

# A Parent's Guide: The Health and Physical Education Curriculum, Grades 9-12

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The Health and Physical Education (HPE) curriculum helps students learn the skills and knowledge they need to make healthy and safe choices – at home, at school and in the community. Students will develop healthy, active living habits that will enhance their physical and mental well-being for the rest of their lives.

Students at the secondary level are required to earn one credit in Health and Physical Education to complete their Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). The Ministry does not mandate which course must be taken. Three types of courses are offered:

- *Healthy Active Living Education (HALE) courses* are similar in structure to the curriculum in Grades 1-8 and continue the same themes at more advanced levels through Grades 9–12. Most students choose the Grade 9 HALE course for their mandatory credit.
- *Focus courses* have the same curriculum expectations as the HALE courses, but the activity component is centred on a specified group of activities (e.g., Healthy Living and Personal and Fitness Activities).
- *College and university preparation courses* are available in Grades 11 and 12 and provide an academic grounding for post secondary studies in areas related to health and physical education.

Schools offer a range of Health and Physical Education courses appropriate to the needs and interests of the students. All courses may not be offered in all schools.

There are **four parts** to the curriculum in the HALE courses and focus courses – **Active Living, Movement Competence, Healthy Living** (which includes sexual health education), and **Living Skills**, which are integrated throughout the curriculum. Overall, this curriculum helps students develop the skills and knowledge they need to:



Understand themselves and others



Think critically, make and promote healthy choices



Develop and maintain healthy relationships



Be safe, physically and emotionally



Be physically active for life, and thrive

## In this guide you will find information about:

- the content of the Grade 9 HALE course
- other health and physical education courses your child may take
- tips for supporting learning at home, at school and in the community

# What Your Child Will Learn in Grade 9 Healthy Active Living Education (Course Code PPL1O)

## Living Skills

Throughout the curriculum, as students learn about Active Living, Movement Competence, and Healthy Living (described below), they are also developing important living skills. Living skills enable students to understand themselves, cope with challenges and change, communicate and interact with others in a healthy way, and think critically and creatively. For example, students learn to:

- deepen their understanding of themselves, their strengths, and their values, and to use this information to make thoughtful decisions about their physical and mental health
- plan in advance, weigh pros and cons, and consider consequences when making decisions

## Active Living

Through active participation, students build a foundation for lifelong healthy active living while learning what makes activity fun. Students learn to:

- understand what makes activity enjoyable for them by participating in different kinds of activities (e.g., fitness, recreational, and outdoor activities, including sports and games), and identify factors that encourage or discourage people from being physically active
- understand and practise the ethics of fair play
- evaluate and revise their personal fitness plans and goals and monitor them over time
- take responsibility for their safety and the safety of others and be able to respond effectively to emergencies, including situations that require a knowledge of cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

## Movement Competence

By participating in a wide variety of activities, students continue to develop and practise skills for moving and build confidence in their ability to participate successfully in physical activities. Students learn to:

- combine and refine skills for moving in a variety of activities
- understand the characteristics of different games and sports and use skills and strategies that improve their success, build their confidence and enjoyment, and increase their desire to participate in these and other activities.

## Healthy Living

Students consider connections between their health and the world around them and learn to use health information to make safe and healthy choices. Students learn about:

- the effectiveness of various methods for preventing sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections (including HIV/AIDS) and unintended pregnancy (e.g., delaying first intercourse, using protection)
- gender identity and sexual orientation and sources of support for students dealing with related questions and issues
- skills and strategies for healthy relationships and the importance of having a strong understanding of consent and sexual limits
- warning signs and symptoms of mental health problems and strategies for coping with or responding to any concerns
- factors that might influence decisions to use or not use substances like drugs or alcohol (e.g., family and peer relationships) and decision-making and communication skills for responding to pressures to use these substances
- the benefits and risks of using electronic communications, and strategies for staying safe and responding to bullying or sexual harassment, both online and in person
- the impact of active living and healthy eating on a person's physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being
- factors that affect their food choices (e.g., cultural influences, and marketing) and factors that should be considered when planning for healthy eating (e.g., the health implications of different preparation methods such as baking or frying).

## Grades 9-12

### Healthy Active Living Education Courses – Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 (PPL10, PPL20, PPL30, PPL40)

Students at the secondary level are required to earn one credit in health and physical education to complete their Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD).

