



**Public Health**  
**Santé publique**  
SUDBURY & DISTRICTS

December 30, 2022

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Directors of Education, Local School Boards  
Sports and Recreation Organizations  
Early Learning Centres

Dear Recipient:

**Re: Physical Literacy for Healthy Active Children**

At its meeting on October 20, 2022, the Board of Health carried the following resolution #29-22:

*WHEREAS being physically active every day helps children and youth perform better in school, learn new skills, build strong muscles, improve blood pressure and aerobic fitness, strengthen bones and reduce the risk of depression<sup>i</sup>; and*

*WHEREAS the implementation of stay-at-home orders, closures of schools, and indoor and outdoor spaces to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 is the reduction of physical activity levels in all age groups<sup>ii</sup>; the percentage of youth meeting the Canadian physical activity recommendations for children and youth fell from 50.8% in 2018 to 37.2% in 2020<sup>iii</sup>; and*

*WHEREAS the Government of Canada's national policy document Common Vision for Increasing Physical Activity and Reducing Sedentary Living in Canada: Let's Get Moving identifies physical literacy as the foundation for an active lifestyle<sup>iv</sup>. Studies show that children who have high physical literacy scores are more likely to meet national physical activity or sedentary behaviour guidelines<sup>v</sup>; and*

*WHEREAS physically literate individuals have been shown to have the motivation, confidence, physical competence,*

**Sudbury**

1300 rue Paris Street  
Sudbury ON P3E 3A3  
t: 705.522.9200  
f: 705.522.5182

**Elm Place**

10 rue Elm Street  
Unit / Unité 130  
Sudbury ON P3C 5N3  
t: 705.522.9200  
f: 705.677.9611

**Sudbury East / Sudbury-Est**

1 rue King Street  
Box / Boîte 58  
St.-Charles ON POM 2W0  
t: 705.222.9201  
f: 705.867.0474

**Espanola**

800 rue Centre Street  
Unit / Unité 100 C  
Espanola ON P5E 1J3  
t: 705.222.9202  
f: 705.869.5583

**Île Manitoulin Island**

6163 Highway / Route 542  
Box / Boîte 87  
Mindemoya ON POP 1S0  
t: 705.370.9200  
f: 705.377.5580

**Chapleau**

34 rue Birch Street  
Box / Boîte 485  
Chapleau ON POM 1K0  
t: 705.860.9200  
f: 705.864.0820

**toll-free / sans frais**

1.866.522.9200

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*knowledge and understanding to value and take responsibility for engaging in physical activities for life<sup>vi</sup> and these skills help them make healthy, active choices that are both beneficial to and respectful of their whole self, others, and their environment<sup>vii</sup>; and*

*WHEREAS the school community offers one of the best opportunities to improve the quality of sport and physical activity participation for children and youth; and*

*WHEREAS the Ontario Public Health Standards require that: “community partners have the knowledge of and increased capacity to act on the factors associated with the prevention of chronic diseases and promotion of wellbeing, including healthy living behaviours, healthy public policy, and creating supportive environments.”<sup>viii</sup> This includes knowledge of the importance and impact of physical literacy on increasing physical activity participation thereby reducing the risk of chronic disease;*

*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts encourage all area school boards, sport and recreation organizations, and early learning centres to work to improve physical activity levels among children and youth across Sudbury and districts, including through collaboration with Sport for Life Society, Active Sudbury and Public Health Sudbury & Districts, agencies that provide comprehensive physical literacy training to teachers, coaches, recreation providers and early childhood educators; and*

*FURTHER THAT a copy of this motion be shared with the Sport for Life Society, Active Sudbury, local members of Provincial Parliament, all Ontario Boards of Health, and area school boards, early learning centres and sport and recreation organizations.*

As we look ahead to increase physical activity and to decrease sedentary behaviours in the population; the need for improving physical literacy is greater than ever before. It is crucial that we embrace physical literacy as a catalyst for children and youth to be active and healthy. We know that *it takes a village to raise a child* and the collaboration of multiple sectors to embed physical literacy development in plans, programs, and policies. Therefore the Board of Health for Sudbury & Districts encourages all area school boards, sport and recreation organizations, and early learning centres across Sudbury and districts to work to

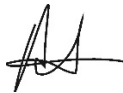
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improve physical activity levels among children and youth through collaboration with agencies that provide comprehensive physical literacy programming, including the Sport for Life Society, Active Sudbury and Public Health Sudbury & Districts.

Sincerely,



Penny Sutcliffe, MD, MHSc, FRCPC  
Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer

cc: Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health  
Loretta Ryan, Association of Local Public Health Agencies  
France Gélinas, Member of Provincial Parliament, Nickel Belt  
Jamie West, Member of Provincial Parliament, Sudbury  
Michael Mantha, Member of Provincial Parliament, Algoma-Manitoulin  
All Ontario Boards of Health  
Constituent Municipalities

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<sup>i</sup> Centre for Disease Control and Prevention. Healthy Benefits of Physical Activity for Children (2021). Taken from: <https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/adults/health-benefits-of-physical-activity-for-children.html>

<sup>ii</sup> Science Table. The Impact of Physical Activity on mental Health Outcomes during the COVID-19 Pandemic. (2022) taken from : [The Impact of Physical Activity on Mental Health Outcomes during the COVID-19 Pandemic - Ontario COVID-19 Science Advisory Table \(covid19-sciencetable.ca\)](https://www.scientable.ca/covid19-science-table)

<sup>iii</sup> Statistics Canada. The unequal impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the physical activity habits of Canadians. (2022) Taken from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/82-003-x/2022005/article/00003-eng.htm>

<sup>iv</sup> Government of Canada. A common Vision for increasing physical activity and reducing sedentary living in Canada: Let's Get Moving. (2018) Taken from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/lets-get-moving.html>

<sup>v</sup> Tremblay MS, Longmuir PE, Barnes JD, Belanger K, Anderson KD, Bruner B, Copeland JL, Delisle Nyström C, Gregg MJ, Hall N, Kolen AM, Lane KN, Law B, MacDonald DJ, Martin LJ, Saunders TJ, Sheehan D, Stone MR, Woodruff SJ. Physical literacy levels of Canadian children aged 8-12 years: Descriptive and normative results from the RBC Learn to Play-CAPL project. BMC Public Health. 2018;18(Suppl 2):1036.

<sup>vi</sup> The International Physical Literacy Association, May 2014. Taken from: <https://physicalliteracy.ca/physical-literacy/>

vii Government of Ontario HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION, 2019 | The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8. 2019 taken from: <https://preview-assets-us-01.kc-usercontent.com/fbd574c4-da36-0066-a0c5-849ffb2de96e/db4cea83-51a1-458d-838a-4c31be56bc35/2019-health-pysical-education-elem-PUBLIC.pdf>

viii Government of Ontario. (June, 2021) Ontario Public Health Standards: requirements for Programs, Services and Accountability. Taken from: [https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/oph\\_standards/](https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/oph_standards/)