

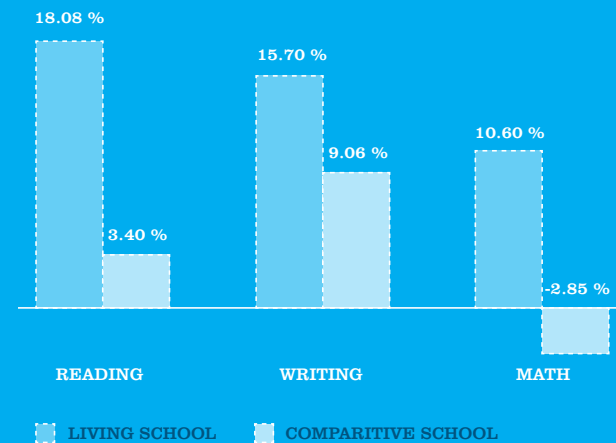
“Prior to changing our school policies to reflect healthier choices, a health lesson on making wise choices from the four food groups could be interrupted by an announcement to ‘Get your hot dog at lunch’ or ‘Don’t forget to bring in your extra chocolates from fundraising’. Now, we have students who line up anxiously awaiting hot homemade soup at lunch and nobody asks about hot dogs at all.”

New Lowell Public School,  
New Lowell

### LIVING SCHOOLS HAVE A POSITIVE AFFECT ON LEARNING.

Each year, the Educational Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) conducts province-wide assessments at the primary, junior and secondary levels to measure student achievement against curriculum expectations. Recent studies examined the effect of Living School on Grade 3 and Grade 6 EQAO test scores – and showed significant improvement, especially in comparison to non-Living Schools.

### AVERAGE TEST SCORE IMPROVEMENT AFTER ONE YEAR.



“The best thing about being a Living School is seeing the success of our students and staff – the minds and bodies being more attentive and alert which leads to academic, personal, social and emotional success.”

St. Mary’s French Immersion,  
Sault Ste. Marie

### WHAT MAKES LIVING SCHOOL WORK?

Comprehensive school health programs are not new. However, the Living School process brings it to life.

Through provincial coordination, consultation support and creating an action plan that addresses each school community’s distinct needs, the Living School framework enables a school to follow its own priorities. So, you’ll see that a Living School in Oakville will be very different than one in Shanty Bay. But the common thread among all Living Schools is the success achieved.

Living School does not replace existing programs or services, it integrates them by providing a fertile environment wherein other health promotion initiatives can flourish. By sharing responsibility, Living School maximizes the strengths and resources of the entire community so no one sector is overburdened.

“The Living School Framework transforms school culture, learning, health and safety all at the same time – instead of viewing them as independent.”

Dr. Martin Shain,  
Principal Investigator, Living School

### LET’S BUILD ONE IN EVERY COMMUNITY.

Just think – if every school was a Living School, our goal to reduce long-term disease by encouraging a generation of healthy Ontarians could be realized.

The framework has been established. The plan has been built. The success stories can be found throughout the province.

To learn how you can play a part, contact Ophea at 1 888 446 7432 or visit [www.ophea.net](http://www.ophea.net).

YOU SHOULD SEE WHAT KIDS PICK UP AT A LIVING SCHOOL



Ophea (Ontario Physical and Health Education Association) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to supporting school communities through advocacy, quality programs and services, and partnership building.

Ophea is led by the vision that all children and youth will value, participate in, and make a lifelong commitment to active, healthy living.



living school

## IT TAKES A WHOLE COMMUNITY TO RAISE A CHILD.

Living School is a comprehensive school health initiative that brings together the entire school community – students, parents, teachers, administrators, school boards, public health professionals, sport and recreation organizations, community coalitions, local businesses, and municipal governments — to support and enhance active, health living for children and youth.

Using the school environment as a hub, Living School motivates, supports and assists school communities in addressing the risk factors for chronic disease and obesity – physical inactivity, unhealthy eating, tobacco use and alcohol and substance abuse.