Students who choose to take Healthy Active Living Education (HALE) courses throughout secondary school will have the opportunity to further develop the knowledge and skills established in Grades 1–8. The course content reflects the growing maturity and changing needs of the students in each grade. In the Grade 11 and 12 HALE courses, the focus of learning shifts towards applications that may have greater relevance to students' lives after graduation. For an overview of the content of these courses, see the charts in the appendices of the [curriculum document](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/health9to12.pdf), pages 201–205. [www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/health9to12.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/health9to12.pdf)

### Focus Courses

Schools can develop HALE courses in Grades 9 to 12 that focus on a specified group of physical activities. These courses offer flexibility and allow students to pursue more specific areas of interest while still meeting all the expectations of the corresponding HALE courses. The following is a list of the possible focus areas:

- Healthy Living and Personal and Fitness Activities (PAF)
- Healthy Living and Large-Group Activities (PAL)
- Healthy Living and Individual and Small-Group Activities (PAI)
- Healthy Living and Aquatic Activities (PAQ)
- Healthy Living and Rhythm and Movement Activities (PAR)
- Healthy Living and Outdoor Activities (PAD)

**Note:** A student may take more than one focus course for credit in the same grade, in addition to or instead of other health and physical education courses.

### Senior Health and Physical Education Courses

In Grades 11 and 12, three university and/or college preparation courses are offered:

- Health for Life (PPZ3C), Grade 11, college preparation course
  - » In this course, students examine factors that influence their own health practices and behaviours, as well as factors that contribute to the development of healthy communities. The course prepares students for college programs in health sciences, fitness, wellness, and health promotion.
- Introductory Kinesiology (PSK4U), Grade 12, university preparation course
  - » This course focuses on the study of human movement and systems, factors, and principles involved in human development. It prepares students for university programs in physical education and health, kinesiology, health sciences, health studies, recreation, and sports administration.
- Recreation and Healthy Active Living Leadership (PLF4M), Grade 12, university/college preparation course
  - » In this course, students explore the benefits of lifelong participation in active recreation and healthy leisure and develop the leadership and coordinating skills needed to plan, organize, and safely implement recreational events and other activities related to healthy, active living. The course prepares students for university programs in physical education, health, and kinesiology and for college and university programs in recreation and leisure management, fitness and health promotion, and fitness leadership.

For more information, see the Ontario Curriculum, [Health and Physical Education, Grades 9-12](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/health9to12.pdf). [www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/health9to12.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/health9to12.pdf)

## Supporting Your Child's Learning

Parents, schools, and community organizations all have important roles in supporting student learning and well-being. Here are some ways to support your child's learning and some sources of support and information that you may find useful:

### At Home

- Stay involved. Research shows that teens want supportive advice, information, and guidance from parents. You are your child's first source of information about health matters, including sexuality, and you play an important role in educating and guiding your child throughout childhood, adolescence, and beyond.
- As your teen becomes more self-aware and independent, support from home continues to make a significant difference. Ask about what your teen is learning at school. Listen, and share your thoughts.
- Encourage your teens to be physically active and to walk or bike to school, work, and social engagements. Make physical activity and healthy eating a part of your family life.

### At School

- Learn how you can support a [healthy school](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/links.html) environment in your child's secondary school. [www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/links.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/links.html)
- A variety of student-led activities, teams, or clubs, such as [Gay/Straight Alliances](#) and Students and Teachers Against Racism, promote and encourage the understanding and development of healthy relationships. Schools and boards must support students who wish to establish and lead activities and organizations that promote a safe and inclusive learning environment and respect for others. [www.egale.ca/portfolio/mygsa/](http://www.egale.ca/portfolio/mygsa/)
- If your child seems to be struggling with a mental health issue, check with a mental health professional for assessment and treatment. Ask your child's teacher if they have noticed behavioural changes and discuss ways in which the school might provide support.

### In the Community

- You can obtain health and fitness information from your local health unit or community health organization. Find the location of your [local health unit](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/system/services/phu/locations.aspx) here: [www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/system/services/phu/locations.aspx](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/system/services/phu/locations.aspx)
- Friendship Centres, located in towns and cities across the province, are available to serve the needs of Indigenous students in urban communities. For more information, and to find a [Friendship Centre](http://www.offc.org) near you, go to: [www.offc.org](http://www.offc.org)
- Find out about community recreation opportunities near you. For information about programs, sports, trails, and [community recreation](http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/sport/recreation/recreation_index.shtml) opportunities, see [www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/sport/recreation/recreation\\_index.shtml](http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/sport/recreation/recreation_index.shtml)
- [Kids Help Phone](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca) provides help and trustworthy information for teens and younger children by phone and online. [www.kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca)