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# EVER ACTIVE BULLETIN



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Happy Spring!

For those of us in the education world, this time of year can be one in which to steal a few moments of quiet reflection. The learning and socialization of teacher's conventions are past, Spring Break occurs at some point to offer a welcome respite from the hectic pace of school, coaches have a short hiatus between basketball and badminton and the spring sunshine is inviting you to pause on a bench with your eyes closed and enjoy the peace and warmth. If you are like me, thoughts tend to turn towards preparing for the end that will come all too soon. Celebrations, exams, activity days, clean-up, track meets – all require thought, preparation and action. In the midst of this beautiful chaos that is May and June, I hope you can find a few moments on that bench in the sun to consider your schools continued growth as a healthy active community.

The mission statement for EAS reads: ***The Ever Active Schools program, in partnership with Alberta school communities, will contribute to the development of children and youth by fostering social and physical environments that support healthy active lifestyles.*** Given this statement, it is crucial that we seek continued improvement to ensure true partnership and effective engagement with our member schools. As such, I offer below two upcoming opportunities for interaction and feedback within our provincial community.

### **Ever Active Breakfast of Champions: HPEC Conference 2006 in Calgary**

In recognition of the champions (this means you!) that make healthy active school communities a reality, EAS in collaboration with HPEC 2006, would like to invite you to be a part of this conference event. We have some special things planned for the breakfast including a guest speaker, recognition of your efforts as well as some fun! If you are attending conference, we would like to know - look for a special email detailing the event and bring your Energizer T-shirt (if you don't have one, then come and get one!).

### **Energizer Days: Past, Present and Future**

EAS hosted eight Energizer Days in collaboration with the Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia [www.arpdc.ab.ca](http://www.arpdc.ab.ca) in 2005. Thanks to everyone who attended and shared their enthusiasm, energy and ideas. Participants had the opportunity to network, offer peer support, learn about new resources and share ideas. To further engage your school community, plans for next years E-Days tentatively include:

- \* Expanding the participant list to include teachers, administrators, students and parents with sessions for each as well as large group activities
- \* Opportunity to focus on individual school needs within sharing ideas with all
- \* Time to plan with stakeholders for the new school year
- \* Changing the dates to be earlier in the school year (October)
- \* Adapting the format to resemble a "mini-conference"

Look for more information and dates to come in mid-May.

As always, we welcome your feedback, concerns and ideas with a view to the continued improvement mentioned above. Be sure to use some of your sunshine time to congratulate yourself on a job well done - then find someone else to help share the load!

Yours in perpetual motion,

*Doug Gleddie*  
Provincial Coordinator

## ***LIVE OUTSIDE THE BOX - STUDENT LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP***

The Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation (ASRPWF) launched the Live Outside the Box (LOTB) campaign in February 2003. The campaign targets 10-14 year olds and encourages them to increase physical activity and reduce screen time. In 2004, EAS partnered with the LOTB campaign to offer a pep rally for two schools promoting physical activity and screen time reduction. This year we were able to partner again to provide the first ever EAS / LOTB Student Leadership Workshop.



Thirteen EA member schools came together on November 16, 2005 to discuss leadership, share ideas and collectively plan for increased activity and screen time reduction at their schools. As part of the day, each school received a banner – ***Our School Chooses to LIVE OUTSIDE the BOX*** – to be displayed in their school (see the Promising Practices section of this bulletin for how to get yours!). 47 students aged 10-14 and 17 teachers came together to participate in activities and discuss leadership opportunities in schools designed to increase physical activity and reduce screen-time. As part of the day's events, students were asked for their top 5 ways to reduce screen time among their peers. A sample of student ideas are shared verbatim below sorted into three basic categories.

### **Parents need to set reasonable limits:**

- Impose a screen time limit.
- Parent regulation (other activities must be done first, responsibilities sports, volunteer work).
- Setting limits on TV time.
- Parents enforcing the rules!
- Hide the remote and take out the batteries.

### **Activity needs to include opportunity for socialization:**

- Encourage interaction/socialization with friends face to face
- Invite people to do active stuff
- Take a walk and find friends
- Encourage friends to play

### **Ideas from youth for youth to be more active:**

- Make easily accessible activities (ie: don't have to travel long distances and when it is cold outside, make good indoor activities)
- Decrease cost of sports
- More activity workshops (ie: learning about the benefits of sports)
- Join extracurricular activities
- Create teams and new games
- Start a family game night



## PROMISING PRACTICES

The three selections on this page are taken from the EAS Promising Practices document. This resource shares all the good things our member schools are doing to build and support healthy active school communities. EAS had planned to have the new and improved version of the resource for distribution at Energizer Days, however, our re-formatting and updating has taken a little longer than hoped. Thanks for your patience and we hope to have the new version on our website by May and an interactive cd ready for E-Days in 2006.