To do so, the Living School framework follows a **four-phase process** that involves community consultation, declaration and commitment, school community action planning and implementation, and finally, evaluation and celebration. This process is used to shape policies and launch activities in **four action areas**:

- **Effective Health Policies and Guidelines**
- **Quality Health and Physical Education Curriculum**
- **Healthy and Supportive School Community Environments**
- **Health Promoting School Community Programs and Services**

Because of its comprehensive and consultative approach, the Living School framework is also able to support other issues specific to a school community's individual needs – such as bullying, self-esteem and school safety.

Open to children, to families, to the community and to new opportunities, Living Schools are alive – not only with academics, but also with play, sport and activity. Each one of the 34 Living School's across Ontario is as unique as the community it serves. However they all have created an environment to exercise the body as well as the mind.

“The best thing about being a Living School is observing the paradigm shift in the students' thinking as they become more aware of better choices that they can make. It will be interesting to see the effect on the youngest students as they progress through the grades.”

John McCrae Public School,  
Markham

## BRINGING A LIVING SCHOOL TO LIFE.

Ophea has invested in the development of a comprehensive set of resources and tools that have helped communities implement Living School across Ontario:

**Awareness & Promotion** – Ophea created a Living School Charter that brings partners together under a shared vision and establishes commitment. A social marketing campaign has been developed to generate awareness in Living School communities.

**Support** – A Provincial Living School Consultant from Ophea visits each Living School community to help get them started. Tools can also be accessed online on the Living School Information and Resource Hub.

Ophea provides Living Schools with initial funding for any start-up costs. While initially \$67 per student, if Living Schools expand throughout the province, the investment needed will be reduced to only \$8 per student.

**Recognition** – Ophea coordinates an annual, province-wide Live it Up challenge to promote and raise the profile of Living Schools in the community and media. Ophea also provided every Living School with a Living School flag, as well as t-shirts, certificates and plaques to celebrate their achievements.

**Research & Evaluation** – Ophea conducts ongoing research on the success of Living Schools and their impact on students, schools and the community.

## LIVING SCHOOLS AFFECT A CHANGE IN ATTITUDES, A CHANGE IN CULTURE AND A FEELING OF SUCCESS.

A qualified research team evaluated the 2004/2005 Living School Pilot Project. Although no significant results were expected after only one year, in fact, real improvements could be seen right away.

Data collected from community consultations as well as student and staff surveys showed that, one year later, Living School had resulted in:

- **Increased appreciation of the value of community partners and how to effectively work with them**
- **Increased belief in the ability of the school community to influence student health behaviours and attitudes**
- **Increased physical activity levels and trends toward healthier eating behaviours among both students and teachers**
- **Increased student attentiveness and alertness, increased student attendance and a reduction in behavioural issues**
- **Increased sense of student belonging, attachment and safety in the school community**

“Our community values our Living School as a source of education for the children and their families about leading a balanced and active life. Our parents tell us that their children are changing the habits of the family because of the messages they are receiving at school and the modelling they are experiencing each day. Our children have incorporated these habits into their daily routine.”

West Oak Public School,  
Oakville

“There is a greater sense of pride in the school, as staff and students take pride in eating healthier foods and in being more physically active. This pride has led to more pride in the cleanliness of the school, desks, lockers, hallways and restrooms. Being a Living School really promotes a positive message and a positive school culture.”

St. Andrew Catholic School, Oakville

## LIVING SCHOOLS HAVE A HEAD START WHEN IT COMES TO ACHIEVING DPA TARGETS.

In 2005, the Ontario Ministry of Education announced that every elementary student in Ontario must participate in a minimum of 20 minutes of daily physical activity (DPA) as part of the Health and Physical Education Curriculum.

By the fall of 2006, surveys of students and school principals showed that Living Schools were able to implement DPA into their curriculum more effectively and more quickly. In fact, 62% of Living Schools indicated they would achieve their DPA targets within the school year. Only 20% of comparative schools reported they would be able to reach DPA targets.

A high percentage of students in Living Schools also report participating in DPA in non-school settings, indicating that these physical activity behaviours are carrying over into children's lives outside of school as well.

“Living School laid down the necessary infrastructure for DPA in that it root-feeds the health culture of the school. Without this, DPA is like a graft that may or may not take.”

Living School Principal, from the 2006  
Living School / DPA Research Study