ST. GABRIEL CES 2023-2024

Bullying Prevention, Intervention and Follow-up Plan

KEY TERMS

What is Bullying?

'Bullying' means aggressive and typically repeated behaviour by a child or youth where,

a) they should know that the behaviour would be likely to,

> i. cause harm, fear or distress to another individual, including physical, psychological, social or academic harm, harm to the individual's reputation or harm to the individual's property, or

> ii. create a negative environment at a school for another individual

b) there is a real or perceived power imbalance based on factors such as size, strength, age, intelligence, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race, disability or the receipt of special education.

Bullying is defined as: "typically a form of repeated, persistent, and aggressive behaviour directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear and distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance".

What are the Forms of Bullying?

1) Physical Bullying can be:

- Hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, beating up, stealing, or damaging property.

September 2022

2) Verbal Bullying can be:

- Name-calling, mocking, hurtful teasing, humiliating or threatening someone, racist or sexist comments, harassment.

3) Social Bullying can be:

- Excluding others from the group, gossiping or spreading rumours, setting others up to look foolish, and damaging friendships;
- Treating people badly because of their identity, saying bad things about a culture, calling someone racist names, telling racist jokes;
- Treating people badly because of their religion or beliefs, saying bad things about a religion or belief, calling someone names, telling jokes about a religion or belief;
- Leaving someone out or treating them badly because they are a boy or a girl, making someone feel uncomfortable because of their sexual orientation/gender identity/gender expression, making sexist comments or jokes, touching, pinching or grabbing someone in a sexual way, making rude comments about someone's sexual behaviour or sexual orientation;
- Leaving someone out or treating them badly because of a disability, making someone feel uncomfortable because of a disability (e.g., mental or physical), making comments or jokes to hurt someone with a disability;
- Treating someone badly because of his/her appearance (e.g., weight-based teasing) or social class (e.g., not having name brand clothing or possessions).

4) Electronic Bullying: Electronic communication lets youth connect with each other in all kinds of ways. Youth use social media to create relationships with others. Healthy face-to-face and online relationships mean that interactions are respectful. Disrespectful interactions become bullying. Cyberbullying is:

- Electronic communication used to upset, threaten or embarrass another person;
- Using email, cell phones, text messages, and internet sites to threaten, harass, embarrass, socially exclude, or damage reputations and friendships;
- Includes put-downs, insults, spreading rumours, sharing private information, photos or videos or threatening to harm someone;
- Is always aggressive and hurtful.

How is Bullying different from Teasing and/or Aggression?

Teasing	Aggression	Bullying
Is equal and reciprocated Is fun and not hurtful	Is conflict Can be intentional or unintentional	A form of typically repeated, persistent, and aggressive behaviour

September 2022

Often occurs prior to aggression	Could be one time Can lead to BULLYING	Directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause fear

Key Elements of a Whole School Approach to Prevent Bullying and Promote Healthy Relationships

A whole school approach brings everyone together to work toward creating a safe, inclusive, and accepting school where bullying problems are prevented and handled effectively when they arise. A whole school approach involves the administration, teaching and school staff, children, youth, parents/guardians, and the broader community.

A whole school approach is the most effective way to prevent bullying and promote learning. Children's learning depends on having positive relationships at school. When everyone works together for a safe, inclusive, and accepting school, children and youth receive **consistent** messages and responses about bullying. By providing consistent messages, responses, and supports that address bullying problems, school communities can promote positive, healthy relationships for their children and youth.

Bullying prevention and intervention are not just about eliminating bullying—it is also about promoting the development of healthy relationships. The goal is to help ensure that all children and youth have healthy, safe, respectful and caring relationships with everyone in their lives.

Prevention

Bullying prevention strategies provide children and youth with awareness and skills:

1. To initiate and engage in positive relationships;

2. To prevent from bullying others;

3. To cope effectively with being bullied (e.g., walk away or tell someone)

The classroom is one of the primary places where social and emotional skills can be learned and character can be developed, but learning these skills does not always come naturally. Just as with other forms of learning, children and youth learn relationship skills by trial and error and, as with reading and math, we need to provide extra supports to those who are constantly struggling to foster positive relationships.