### BANNER MOTIVATION

**Equipment:** EAS / LOTB banner, highly visible place to hang it, stakeholder creativity

**Organization:** Live Outside the Box (LOTB) encourages youth aged 10-14 to get active and reduce screen time. Apply for an EAS / LOTB banner from the EAS office and use it as an incentive for youth to decrease their amount of screen time. Initial motivational ideas include:

- ☞ Have the entire school community sign the banner prior to a pep rally to kick off your LOTB initiative. Unveil the banner at the pep rally
- ☞ Students, staff and parents record their physical activity levels and screen time reduction in a log book or journal. Once levels have reached a certain point (100 hours) successful participants are able to sign the banner
- ☞ Unveil the banner at the first school community meeting of the year (Meet the Teacher). Distribute paper to collect ideas on how to reduce screen time and increase physical activity. Have your leadership students organize the information and “publish” the ideas in the school newsletter.



### AN APPETITE FOR HEALTHY CELEBRATIONS

**Equipment:** fresh fruit or vegetables, healthy snacks

**Organization:** When planning class parties or celebrations encourage and require healthy alternatives to the usual pop and chips. Options include fresh fruit, vegetable plates, whole wheat breads and crackers, real cheese and milk or juice. Use parent volunteers to help with the preparation. Survey the students in your class to find out what types of healthy food they would enjoy and plan accordingly. Consider conducting a school wide survey and sharing this information with all staff, parents, the school store and local community providers.

### DEFINITION: BULLY!

**Equipment:** 2-3 staff, administration, student leaders, class-time

**Organization:** Begin with an anonymous paper and pencil survey of all students to ask what constitutes bullying at your school. Ask for specific examples of what bully behaviour is and how students can help stop this issue. Have a team of students staff, parents and administration organize the information and share it with the school community. Ideas can include:

- ☞ put up posters describing what bullying is in the words of the students
- ☞ work with students to write and perform a drama based on the information you have collected and perform at a school assembly, parent meeting or any large school event.
- ☞ Develop a 1-2 day lesson plan for all teachers that summarizes information from the survey. Allow students the chance to react to and discuss the findings, then make a plan to move towards solutions.



## TREKKING ACROSS ALBERTA

The Trek Across Alberta Teacher's Guide supports Alberta's Centennial Project and encourages Kindergarten to Grade 6 teachers and students to explore the province through 30 sites that reflect a variety of flora, fauna, cultures and environments. Each day, using pedometers to count their steps, students will advance through a virtual tour of Alberta. Each site has a link to a relevant Alberta Community Development webpage that challenges the students with grade specific activities linked to various curricular outcomes. This resource is now available on the Alberta Education website at [http://www.educatin.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/curriculum/bySubject/physed/default.asp](http://www.educatin.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/physed/default.asp). To promote healthy, active lifestyles and support DPA, schools can purchase pedometers from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC) at website <http://www.lrc.learning.gov.ab.ca>.

## SUMMERACTIVE SCHOOL RESOURCE

The **Healthy Active School Communities** SummerActive resource has arrived in schools across the province. This resource has been compiled for teachers, administrators, parents and community leaders. Ideas and information on active living, healthy eating and tobacco reduction are arranged in sections to support the creation and support of healthy active school communities.



**SummerActive** is Canada's annual six week community based healthy living campaign. The dates for 2006 are **May 12 to June 21**. During this time, check out the following National and provincial initiatives:

- ☛ plan an event for your school, workplace or community and register on [www.summeractive.org](http://www.summeractive.org) for a chance to win prizes
- ☛ **LIVE OUTSIDE THE BOX** challenge week. Choose a week and go TV free. Visit [www.liveoutsidethebox.ca](http://www.liveoutsidethebox.ca)
- ☛ **ALBERTA ACTIVE LIVING** challenge day. Albertans are encouraged to be active for at least 30 minutes on **May 25** and register with the Be Fit For Life Centre in their area. Visit [www.befitforlife.ca](http://www.befitforlife.ca)

## SOFTBALL ALBERTA – LEARN TO PLAY

**Getting Involved** in one of North America's favorite sports is now easier and more fun than ever! The **Learn to Play Program** for five to ten year-olds has been designed to address the needs of this age group by replacing the old game of T-Ball!

This program was piloted in communities across Canada in 2003 and 2004. Since then the **Learn to Play Program** has received rave reviews from parents, kids and the Minor Softball Association. Kids can't wait for the launch of the program this spring. The primary goal of the program is make the game FUN for kids. One of the ways this is done is by providing the coaches with all the tools they need to run a successful program. Throughout the eighteen easy to follow lesson plans are games and activities that are sure to elevate the heart rates and smiles of children while challenging them in appropriate ways. Softball skills are successfully sewn together with life and team skills. The **Learn to Play Program** differs from sports like mini-soccer where only the assertive children touch the ball. Small groups are implemented to ensure that skill development is accomplished along with a healthy injection of self-confidence.

Softball Alberta along with Softball Canada is committed to making a positive difference in the lives of young people and to supporting the grassroots level of their sport.

