

**Canadian/International Symposium**

# **Settings for Health and Learning**

**June 2-4, University of Victoria,  
Victoria, British Columbia, Canada**

Hosted by the Health & Learning Knowledge Centre of the  
Canadian Council on Learning



Health & Learning Knowledge Centre  
Centre du Savoir sur la Santé et l'Apprentissage

CANADIAN COUNCIL ON **LEARNING**    CONSEIL CANADIEN SUR **L'APPRENTISSAGE**

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# SETTINGS FOR HEALTH & LEARNING

## INTRODUCTION

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There is increasing evidence that the health and learning are intertwined and interdependent. For example,

- The physical and social environments in which we live, learn, work and play interact with a myriad of factors to reduce or expand our opportunities for health, social development and educational achievement.
- Health status is correlated with educational achievement.
- Learning about health can influence health behaviours and access to appropriate health services.
- Healthy, supportive environments enhance learning outcomes.

Because the impact of place has emerged as an important concern for health and learning, the health promotion and educational sectors have identified settings-based programs and interventions as an important strategy.

A ‘setting for health’ has been defined as: “The place or social context in which people engage in daily activities in which environmental, organisational and personal factors interact to affect health and wellbeing...” (World Health Organization, 1998).

In the education sector, settings-based approaches have also emerged but are not always described as such. In early childhood education programs, there is considerable attention paid to the overall social and physical environment of the pre-school in high-quality programs, and social development in children is considered equally important to gains in knowledge or skills. For primary and secondary education, whole school approaches on educational achievement (effective schools) have been recognized as being critical to school improvement and system reform. Learning communities, where the inhabitants and the institutions of the community band together to promote achievement and social development, are also a concern in adult education. In the work place, the learning organization has emerged as an important management and staff development approach and such organizations address a variety of factors within the organization.

A settings-based approach is more than simply delivering interventions to a population that has been gathered together for another purpose such as education or work or recreation. It is not a single intervention or program within a setting. A settings approach is one that seeks to influence the health or educational status or behaviours of individuals by influencing social/economic conditions and/or policies/programs/ practices within the setting through multiple, coordinated interventions.

The setting becomes “healthier” or more “effective for learning” because the overall context for working, living, learning or playing has changed. Settings can be formal organizations such as schools or workplaces, as well as informal places such as churches or drop-in centres. Settings are also geographical, social or economic contexts such as communities, islands, or regions within a country. Settings can also be virtual, as the Internet becomes more of an interactive social environment as well as a device to exchange information. These contexts and settings overlap and interact with each other

### **Health**

Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. It is a resource for everyday living.  
(World Health Organization. 1984)

### **Education**

Provides cognitive, material, social and psychological resources or skills.  
(Lynch & Kaplan, 2000)

### **Learning**

The cognitive process of acquiring skill or knowledge. ([www.webster-dictionary.org](http://www.webster-dictionary.org) )

### **Setting**

A place or context in which something is set.  
([www.webster-dictionary.org](http://www.webster-dictionary.org) )

in many ways. There are influences (social, technological, economic) that cross over the boundaries of settings and the contexts that surround those settings.

The Health and Learning Knowledge Centre (HLKC) of the Canadian Council on Learning (CCL) has recognized these trends and identified “healthy communities of learning” as one of its strategic priorities. HLKC has funded a series of project and ongoing activities as part of its program of work. These activities include the organization of an international symposium, an international scan of related policies and initiatives, and a collection and analysis of the research, policy and practice evidence associated with settings-based approaches. Together, these will be used to discuss how formal and informal settings can be used to promote health and learning.

The HLKC is inviting Canadian and international organizations to join a conversation aimed at

- Describing what we know about the settings-based approach to health and learning, common challenges/issues, and future directions for research
- Compiling a preliminary list of key contacts and sampling of national, state/provincial and international initiatives from a web scan and email inquiries
- Identifying potential actions and collaborative work that can occur in Canada and internationally to promote more effective work in health and education using settings-based strategies and programs
- Strengthening international networks associated with specific settings or settings in general
- Identifying opportunities and activities that can enhance knowledge exchange and development about settings-based approaches

For further information, contact:

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#### References:

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**THE CANADIAN/INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM  
SETTINGS FOR HEALTH AND LEARNING**  
June 2 – 4, 2007  
University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

**OBJECTIVES**

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- To discuss promising and evidence-based practices, policies and programs in several settings, including pre-schools, schools, post-secondary institutions, primary health care, workplaces, prisons, cities, communities and more.
- To present the initial results of web scans and email inquiries for related contacts people and samples of policies, programs and initiatives.
- To provide an opportunity for international networks concerned with various settings to consolidate their development while stimulating further developments on settings in Canada. Further, to enable the IUHPE “joined settings” project to make further progress in sharing knowledge about effective interventions in settings and places.