Goals of Bullying Prevention Activities

1. Promoting positive relationships within and between the entire school to enhance school climate and a supportive learning environment;

2. Educating and developing awareness about bullying, the importance of healthy relationships, and self-awareness about the use of real and perceived power in relationships;
September 2022

3. Consolidating attitudes which are incompatible with bullying for inclusion, acceptance and respect for all;

4. Developing awareness of bullying issues at the school;

5. Developing positive solutions to prevent and address bullying;

6. Learning positive strategies to address bullying by a) children and youth who are victimized, b) children and youth who witness bullying, c) teachers, and d) other school staff;

7. Building social responsibility and open trusting communication about bullying and relationship difficulties.

Intervention

Bullying intervention strategies are used when children and youth experience problems with bullying. There are two approaches to intervention:

1. Providing individualized supports to promote development in areas where children and youth are struggling (e.g., understanding, social skills, attitudes) and to promote their strengths.

2. Helping to ensure that children/youths' relationships with teachers, peers, family and the community are both positive and support the development of constructive social understanding, behaviours, and attitudes.

STRATEGIES

PREVENTION	PREVENTION: POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES THAT RAISE AWARENESS AND INCREASE POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS FOR THE WHOLE SCHOOL
Children and Youth	1) Classroom based learning activities that promote understanding of differences, inclusion and positive leadership (i.e. CYW lead classroom visits to engage students in building healthy relationships e.g. Acts of Kindness, Being a good friend, being respectful, conflict resolution, empathy, listening). 2) Positive Messages using student council members over announcements to promote Healthy Relationships - staff can use as part of classroom lessons. 3) Awareness "Tiktok" type videos to promote anti-Bullying behaviour 4) Announcements with a positive message focusing on healthy relationships and 5) Pink shirt day (see www.pinkshirtday.ca for updated dates) 6) Activities for Bullying Awareness Week (week beginning with the 3rd Sunday in November) 7) Recognition of students' positive behaviours 8) Survey of messages and images in school to ensure they reflect school's diversity and promote positive, caring relationships.

September 2022

	9) Involvement of children/youth in assessments of bullying and supportive relationships at school. (Extra Curricular) 10) Information in community emails regarding student Mental Health and Bullying Awareness 11) Student Council meetings to generate ideas and express concerns
School Staff	1) Complete Mental Health in The Classroom Assessment, Monitoring and Reflection Tool 2) Develop a clear vision of a supportive learning environment and positive climate for the school 3) Staff identification of strengths and concerns in school 4) Activities to increase staff cohesion and collaboration (e.g., collaboration with Employee Assistance Counsellor) 5) Generate innovative supervision strategies for target areas in the school (e.g., halls, outside) 6) Develop strategies and tools for effective communication such as between: • Teacher and principal • Bus driver and principal • Teacher and parent/guardian • Student and teacher (e.g., bullying problem/solution box) • Parent/guardian and teacher (e.g., letter: see www.teachsafeschools.org) 7) Involvement in assessments of bullying and supportive relationships at school 8) Facilitate Peer Leader group focused on restorative practices among peers
Classroom Strategies	**Supportive Learning Environment Classroom Strategies:** 1) Classroom Mission and Vision / Motto Exercise to establish a shared set of class norms at the beginning of the year for creating a supportive learning environment – one that everyone in the class participates in creating and buys into. 2) Hold Restorative Practice sessions for discussion of issues that arise and suggestions of solutions. These times can be guided by class norms such as only one person talks at once, no put downs, attentive listening, mutual respect, and the right to pass. 3) CYW/Classroom teacher to facilitate Classroom-based learning activities that promote learning and understanding of (e.g. School Mental Health Ontario (smho-smso.ca) activities): • The importance of positive relationships for learning and life • The definition of bullying • Differences between bullying and teasing, aggression and competition, aggression and assertiveness, telling and tattling • Social responsibilities and strategies for those who witness bullying • Empathy • Positive leadership and recognition • Expectations for a supportive learning environment, and positive class and school climate

As students develop Social Emotional Learning skills, students will also gain "transferable skills" (for example, self-directed learning, collaboration, critical thinking, communication and innovation) and develop "learning skills and work habits" as they learn to set goals, follow through and overcome challenges. These interconnected skills taken together, help foster overall health and well-being, and the ability to learn, build resilience and thrive. Helping students make connections among these skills is key to enhancing their learning experience in school and throughout their lives. This, in turn will assist in helping students recognize behaviour that could lead to bullying and provide tools they can use to recognize this type of behaviour.

