grant application or project (although this is not an exhaustive list):

+ **Youth Health on Canada.ca** includes more information on:
  › **Canada's Food Guide:** helps guide the healthy eating and living habits of all Canadians. This interactive guide also includes recipes and additional resources.
  › **Physical activity tips for youth:** includes ideas to stay active at home, at school, at play, whether you are inside or outside.
  › **Mental health and wellness:** learn about mental health, how to improve and take care of it, and the resulting benefits of positive mental health to help you stay healthy overall.
  › **Substance use and related harms:** find information about substances, including tobacco, alcohol, cannabis and other drugs. Learn about substance-related harms, stigma, and how to get help.
+ The **Sexually Transmitted Infections Booklet** includes information for youth on sexually transmitted infections, including prevention, symptoms, treatment, how and where to test, and more.
+ **PREVnet** is a national research and knowledge mobilization hub that brings together researchers and national organizations to build research capacity, assess youth relationship problems including bullying and dating violence, and promote evidence-based programs and effective policies across Canada to address and reduce youth interpersonal violence and promote healthy relationships.
+ The **Blueprint for Action** is a comprehensive guide that outlines approaches to preventing substance-related harms among youth, especially within school communities.

5 APPENDIX A: EXAMPLES OF PROJECT IDEAS

Virtual Escape Rooms

+ Promote collaboration and give youth the opportunity to meet new people by hosting an escape room. See which team can solve the mystery first! This event can help students connect, have fun and build team-working skills. It is also possible to host this activity virtually.

🙂 **Tip:** Use this as an orientation event to allow new students at your school to meet others!

$ Estimate the cost for the following: Escape room booking in your area, potential transportation costs, gift cards for winning team. If virtual: virtual meeting platform costs, virtual escape room codes.

Start a Collective

+ Start a Collective for students in your school who have shared interests. The Collective can also include snacks and games for students to enjoy and have some fun with their peers. Students can come together weekly to share personal experiences and have the support of their classmates. This is a flexible project that can be built to suit the needs of your school. Reach out to peers to do some preliminary research that can tell you more about how this project can best meet your school's needs! For instance, some youth that may benefit from a Collective include: 2SLGBTQI+ youth, immigrants and/or newcomers, students with disabilities, or youth who identify as members of a racialized group.

🙂 **Tip:** You should be able to secure a classroom at lunch or after school for your Collective to meet with your school's approval.

$ Estimate the cost for the following: Board games, snacks.

Exam Week Healthy Snack Program!

+ This weeklong program will provide simple and nutritious snacks to students throughout the day during exam week. You can use grant funding to purchase and prepare snack kits that can be given to students during exam week. Remember, all of these ideas can be adapted to fit the needs of your school and community, so there may be a better time in your school to run this program outside of exam week!

$ Estimate the cost for the following: food, paper lunch bags/containers, supplies, compostable cutlery.

6 APPENDIX B: PROJECT BRAINSTORMING TIPS

Tips for Brainstorming

+ Listen to everyone's ideas and give them equal consideration. In a brainstorming session, no idea is unrealistic.

+ Give everyone an opportunity to speak and offer their input.

+ Brainstorming in a group setting helps gather more ideas and makes it easier to consider all the pros and cons of a particular suggestion.

+ If your project is targeted towards a specific demographic (i.e. a book club for elementary school students), take the time to include them in the brainstorming process.

+ Create a table with the following headings and brainstorm as many ideas possible until you run out of them:

What are some issues within your school or community that call you to action?

For example: bullying, isolation, mental health, etc.

How does this issue make you feel?

For example: angry, sad, frustrated, motivated, inspired, energized, etc.

What do you think your school or community needs to help with this issue?

For example: fundraising, regular volunteers, raising awareness, an event that brings people together, etc.

7 APPENDIX C: PROJECT LISTS AND TRACKING

Once you have decided on an idea for your project consider developing a table or even a simple checklist to help your team stay on track.

GENERALIZED WORK PLAN CHECKLIST

+ Define your Goal, or what you are trying to achieve with your project.

  😊 *Tip:* Look up S.M.A.R.T. Goals and use them to help define the parameters of your project!

+ What is the audience you want to reach?

+ Are consent forms required for any part of your event (i.e., if photos/videos are being taken of participants that may be shared, if students are leaving school property for an event, for "high-risk" events, etc.)?

+ Permissions: Are there special permissions needed at your school for this type of event?

+ Consider if there are any accessibility requirements.

+ Communicate clearly the type of event, as certain types of events have specific needs. You can also note if the event is in-person or virtual.

+ Part of your checklist should include any items you need to purchase. For example, snacks, beverages, name tags, first aid kit, equipment required for games and activities, or any other resources you need for your event. Many of these items can be purchased or received as donations in the days leading up to your event, but it is still good to have your checklist ready well in advance.

+ Keep track of all donations, where they came from and anything that needs to be returned.

PLANNING AND ORGANIZING CHECKLIST

+ Some steps will take longer and require more planning than others. Consider confirming room rentals and merchandise orders or rentals at least 4–6 weeks in advance.

+ Your school and community are your number one resource. Space and items may be donated or available for free through your school, local community centres, and more. Reach out to the list of suggested resources below but don't forget to consider sources that may be unique to your region!

  › Schools

  › Community centres

  › Parent-Teacher Organizations

  › Local businesses

  › Social media

LOCATION/VENUE CHECKLIST

+ Do you need to book a location? What is the capacity? Are permits needed?

+ Do you need a deposit for the venue location?

+ Determine if the following are needed: Tables, Chairs, Lighting, Wi-Fi, Project-specific equipment (for example, sound/music system, sports equipment, board games, cooking utensils, craft supplies, etc.)

DAY-OF BREAKDOWN CHECKLIST

Your breakdown checklist for the day-of should include an itinerary of everything that is happening, who from your team is involved with each step and when and where each teammate is needed throughout the event. Start with when volunteers or your team should first arrive, make sure everyone is aware of their assigned tasks, and that all supplies are listed and accounted for. You can look online for a wide variety of helpful templates to help with this.

PROJECT PROMOTION CHECKLIST

Consider the following resources to promote your event and add your own!

+ Posters (schools, community centres, local businesses, sports arenas)

+ School or Parent-Teacher Association Newsletter

+ Local or school newspaper advertisement

+ Radio advertisement

+ Events segment on your local news

+ School announcements (if your event is for more than just your own school, see if you can also submit an announcement for other schools in your area!)

+ Social media

REFLECTION CHECKLIST

Reflection following the event is important. Consider holding a reflection session or survey with your participants, team, and any sponsors.

+ Create a post-event survey for your participants. You can use this survey to measure all kinds of things, such as knowledge gained, whether they felt the event met their needs, and suggestions to improve future events.

+ Debrief with your team by hosting a final team meeting or sharing a different survey with your volunteers, mentors, and teammates.

+ Send a recap of the event to your sponsors and donors, including thank you letters.