



The Victorian Prevention and Health Promotion Achievement Program

Frequently asked questions

The Victorian Prevention and Health Promotion Achievement Program is being rolled out to primary schools and preschools in Wodonga. This information sheet will answer some of the most commonly asked questions schools and early childhood settings have had about the program. For the purpose of this information sheet, “schools” refers to all settings where children learn, which includes kindergartens, childcare settings, family day care and primary schools.

Q. What is the background of this initiative?

Healthy Together Victoria aims to improve people's health where they live, learn, work and play. The initiative is funded by the state and federal governments and delivered through local partnerships. The local initiative is a partnership between Wodonga Council and Gateway Community Health, and is known as Healthy Together Wodonga. It's an initiative that puts the emphasis of healthy living back into local hands.

Healthy Together Victoria includes the development of a Victorian Health Promotion for Children and Young People Policy, and the Victorian Prevention and Health Promotion Achievement Program. The achievement program is a framework for schools and services to register to and implement within their setting to support the broader aims of the healthy children initiative and Healthy Together Victoria - improving the health of all Victorians.

The achievement program is a joint partnership between the Victorian Department of Health and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. The partners have ensured that the achievement program aligns with existing frameworks which underpin the work already being done in schools such as the Victorian Essential Learning Standards and the National Quality Standards.

Q. Why involve schools?

Early childhood is a key setting in which children learn and play. Early childhood is a period of rapid learning and development. Lifestyle habits that are created during these formative years continue into adulthood. Therefore, developing healthy lifestyle behaviours at this age will support not only the current health of children, but also their future health, and that of future generations. The achievement program has been developed to recognise the programs and achievements already happening in schools, and encourage further development of activities that support children's health and wellbeing.

Q. Is this initiative available to all schools in Victoria?

The achievement program is available to all Victorian kindergartens, long day care, family day care and primary schools. However, not all areas in Victoria are participating in Healthy Together Victoria so they will not be receiving any additional assistance to complete the program. Wodonga schools will receive additional support from the Healthy Together Wodonga team to complete the program.

Q. What are the benefits for our school/service?

Children's health plays an important role in how they learn and interact with others. Therefore, promoting and protecting the health of children is at the forefront of all that we do. The Healthy Together Victoria initiative is the first of its kind, therefore participating schools will be recognised as leaders in health and wellbeing. Participating schools will receive signage promoting involvement in the program and additional icons to add for each priority area that has been achieved. The Healthy Together Wodonga team will provide you with a variety of tools such as policy templates, case studies, real life examples of what other schools are doing, engagement tools and make you aware of grant opportunities. We can help you establish meaningful relationships with your broader school community and help you lay the foundations for a whole school approach to health and wellbeing.

Q. What approach does the achievement program adopt?

The program adopts a whole of school approach to health and wellbeing. This means bringing together school staff, students, families, health care professionals, the broader community and local organisations to work collaboratively on issues to promote and protect the health and wellbeing of the whole school community. Getting everyone involved is the key.

Q. What is the process? What do we have to do?

Schools establish or tap into an existing team that will focus on implementing the achievement program. This team will create a shared vision through the engagement and consultation of the broader school community. The team will develop a plan for health and wellbeing, and put this plan into action. The team will monitor, review and evaluate the



progress of the action plan (see diagram below for steps).

Q. Will funding be available for schools?

Schools do not receive direct funding as a result of participating in the achievement program. However, if similar needs and priorities are shared across multiple school settings/networks there may be opportunities to implement strategies or professional development workshops to address this need. While individually funded health programs are effective, there are issues related to sustainability after funding ceases. Therefore, by implementing an approach that utilises current strengths and potential community relationships and networks, the likelihood of continuing into the future is increased.

Q. How long will it take?

Schools can work through the achievement program at their own pace. There are no deadlines as the program is designed to be implemented at a pace appropriate for each school. For example, you may choose to focus on two health priorities per term or per school year.

Q. What paperwork is involved?

During the first phase of the achievement program there are only two documents that need to be completed and returned. This includes a simple one page Health Promotion Charter (provided) to be displayed somewhere in the school and a short progress report, which takes approximately five minutes to complete.

Q. Is every step required?

No. Don't let the size of the coordinate booklet be discouraging. It is long as it includes all the possible tools a school could use to engage their community in consultation. It is up to each school to decide how this will be done. The main things to consider during the first phase is to set up a health and wellbeing team (or other existing team), and to meet to discuss issues related to health and wellbeing at the school.

Q. What resources will we receive?

Each school will receive the achievement program booklets. The booklets are a step-by-step guide. The booklets include suggestions for how to engage with the school community.

Schools will also receive the support of the Victorian Healthy Eating Advisory Service, which provides information and tips on healthy eating, as well as help with conducting canteen menu audits.

The Healthy Together Wodonga team can also provide information, links to resources, draft policies and professional development opportunities as identified.

Q. Is there a formal assessment at the end?

There is no formal assessment for schools participating in the achievement program.

Q. Where can I find out more and who can I contact?

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