Language Integration:

1) Books: There are many books that focus on bullying problems; these are available for all ages of children and youth. One Ontario resource for a list of books can be found at: www.parentbooks.ca/Bullying_Resources_for_Kids_&Teens.html. It is important to note that one criterion for choosing a book to study is that the resolution to bullying should be constructive and positive. Some books end with revenge and observational research indicates that when a child uses aggression in response to being bullied, the bullying continues longer. Stories of bullying (use of power and aggression) and the pain it causes are central to the stories of Harry Potter and are frequently found in classic literature, as well (e.g., Lord of the Flies, Cinderella).

2) Poetry: Creating prose and poetry to express feelings about bullying can also engage children and youth. A recent example of spoken poetry by Shane Koyczan, a Canadian poet highlights the power of words. His illustrated poem on bullying, entitled To This Day is available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltun92DfnPY.

Mathematics Integration:

1) Statistics: There are a lot of statistics about bullying that can be used to develop understanding about the prevalence of bullying and the harm that it causes.
2) Data: In math class, students can:
- Analyze data from their school's climate survey
- Develop observation strategies or questions that are relevant for their school
- Collect and manage additional data from students, parents/guardians, teachers, or community leaders, and analyze the responses and report on the findings

September 2022

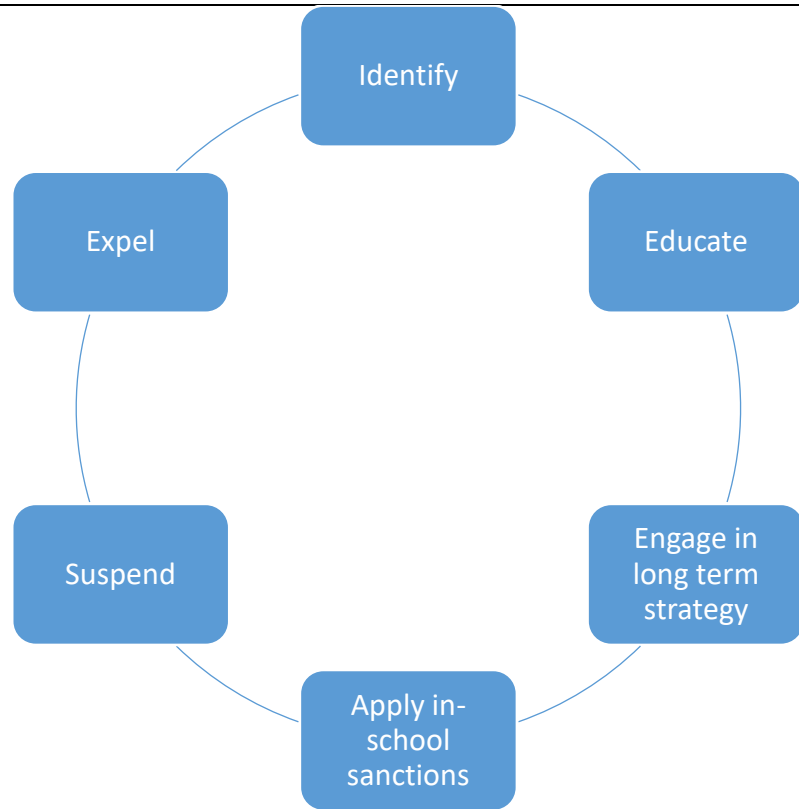|	
	Arts, Science, and Health Integration: Bullying is a relationship problem and relationship problems form the basis of many forms of artistic expression. Students can be encouraged to explore the issues and solutions to bullying through visual arts, drama, dance, and music. There is much to be learned through science and health about social-emotional development, social behavior and the brain, stress and functioning, and mental health.
Parents/Guardians	1) Provide opportunities for parents/guardians to learn about bullying 2) Representation on Bullying Prevention Champion Teams 3) Facilitate parent/guardian involvement at a variety of times to suit availability by having food, babysitting, transportation support etc., if possible 4) Inform parents about bullying prevention activities at school 5) Encourage parents/guardians and grandparents to volunteer (e.g., school and classroom activities or school council initiatives) 6) Involvement in assessments of bullying and supportive relationships at school 7) CSC meetings to generate ideas and express concerns
Community	1) Partnerships with agencies (e.g. police liaison officer and social worker) to provide prevention education.
Additional Notes:	There are many creative ways to work with the different levels of a school community to increase awareness and engagement in promoting positive relationships and preventing bullying. The activities that you choose for your school need to fit with the special circumstances of your school. You can get additional ideas for activities for all members of the school community and of the school for all grades on numerous internet sites related to developing a supportive learning environment, positive school climate and preventing bullying. Here are a few that have whole school activities described: www.teachsafeschools.org www.peacefulschoolsinternational.org www.stopbullyingnow.gov School Mental Health Ontario (smho-smso.ca)

