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# A Collaborative Interagency Educational Approach

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### What is SchoolsPlus?

SchoolsPlus is Nova Scotia’s collaborative interagency approach to educating the whole child and family. As a component of the “Our Kids are Worth It: Strategy for Children and Youth”, SchoolsPlus is a direct response to Commissioner Nunn’s recommendation of the need for improved co-ordination and collaboration in the delivery of services for children, youth and families. SchoolsPlus is predicated on the “belief that all families benefit from some level of support” (Our Kids Are Worth It, 2007:17) and that we need to co-ordinate activities and resources “so efforts and dollars are not duplicated or wasted” (Our Kids Are Worth It, 2007:19).

### Our Vision:

The vision for SchoolsPlus is that schools become the hub of the community, and a convenient place for services to be delivered to families.

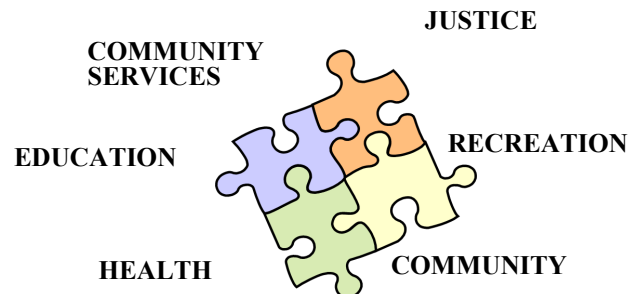
### Background Information:

Implementation of SchoolsPlus within the Halifax Regional School Board began in December, 2008. The initiative operates within the Program Department, Programs and Student Services division and proactively supports student achievement by:

- Facilitating the availability of resources necessary to ensure interagency support
- Providing direct support to children and youth (and where appropriate their families) identified as being in need of access to further programs and services to facilitate their success in and out of school
- Developing and enhancing partnerships with external agencies with the intention of facilitating on-site services and supports
- Outreaching to community to identify and remove barriers impeding success in and out of school
- Timely identifying and responding to children, youth and families requiring support services
- Promoting programming aimed at improving student attendance and engagement

### Our Logo:

The puzzle symbolizes integrated service delivery and exemplifies the significance of inter-agency collaboration as a critical component of school success.

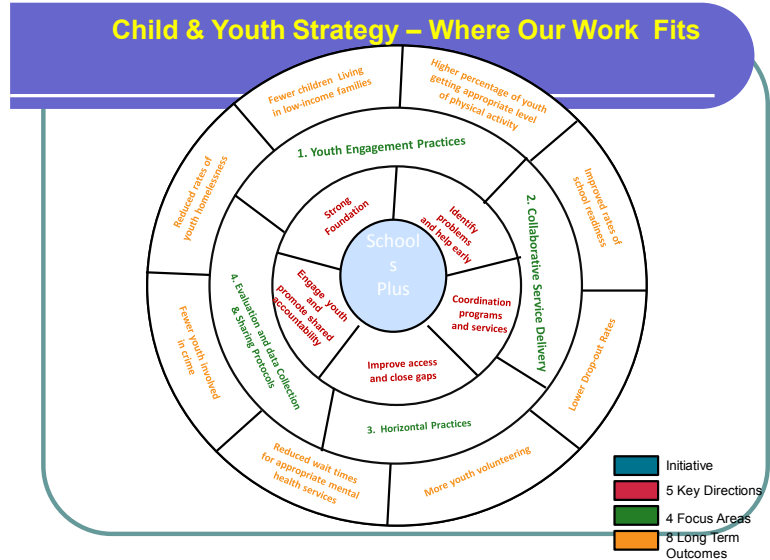




# Where Our Work Fits

SchoolsPlus is guided by the Key Directions of the Child and Youth Strategy namely:

- Identifying problems and helping early
- Building a strong foundation
- Engaging youth and promoting shared accountability
- Improving access and closing gaps
- Coordinating Programs and Services



“Before when there was a meeting at the school I would have a hard time getting there because I don’t have a car. Now because of SchoolsPlus Community Outreach I am able to call and she helps me get there and as a result I am able to attend meetings and I feel more involved.”

(Parent)

# Staffing Roles & Responsibilities

## SchoolsPlus Leader

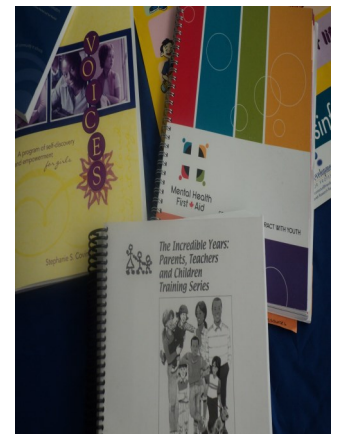
Within the Halifax Regional School Board SchoolsPlus is coordinated by a **SchoolsPlus Leader** who is responsible for :