**PARTICIPANTS AND PARTNERS**

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Almost all of the invited participants will be well versed in research, practice or the administration of programs and systems related to settings. The invited participants and partners include:

- Ministry officials from national and sub-national governments concerned with education, health, municipal affairs, seniors and others.
- National associations representing school health, health care, public health, municipalities, early childhood education, seniors and others
- Researchers and experts from universities and colleges and other research centres to exchange information and materials, including an opportunity to present posters and post summaries on the project web site.
- Canadian and international networks that are focused on settings-based approaches that promote health or learning.
- CCL Knowledge Centres on Work, Early Childhood, Aboriginals and Adults
- International Union for Health Promotion and Education
- Canadian Population Health Initiative
- National Voluntary Health Organizations, Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance of Canada, and Public Health Agency of Canada
- CIHR Initiative Promoting Interventions-based Research
- Federal Cities Agenda/Program

## PRE-SYMPOSIUM ACTIVITIES

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1. Consultations and discussions have occurred with Canadian and international organizations to secure their involvement in the planning of the Symposium. The symposium has been coordinated with IUHPE Conference Program and related pre-conferences/symposia.
2. Researchers are currently conducting an international scan for documents, contacts, networks/centres that will be compiled into inventories and lists.
3. The key evidence from the published research and “grey” is being identified literature with a view to preparing lists, abstracts, summaries and other analyses for use at the Symposium and after the Symposium.

## SYMPOSIUM LOCATION & LOGISTICS

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The symposium will be centered in the David Strong Building. Matthews/McQueen lecture hall. Please refer to the attached document entitled *Symposium Site Information* for logistical information.

## SYMPOSIUM PROGRAM

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An international-Canadian Planning Committee has developed this program structure and suggested speakers. The Health & Learning Knowledge Centre thanks the members of the Planning Committee for their contributions.

### *SATURDAY, JUNE 2*

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1:00-4:00     **Registration**

5:30-7:00     **Welcome**

Budd Hall, Co-Chair, Health and Learning Knowledge Centre; Professor and Director, Office of Community-Based Research, University of Victoria

Irving Rootman, Co-Chair, Health and Learning Knowledge Centre; Professor and Michael Smith Health Research Foundation Career Scholar, University of Victoria

Joan Wharf Higgins, Scientific Advisor, Health and Learning Knowledge Centre; Associate Professor and Canada Research Chair, University of Victoria.

**Panel: Why Place/Settings Matter for Health and Learning**

This session will present and discuss the rationale for using the settings approach in health promotion and education. Recent research funded by the Canadian Population Health Initiative on “place and health” will be highlighted as well as similar approaches in education on learning communities. Broader contexts, such as regions or islands will also be discussed.

7:00-9:00     **Reception**

*SUNDAY, JUNE 3*

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7:30-8:30     **Registration**

8:30-9:45     **Keynote What We Know About Healthy Settings after 20 Years**  
This session will examine our experiences and evidence related to settings-based

*SUNDAY, JUNE 3 continued...*

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work in the past two decades. An agenda of challenges and opportunities will be identified for researchers, practitioners and policy-makers.

Chair – Trevor Hancock (Consultant, Ministry of Health, British Columbia, Canada)

- Lawry St. Leger (Lead author of IUHPE book chapter on Schools)
- Cordia Chu (Centre for Environment and population Health, Griffith University, Australia on Workplaces)
- TBD , Speaker from Brazil in healthy communities and villages

9:45-10:00    **Health Break**

10:00-11:30   **Concurrent Sessions**

Participants will meet in small groups by specific settings. The results of the web scans/email inquiries and collections of evidence will be distributed). Sessions will be facilitated by international and Canadian resource people who have agreed to work together in planning and follow-up to the symposium. The purpose of this session is to strengthen existing networks that are based on these settings.

11:30-1:00    **Lunch**

1:00-2:00     **Keynote: Principles, Values & Common Issues across Settings**

This session will provide an overview of the principles and values underlying settings-based practice in health promotion and education as well as introduce some of the issues that are common to all settings-based practice.

- Mark Dooris Healthy Settings Development Unit, University of Central Lancashire, United Kingdom

2:00-3:00     **Plenary Session/Poster Sessions: Applying Settings-based Strategies:** This session will begin as a plenary session then flow into a reception among the poster sessions. Individuals from around the world will briefly describe successful examples of settings-based programs and initiatives that address specific needs such as health literacy, chronic disease, marginalized populations. Participants are encouraged to bring poster materials describing their work. The results of the web scans, email inquiries and evidence collections will also be part of this session.