INTERVENTION	INTERVENTION: POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES THAT FOCUS ON INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE INVOLVED IN BULLYING PROBLEMS – AS THE CHILD OR YOUTH WHO BULLIES, THE CHILD OR YOUTH WHO IS VICTIMIZED, OR THE CHILD OR YOUTH WHO WITNESSES THE BULLYING
School Level	When addressing bullying ask yourself the following questions:

September 2022

- What are the particular children or youth circumstances?
- What is the nature of the bullying behaviour?
- How frequent and severe is the bullying?
- What is the impact of the behavior on the school climate?
- Where in the school is the bullying taking place?
- What interventions will promote positive behavior in this student and be both corrective and supportive?
- Is the response based on current school, board and ministry policies and guidelines (e.g., considering mitigating and other factors)?

Below are the steps to be taken when responding to aggressive and/or bullying incidents that could happen at your school. The steps are based on the Progressive Discipline PPM 145. Progressive discipline utilizes a continuum of interventions to provide support to teach appropriate behaviours and consequences to address appropriate behaviour. The six steps to address bullying are outlined in the chart below.

Responding to Aggressive and Bullying Incidents:

Diagram (cycle): Identify → Educate → Engage in long term strategy → Apply in-school sanctions → Suspend → Expel

INTERVENE IN AGGRESSIVE AND/OR BULLYING INTERACTIONS: STEP 1

Step 1: Identify	This level of intervention applies to all aggressive and bullying incidents.
Response is immediate and takes about 3 minutes.	**Stop the Aggression or Bullying** It is important that all children and youth understand the school's commitment to ensuring their safety. • Interrupt the bullying in front of anyone who witnesses it. Say, "*Stop it. That's bullying*." • Make sure all children and youth in the area hear your comments.
	Identify the Behaviour as Aggression or Bullying A major goal is to take the "spotlight" off the child/youth being targeted and turn the focus to the behavior. • Label the form of bullying (physical, verbal, social or electronic): "*I noticed (saw, heard) _____.*

September 2022

	• Identify the problem behaviour with reference to the school's Code of Conduct: "*Our school's Code of Conduct says we must treat everyone with respect.*"
	Broaden the Response Help children or youth who bully realize the negative impacts of their actions. • Identify the aggression and bullying behavior in the context of the impact on other children and youth at the school: "*This can also hurt others who overhear it.*" • Identify the behaviour, <u>not the person</u>, as negative and indicate the expectations for children or youth: "*At this school, we do not put people down.*" or "*Our school does not appreciate hurtful behavior. We support and are respectful to other children/youth.*"
	Ask for Positive Change in Future Behavior Speak directly to the child or youth who is bullying and personalize the response. • "*(Use the child/youth's name), please pause and think before you act.*" Be sure to be supportive to the child or youth who was victimized. • Check in with the child or youth who was bullied: "*All children and youth in our school have the right to be safe and be treated respectfully. I am sorry this happened to you and I will work to help ensure that it will not happen again.*"
Response requires short-term follow up.	**Follow up** • Record the incident and report it to the principal. • Determine if this is bullying or aggression (use the tool). If this is bullying, continue to Step 2.

