

Healthy Schools Year-End Story Template

Date: June 6, 2013

School Name: Nala'atsi

School District: 71; Comox Valley

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Tell us about your Healthy Schools Team (i.e. who was on it? How many students? 24 students; Other teachers? 2 teachers, 1 Youth and Family Worker, 1 Aboriginal Support Worker, 1 Vancouver Island Health Authority(VIHA), Dietitian, 10 Elders from the Wachiay Friendship Centre and their Support Worker

Share Your School Story! Tell us about what happened and how it went!

Twice a month, Erin Rowsell, a dietitian working in the Aboriginal Health department at Vancouver Island Health Authority, came into to Nala'atsi to prepare a healthy meal with our grade 10-12 students and the Elders from the local Friendship Centre. The meals ranged from homemade pasta, spaghetti made with bison and fish tacos and always included lots of vegetables and lean protein. During the preparation of the meal Erin would talk to the students about what she was doing and the benefits of the ingredients of that particular meal. The students got a chance to learn about indigenous food (we used stinging nettles instead of spinach in the lasagna) and how to make inexpensive meals which were nutritious and delicious. While we ate lunch, Erin would choose a food related topic to speak about. These lasted from 2-4 minutes and ranged in topic from how to evaluate the food value of fast food outlets like McDonalds, to how to add inexpensive protein to your meals so that you can stretch your food dollar. These sound-bites as we called them were videotaped and put on to the school website for future reference. One of the most memorable sessions was entitled **Foods that Look like the Organ They are good For**. Erin prepared a poster that listed foods like carrots, celery, onions, walnuts, kidney beans and tomatoes and then challenged the students to match them up with the organ of the body that they were good for. Staff, Elders and students then enjoyed the delicious chili that was made from the ingredients!

Along with enjoying Erin's company, staff, Elders and students appreciated the chance to learn how to cook at 10 new recipes, become more confident about making good food choices and finding out where to access information about good nutrition.

Reflections (what worked well, what would you do differently next year?)

This was an AMAZING experience for everyone. An additional benefit was the publication of a small recipe book which contains the recipes that Erin cooked with the students. Having the Elders there to act as mentors was also a bonus as our students do not have enough healthy role models to relate to. The sharing of food is a powerful way to form connections and we all felt good preparing, eating and even cleaning up after these delicious experiences. I would like to do this again and this time invite other cooks to come in to prepare food with our students. Photographs and short video clips of the students can be found on our school website.

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