- Networking and advocating for the SchoolsPlus initiative
- Monitoring the progress of students served and facilitating outcomes achievement
- Assessing ongoing development and potential expansion of the program
- Staffing supervision, succession planning and professional development
- Consulting with the Schools Plus Advisory Committee and coordinating sub-committee workplans
- Resource management and allocation

## SchoolsPlus Community Outreach Workers

**SchoolsPlus Community Outreach Workers** are individually assigned designated SchoolsPlus sites to:

- Work proactively with families and community to facilitate services to students
- Establish an active network of community groups representing the diverse nature of the community
- Ensure effective connections and communication between the school, families and other appropriate agencies
- Research, facilitate and/or monitor site-based programs on behalf of students, parents and the school



# SchoolsPlus offers Three Levels of Distinct Service

## Direct Service

- Advocating and supporting youth and their families in accessing resources
- Coordinating, attending and/or facilitating attendance at meeting with and on behalf of students
- Facilitating evidence-based programming
- Identifying and locating resources to close gaps and develop networks of supports for children, youth and families

## Collaborative Service

- Strategic engagement with departmental, municipal and community agencies to provide diverse and evidence-based programming
- Capacity building towards greater competency and resilience
- Interagency consultation, collaboration and decision-making

## Collateral Support

- Partnerships in support of school-community initiatives
- Programming assistance

### Examples of Partnerships/Co-location

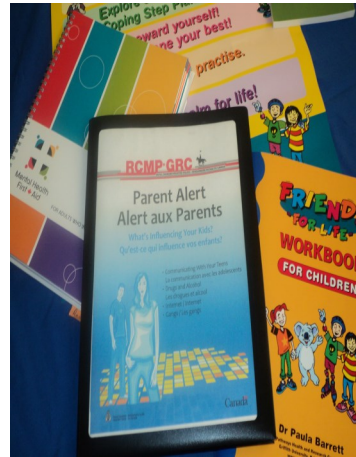
- SchoolsPlus-Departmental/Municipal Workplans
- Halifax Regional Municipality Community Recreation
- IWK Mental Health and Addictions
- Our Healthy Schools, Dental Sealant Project
- Youth Advocate Program
- Probation and Halifax Youth Attendance Centre Resources
- Dept. of Community Services Specialists' Workplan Initiatives

### Examples of Programs and Services

- OK2BeMe, Swim to Survive, Two Schools Together Project
- HRM Leadership, Step Up to Leadership
- Breakfast Programs, Restorative Practices, Lunch Programs

### Examples of Training for Students, Parents and/or Staff

- Trauma-Informed Training, Child Abuse Protocol Training, Mental Health First Aid
- Cultural Competency, African Drumming, Global Tour
- Incredible Years Parent Program, HRM Volunteer Conference
- Voices Girls Empowerment Program, Emergency First Aid, Home Alone



*“Before when I didn’t attend school I would stay home. Now because of SchoolsPlus I was going to tutoring, then when I got back to school I caught up on my grades and I might grade.”*

## What Schools are saying...

Because of SchoolsPlus our students have had access to so much more than they did before and parents are more aware of what is out there for their kids.” (Teacher)

“Because of SchoolsPlus our work has become easier and student success/involvement has become greater.” (Staff member)



## SchoolsPlus Sites—2013-2014

### SchoolsPlus Services are available at the following schools:

#### Nelson Whynder Elementary School\*

- Ross Road School

#### Bicentennial School\*

- Southdale-Northwoodside
- South Woodside
- Prince Arthur Jr. High School
- Crichton Park
- Hawthorn

#### Harbour View School\*

- John Martin Jr. High School
- Shannon Park
- John McNeil

#### St. Joseph's A. McKay\*

- Highland Park

#### Elizabeth Sutherland School\*

- John W. McLeod-Fleming Tower
- Cunard Jr. High School
- Chebucto Heights

#### Joseph Howe School\*

- Oxford School

#### Rockingstone Heights School\*

- Central Spryfield
- William King
- Sambro
- Harrietsfield
- Herring Cove Jr. High

#### Hillside Park\*

- AJ Smeltzer
- Caudle Park
- Sackville Centennial
- Sycamore Lane
- Cavalier Drive
- Leslie Thomas
- Gertrude Parker
- Smokey Drive

\* Indicates Hub Site



*What WE need to know about community...*

*“You need to know our strengths and challenges, our dreams and fears, our barriers to success and access and our willingness to engage....”*

*“You need to know and understand what an “investment” in relationships and people is about to work effectively with us .”*

*(Community Member)*

### SchoolsPlus Advisory Committee

*SchoolsPlus is supported by an inter-departmental advisory committee with membership from across various divisions of Health, Recreation, Justice, Community Services and Education.*

For more information on SchoolsPlus– HRSB contact:  
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<http://www.hrsb.ns.ca/content/id/1249.html>