INTERVENING IN AGGRESSIVE AND/OR BULLYING INTERACTIONS: STEP 2

Step 2: Educate	**This is a response to every bullying incident.** Complete Step 1 first.
	Identify (See above) • Includes all steps in Step 1.
	Educational Opportunities for Learning Children and youth who bully must learn that their behaviour is inappropriate and harmful to the other people involved. They need to acquire the understanding and skills that allow them to interact positively and respectfully with others. Educational learning opportunities will help children and youth develop the insights and empathy needed to modify their behaviour.

September 2022

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Educational learning opportunities must be (a) swift, (b) consistently applied, and (c) delivered in a nonaggressive manner—***hostile adults inadvertently teach children to use aggression***.

Examples of Educational Consequences
Have the child or youth who bullied:
- Lead a class discussion (e.g., harmful effects of bullying, how peers can prevent bullying)
- Write a story (e.g., about the negative impact of bullying)
- Write a note to their parents/guardians explaining their behaviour and the consequences of it
- Develop a role play
- Prepare a class presentation
- Read about bullying prevention
- Make posters for the school
- Work on learning to see the perspective of other children/youth and empathize
- Work on building leadership skills and find opportunity for positive leadership (e.g., leadership in play, clubs and team involvement)

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Repair

Given that children or youth have to interact at school, it is important to repair their relationship(s) so that it does not negatively influence the school climate and perceptions of safety. Involve the child or youth who was bullying in making amends or repairing the relationship to help him or her take responsibility for his/her behaviour and to develop an understanding of the impact of bullying. If the child or youth who was bullying cannot authentically apologize for his/her behaviour, use an indirect method (e.g., writing a letter of apology) rather than a direct apology (e.g., a restorative meeting).

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Follow up (To help ensure ongoing check-ins)

Contact Parents/Guardians
- Contact parents/guardians of both the child or youth who engaged in bullying and the child or youth who was bullied
- Provide some information about what happened, how it was addressed (progressive discipline, the learning opportunities) while respecting the privacy of all students involved. Explain the monitoring and following-up plans to avoid repeated events
- Engage parents/guardians by asking for their support in monitoring the situation and ensuring that it does not happen again

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	• Follow-up with the parents/guardians either with a phone call, email, or note home **one week** after the event to find out how the child/youth is doing and if further information is needed **Monitor the Child or Youth** Identify a school staff member who can check in with the child or youth who bullied and the child or youth who was victimized **the day following the incident**. Use a 'three, two, one' strategy: (i) Check-in three times in the first week following the incident, (ii) Two times in the second week following the incident and, (iii) One time in the third week following the incident. Frequent check-ins with the child or youth who bullied let him/her know that adults are concerned about the behaviour and are monitoring the situation to help ensure that the bullying has stopped. It also supports the child or youth who was victimized, by reinforcing his/her understanding that he/she has a right to be safe, that the adults in the school are concerned about safety, and that they are following up to help ensure that the bullying has stopped.
INTERVENING IN AGGRESSIVE AND/OR BULLYING INTERACTIONS: STEP 3	
Step 3: Support and Counsel	**Children and youth who are repeatedly involved in bullying may require more intensive support.**
Response is on the spot.	**Identify** • Includes all steps in Step 1. • See above descriptions.
	Educate • Includes all steps in Step 2. • See above descriptions
	Developing a Long Term Strategy for the Student who Bullies and for the Student who is Victimized When a problem with either the child who engages in bullying or the child being bullied persists over time in spite of educational intervention, more intensive support is required:

