

alPHa's members are  
the public health units  
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in Ontario

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Ontario

Health Promotion  
Ontario

Ontario Association of  
Public Health Dentistry

Ontario Society of  
Nutrition Professionals  
in Public Health

Hon Liz Sandals  
Minister of Education  
22nd Floor, Mowat Block  
900 Bay Street  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1L2

July 30 2015

Dear Minister Sandals,

**Re: alPHa Resolution A15-6, Physical Literacy in Educational and Childcare Settings**

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On behalf of member Medical Officers of Health, Boards of Health and Affiliate organizations of the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHa), I am writing to introduce the attached alPHa Resolution for your consideration and action.

Ontario's Action Plan for Health Care has singled out physical inactivity as a contributing factor to chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and cancer, which are such a significant yet avoidable burden on Ontario's health care system. The Plan goes on to underscore the importance of putting government efforts into promoting healthy habits and behaviours to keep Ontario healthy.

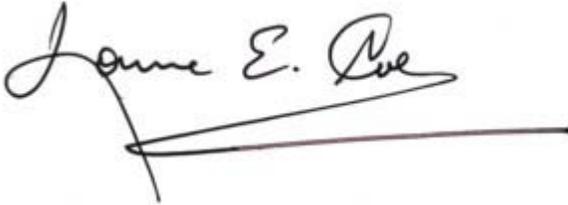
As noted in the Healthy Kids Panel report, which is the foundation of your Government's Healthy Kids Strategy, Ontario children spend at least six hours a day for fourteen years in school environments, which makes these settings ideal for promoting healthy habits that will remain with them through adulthood.

In 2011, the Ontario Society of Physical Activity Promoters in Public Health (OSPAPPH) developed a key message document and the proposed six policy recommendations to enhance development of physical literacy in educational and childcare settings. These are itemized in the attached Resolution, and have already received support from a wide range of stakeholders, including the Canadian Society of Exercise Physiology (CSEP), the Ontario Health and Physical Education Association (OPHEA), Canadian Diabetes Association, ParticipACTION, and others.

Although these recommendations lean towards the prescriptive, their aim is in fact to create a culture of physical literacy as a foundation for an active life. In our estimation, schools and child care settings are the ideal venues for ensuring that all Ontarians are equipped with the basic skills, knowledge, and behaviours needed to live healthy, active lifestyles.

We are certainly pleased that physical literacy is clearly identified as a primary goal of the revised Health and Physical Education Curriculum that is due to be implemented this September. We look forward to working with you to implement the strategies that will be required to meet that goal.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lorne E. Coe". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a long, straight horizontal line.

Lorne Coe  
alPHa President

**COPY:** Dr. David Williams, Interim Chief Medical Officer of Health  
Hon. Kathleen Wynne, Premier of Ontario  
Hon. Eric Hoskins, Minister of Health and Long Term Care  
Hon. Dipika Damerla, Associate Minister of Health and Long Term Care,  
Hon. Tracy MacCharles, Minister of Children and Youth Services  
Hon. Michael Coteau, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport,  
Martha Greenberg, Associate Deputy Minister, Health and Long-Term Care (Health Promotion Division)

**alPHa RESOLUTION A15-6**

**TITLE: Physical Literacy in Educational and Childcare Settings**

**SPONSOR: Chatham-Kent Board of Health**

WHEREAS less than 10% of Canadian children and youth are meeting minimum recommendations for physical activity and more than one-third were considered overweight or obese in 2009-2011; and

WHEREAS physical inactivity is linked to a number of preventable chronic diseases and is associated with increasing healthcare costs; and

WHEREAS individuals who are physically literate have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to lead physically active lives; and

WHEREAS the Ontario Ministry of Education is provincially mandated to oversee both publicly-funded education and licensed childcare settings; and

WHEREAS physical literacy is a clearly stated outcome objective of the Health and Physical Education Curriculum, yet it is not currently measured; and

WHEREAS principals report that delivery of the Health and Physical Education curriculum varies significantly depending on the expertise and comfort level of the teacher; and

WHEREAS only 19.9% of Ontario Elementary Schools have a full or part-time specialist teacher assigned to teach health and physical education; and

WHEREAS neither the Ministry of Education nor School Boards currently ensure every child receives 20 minutes of sustained daily physical activity;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Association of Local Public Health Agencies request the Ontario Ministry of Education and its stakeholders to provide for the public health, safety, and welfare of all Ontario residents by enhancing the development of physical literacy in educational and childcare settings through:

1. Adopting a mandatory assessment of physical literacy for elementary and secondary students across the province;
2. Ensuring that quality daily health and physical education programming is delivered by health and physical education specialists in all Ontario elementary and secondary schools;
3. Evaluating compliance and enforcing the Daily Physical Activity (Policy/Program Memorandum No. 138) requirement;
4. Providing ongoing staff training related to physical literacy for all teachers, early childhood educators, and childcare providers;
5. Strengthening the Day Nurseries Act/Child Care and Early Years Act to promote and support physical literacy development in licensed childcare settings; and
6. Making health and physical education credits a mandatory requirement for grades 9-12.

**AND FURTHER** that the Premier of Ontario, Minister and Associate Minister of Health and Long Term Care, Minister of Education, Minister of Children and Youth Service, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport, the Chief Medical Officer of Health, and the ADM of the Health Promotion Division are so advised.