



PRESS RELEASE

Ministry of Education
SINGAPORE

12 November 2007

EDUCATING FOR HEALTH CONFERENCE

Celebrating LiFE

1. Over the next two days, Singapore schools will have opportunity to tap on resources and expertise from around the region, to boost their efforts in developing the health of our students holistically.
2. The inaugural *Educating for Health* (EFH) Conference will be held on 12 and 13 November 2007 at the Orchid Country Club, bringing together schools and agencies from around the region, such as Australia, Brunei, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Philippines and Thailand. The Conference serves as a one-stop platform where schools can obtain resources, seek expertise and network with one another on practical health promotion efforts.
3. Organised by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Committee for Healthy and Active Children (CHAC), the EFH Conference is the first in a series that will take place biennially. Mr Masagos Zulkifli, Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education, chairs the CHAC, an inter-agency committee which supports schools in the implementation of the Holistic Health Framework.
4. Besides catering to educators, about 180 student leaders will also participate in the EFH Conference. These student leaders will learn how they can promote holistic health and return to their schools as health ambassadors to reach out to their peers. The Conference will also feature an exhibition section, where 140 vendors will showcase their sports education programmes, providing schools with a range of programmes and resources for the development of holistic health for students.
5. While the Conference aims to help schools strengthen existing health promotion efforts, parents and the larger community are also encouraged to play their part in developing our students' total well-being. By observing a healthy diet and adopting an exercise or a sports routine, parents can serve as important role models of healthy living for their children. The larger community could also rally volunteer support to promote and organise health events for both the young and old in the community. In some schools, Parent Support Groups take an active role in promoting a sports-for-life mindset by conducting sports programmes for students and using the schools' facilities on weekends. For example, the parents at Unity Primary School organise Sunday soccer sessions for both students and parents using the school's field and equipment.

The Committee for Healthy and Active Children

6. The inter-agency CHAC was formed in January 2006 to support schools in the implementation of the Holistic Health Framework (please refer to ANNEX). CHAC aligns the health promoting efforts of the following ministries and agencies which have a stake in the health of our students. Each agency took different lead roles according to their areas of expertise in the collaborative effort:

- a. Ministry of Education
- b. Ministry of Health
- c. Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports
- d. Health Promotion Board
- e. People's Association
- f. Singapore Sports Council
- g. National Institute of Education, Physical Education and Sports Science Department
- h. Hospitals (Singapore General Hospital, Changi General Hospital and Raffles Hospital)
- i. Singapore Nutrition and Dietetics Association

7. The first CHAC chairman was Mr Hawazi Daipi, former Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education. Mr Masagos Zulkifli, Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education, took over as chairman of CHAC from June 2006. During the two-year term of service from 2006-07, the committee started a number of collaborative projects to support schools in implementing the Holistic Health Framework (HHF) by promoting and developing in students a habit of living a healthy lifestyle. These projects include the *Baseline Study for Nutrition and Physical Activity*, *Children Health Assessment and Management Project (CHAMP)* and setting up the *Portal for Physical Health*.

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Holistic Health Framework

1. The Holistic Health Framework (HHF) allows schools to bring together in a purposeful manner the key areas, programmes and processes that develop the physical, mental and social health of their students.

2. The HHF is underpinned by three guiding principles:

Total Well-Being

Total well-being encompasses the physical, mental and social health of students and not just measures of weight and fitness.

Inclusion

Inclusion advocates that every student be given opportunities to access the knowledge, and develop the skills and attitudes to live healthily.

Quality Delivery

Quality delivery involves building the capacity of teachers through professional development and engaging qualified and competent para-educators to teach holistic health effectively.

3. Schools adopting the HHF are distinguished by the following key components:

Supportive School Culture and Organisation

A supportive school culture and organisation is demonstrated by having a shared vision on health which culminates in an action plan for effective delivery and resource building.

Comprehensive and Relevant Formal and Non-Formal Curricula

A comprehensive and relevant formal and non-formal curricula is the main vehicle in the delivery of holistic health.

Synergistic Collaborations and Partnerships

Synergistic collaborations and partnerships with stakeholders supporting schools' health promoting efforts through the sharing of expertise and resources.

4. The HHF was introduced as part of the recommendation of the Review of the Trim and Fit (TAF) Programme in 2005. The goal of HHF is to broaden health promotion efforts of schools beyond obesity and fitness management by embracing the total well-being for student and developing their intrinsic motivation to lead a healthy lifestyle.

5. As HHF is for all students, schools would continue to assist overweight and underweight students in weight management and help students with ideal weight to stay fit. The focus in schools has moved beyond managing weight and fitness levels to include mental and social health – a step in the right direction towards holistic health and total well-being.