	• Identify the supports that are available within the school, board, and community to assist in the interventions for the child/youth involved in bullying • Meet with parents/guardians to review the problem and potential solutions which may include exploring the underlying causes of the aggressive behaviour, as well as recognizing the child/youths' strengths and challenges • Based on the child/youths' needs consider the appropriate intervention (e.g., individual counselling, mental health support, parenting/guardian support, skills training). • Assess the need for academic support • Work with the parents/guardians to connect with the appropriate supports and resources within the school, the board, or the community
	Monitoring and Follow-up Follow up with parents/guardians and the child/youth to continue the support and help ensure that positive progress is being made.
INTERVENING IN AGGRESSIVE AND/OR BULLYING INTERACTIONS: STEP 4	
Step 4: Apply in-school sanctions	**Children and youth who are not responding to Steps 1 – 3, may need to have sanctions applied while at school.**
	Identify • Includes all steps in Step 1. • See above descriptions.
	Educate • Includes all steps in Step 2. • See above descriptions.
	Engaging in a Long Term Strategy • Includes all steps in Step 3. • See above descriptions.
	Apply in-school Sanctions to child/youth Engaging in Bullying If the above steps have not been successful in stopping bullying and learning positive behaviours, it may be necessary to introduce appropriate consequences. Schools determine their own progressive discipline measures (e.g., exclusion from extracurricular school activities, think papers, community

	service, detention etc.) in order to keep children and youth safe. Taking into account mitigating factors, detention has been identified as an appropriate strategy within the Ministry of Education's Progressive Discipline Policy.
INTERVENING IN AGGRESSIVE AND/OR BULLYING INTERACTIONS: STEP 5	
Step 5: Suspend	**Once mitigating factors have been taken into account, students may remain on this level for repeated bullying incidents.**
	Identify • Includes all steps in Step 1.
	Educate • Includes all steps in Step 2.
	Engaging in a Long Term Strategy • Includes all steps in Step 3.
	Apply in-school Sanctions to child/ youth Engaging in Bullying • Includes all steps in Step 4.
	Suspend child/youth Engaging in Bullying For safety reasons, it may be necessary to exclude the child/youth from the school for a limited period of time. It is important for the child/youth to remain connected to the school and to his/her academic program, consequently, providing access to learning resources. Developing reintegration strategies sets the expectation that the child/youth will rejoin the school community and abide by the school bullying prevention plan and code of conduct. If available, children/youth can be referred to alternative programs that build skills, behaviours, and positive attitudes, as well as ongoing learning opportunities.
INTERVENING IN AGGRESSIVE AND/OR BULLYING INTERACTIONS: STEP 6	
Step 6: Expel	**This is the final step.**
	Identify
	Educate
	Engaging in a Long Term Strategy
	Apply in-school Sanctions to child/youth Engaging in Bullying
	Suspend child/youth Engaging in Bullying
	Expel child/youth Engaging in Bullying

	• According to the Ministry of Education, in extreme cases, a decision may be made that a child/youth cannot return to his/her school.

POSSIBLE FOLLOW UP	
	The only way that you will know whether bullying has stopped is by following up with the victimized child/youth. Set up regular follow up meetings. For example, the following meeting schedule can be effective: i) daily for the first week ii) every other day during the second week, and iii) once during the third week if the bullying has stopped. In these follow up meetings, you can focus your discussion on questions such as: 1) How have things at school been for you since we last met? 2) Have you experienced any bullying? 3) Have you experienced any problems because you reported bullying? 4) Are there other students you can stay with so that you feel safe? If children and youth still experience bullying during the follow up period, you need to reinforce strategies with those who are bullying to help ensure it stops.

Final Consideration

To understand and effectively address bullying, a "binocular" view is needed. With only one lens, the focus is limited to the individual needs of students involved in all roles within bullying: those being aggressive, those being victimized, and those who witness bullying. This singular view, however, falls short in providing a thorough understanding of bullying problems. By adding a second lens, as with binoculars, it can expand the focus to include student's relationships. This second perspective takes into account the

September 2022

social dynamics in their peer groups—and the roles that adults play in shaping their experiences. Together these two lenses offer a more comprehensive perspective on bullying problems. This deeper understanding of the complexity of the issues will lead to recognize the multiple approaches required to address bullying problems.

Reference

The content of these slides is based directly on and drawn from the PREVNet document *Bullying Prevention and Intervention in the School Environment: Factsheets and Tools,* 2014, developed by Dr. Debra Pepler and Dr. Wendy Craig (www.prevnet.ca).

For additional information and support in bullying prevention and intervention planning, please contact the HWCDSB Superintendent of Education and/or Mental Health Lead.