3:15-4:45     **Concurrent Sessions**

These breakout sessions will address some of the common issues across settings such as working with complexity, sustainability, integration with “core” functions of setting, intersectorial cooperation, systems change. The goal of

these discussions is to elaborate on these common issues and begin to identify strategies that have addressed some of those issues. Participants will also have an opportunity to discuss a summary/consensus statement of the principles and values that should underlie policy, programs and policy on settings.

6:30-9:00     **Dinner** at University Faculty Club

- 8:30-9:30     **Keynote: Promising Directions**  
This session will describe some of the promising directions that are being taken by researchers, policy-makers and practitioners in settings-based work. This session will be coordinated with the earlier keynote session on principles, values and common issues.
- Blake Poland, Public Health Sciences, University of Toronto
- 9:30-11:00    **Concurrent Sessions**  
Participants will meet in small groups organized by promising directions such as inter-agency/disciplinary cooperation, participatory/community-based research, inter-professional education, influencing/monitoring changes to policies and interventions affecting the whole setting etc. Participants will have another opportunity to discuss the summary/consensus statement on settings-based practice in health and education.
- 11:00-11:30   **Health Break**
- 11:30-12:15   **Panel: National and International Networks to Promote Settings Work**  
This session will discuss three examples of networks that have successfully encouraged settings-based work.
- Jurgen Peliken (European Hospitals Network)
  - Peter Davey, (Asia Pacific Collaborations in Healthy Cities)
  - TBD (Latin America Network of Health Promoting Schools)
- 12:15-1:15    **Lunch**
- 1:15-2:00     **Keynote: Policy & Leadership: Whole of Government Approaches**  
This session will discuss the role that governments and policy-makers can play in promoting settings-based work. In particular, the notion of engaging “the whole of government” in health promotion, social development and education.
- TBD, Act Now (British Columbia) and Other Canadian Initiatives
  - TBD, WHO Knowledge Network on Urban Settlements
- 2:00-3:00     **Concurrent Sessions**  
Participants will meet in small groups organized by specific settings to finalize their respective action plans on those settings.
- 3:00-4:00     **Plenary: Action Planning and Next Steps/Announcements**  
Participants will discuss next steps following this symposium. Consideration will be given to the consensus statement on settings-based work in health promotion and education. These will include the development of the IUHPE initiative on “joined up settings” and the next IUHPE conference on settings that will be in Hong Kong in 2010, Canadian collaboration on settings work in areas such as chronic disease prevention and more. The Health & Learning Knowledge Centre will continue to provide support in the form of collections of research evidence.

## PURPOSES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE INTERNATIONAL SCAN AND EVIDENCE SEARCH

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In coordination with the invitational symposium, the Health & Learning Knowledge Centre will be conducting an international scan to identify national/international initiatives and key contacts. The scans/documents-contacts search will provide policy-makers, practitioners, advocates and researchers with a preliminary inventory of current activities around the world and across Canada. The web scans and email inquiries will identify existing networks and centres of excellence on settings, health literacy and system capacity as well as knowledge broker centres similar to HLKC. This information could be used as the basis for more intensive studies and deliberations within Canada and internationally in preparation for the 2010 IUHPE conference. Reports will be prepared that describe an inventory of settings and key contacts, such as the following, where health and education programs may be easily addressed:

- Communities, regions, islands
- Pre-school and daycare settings
- Schools
- Out of Schools Settings for Youth
- Neighbourhoods (Recreation centres, senior and youth centres, etc)
- Cities, Towns and Municipalities, Villages
- Post-secondary campus
- Workplace
- Senior Centres
- Health Care Facilities (hospitals and clinics)
- Prisons/Detention Centres
- Marketplaces, Shopping Malls

## COLLECTION OF EVIDENCE ON HOW SETTINGS CAN PROMOTE HEALTH AND LEARNING

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This related HLKC project is collecting and analyzing the research evidence associated with settings-based practice in health and education. Collections of relevant policy documents, statements and guidelines as well as reports that have been published by a variety of organizations will be gathered and catalogued. Selected citations from the published, peer-reviewed literature will be prepared. Analytical summaries, discussing how this evidence leads to effectiveness will be prepared.

These collections of evidence will be categorized in a variety of ways that stem from settings based work and will address a number of issues that can be related to settings-based strategies. These include issues such as health literacy, social determinants, chronic diseases, mental health and more.

These collections will be maintained in variety of electronic and printed formats and access by researchers, policy-makers and practitioners will be facilitated by virtue of the time saved in searching for such knowledge. These knowledge resources will be used in the symposium and subsequent activities.