

## Healthy Students Reduce Future Health Care Costs

Since 2008 approximately 16 million dollars has been invested in APPLE Schools. Preliminary findings indicate that for every \$1 spent on APPLE Schools, \$13 in avoided future health care costs is saved.<sup>1</sup> The social return on investment could increase to \$15-\$25 when factors such as increased academic achievement, reduction of behavioral incidence, and improved high school completion are included.<sup>2</sup> If APPLE Schools was scaled-up across Alberta, the provincial government would save \$33 - \$82 million in direct health care costs related to overweight and obesity.<sup>3</sup>

## Healthy Students make Healthy Adults

APPLE Schools helps students develop healthy habits that will last a lifetime. Overweight children often become overweight adults who are at greater risk of developing type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer and other chronic diseases. Healthy eating and physical activity are key factors affecting chronic diseases and can be improved in the school environment with the added benefit of impacting families, siblings, school staff and the greater community. Some examples of activities that have lead to positive health changes are:



- Healthy celebrations
- Classroom gardens
- Monthly campaigns
- Taste testing
- Fun Fitness Circuits
- Cooking clubs
- Student Leadership opportunities
- Daily physical activity bins
- School wellness policy development and implementation

More ideas can be found on the APPLE Schools website at: [www.appleschools.ca](http://www.appleschools.ca)

*"The one thing my mom changed when I started here is how she packed healthy stuff in my lunch." Kristina, student*

*"I've had three kids go through APPLE Schools. Now I go shopping for fruit...every 3 days." Carley B, parent*

*"(APPLE Schools) is a cool program and I think it should continue for all schools in Alberta." Keelan, student*

## What is APPLE Schools

APPLE Schools is a privately funded, innovative school-focused health promotion initiative that improves the lives of more than 15,000 students in 51 schools across Northern Alberta. APPLE Schools supports school communities through the development of healthy habits and changes to school environments in order to improve healthy eating, active living, and positive social behaviours for a lifetime.

<sup>1</sup> Presented by Dr. Paul Veugelers at the National Forum on Public Health, University of Alberta, November 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Tran, B. X., Ohinmaa, A., Kuhle, S., Johnson, J., & Veugelers, P. J. (2014). Life course impact of school-based promotion of healthy eating and active living to prevent childhood obesity. PLOS ONE, 9(7), 1-8. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0102242.g001>

<sup>3</sup> Published in APPLE Schools Progress Report, December, 2012 by Dr. Paul Veugelers, University of Alberta.