

Making every school a health-promoting school

Country case studies

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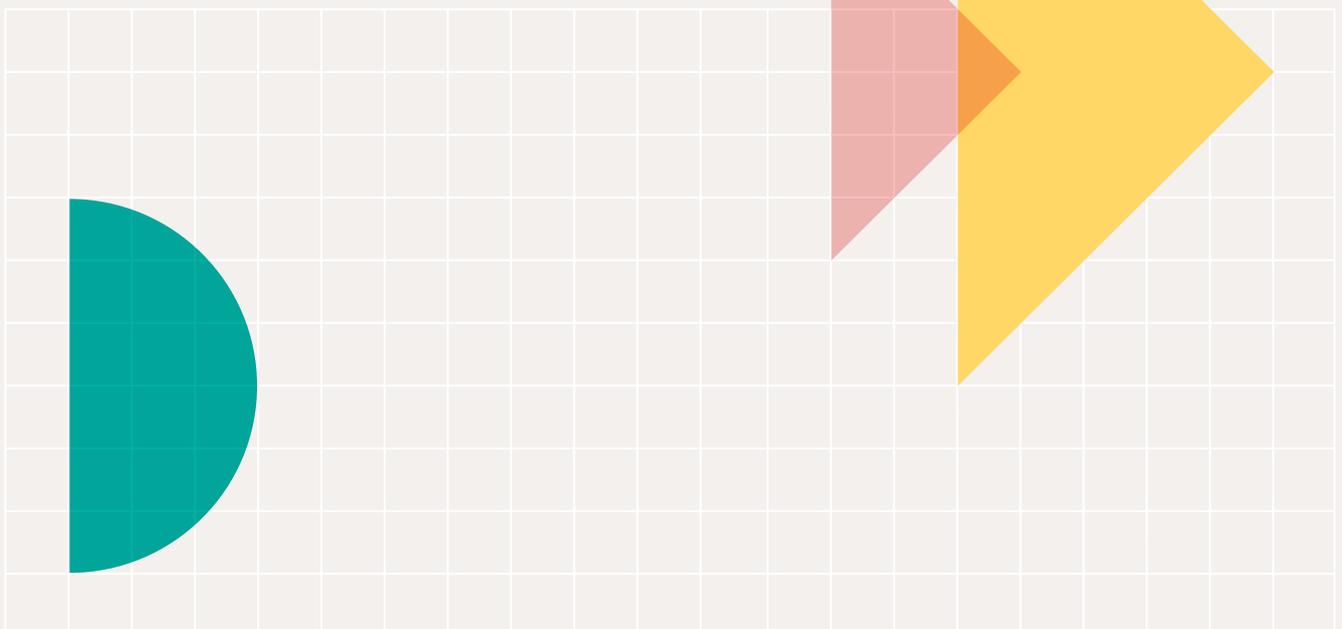
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Foreword

Around the world, schools play a vital role in the well-being of students, families and their broader communities.

The closure of many schools during the COVID-19 pandemic has caused severe disruptions to education, caused an estimated 365 million primary school students to go without school meals and significantly increased rates of stress, anxiety and other mental health issues. Past experience also tells us that in some parts of the world, when schools close for more than a few weeks, there are increases in early and forced marriage, early pregnancy, child labour and domestic violence.

The right to education and the right to health are core human rights and essential to social and economic development. Now more than ever, it is important to make all schools places that promote, protect and nurture health and that contribute to well-being, life skills, cognitive and socioemotional skills and healthy lifestyles in a safe learning environment. Such schools are more resilient and better able to ensure continuity in education and services, beyond the delivery of literacy and numeracy.

The idea of health-promoting schools was first articulated by WHO, UNESCO and UNICEF in 1995. Yet few countries have implemented it at scale, and even fewer have made the institutional changes necessary to make health promotion an integrated and sustainable part of the education system. In 2015, experts in health-promoting schools identified the lack of systematic support, limited resources and a common understanding and approach as major challenges.

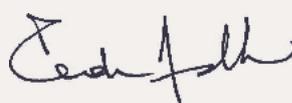
Yet no education system can be effective unless it promotes the health and well-being of its students, staff and community.

Every education system should have institutionalized policies, mechanisms and resources to promote health and well-being in all aspects of school life, including teaching, curriculum and school governance based on participatory processes that are inclusive of the broader community. This requires re-orienting education systems towards a systematic approach to health-promoting schools and allocation of resources so that each level of governance has the infrastructure and the means to implement policies and programmes for better education, health and well-being.

The Global Standards for Health-promoting Schools provide a resource for education systems to use to foster health and well-being through stronger governance. Building on a large body of evidence, eight global standards are proposed, while the accompanying Implementation Guidance details 13 implementation areas, associated strategies and a process that will enable country-specific adaptation. In addition, several case studies illustrate how health promotion in schools is being implemented in low- and middle-income countries.

If implemented, these global standards could improve the health and well-being of 1.9 billion school-aged children, adolescents and staff worldwide, delivering a triple dividend for students today, the adults of tomorrow and the generation of children to come.

Join our effort and let's "Make Every School a Health-promoting School".



Dr Tedros Ghebreyesus
Director-General
World Health Organization



Audrey Azoulay
Director-General
UNESCO



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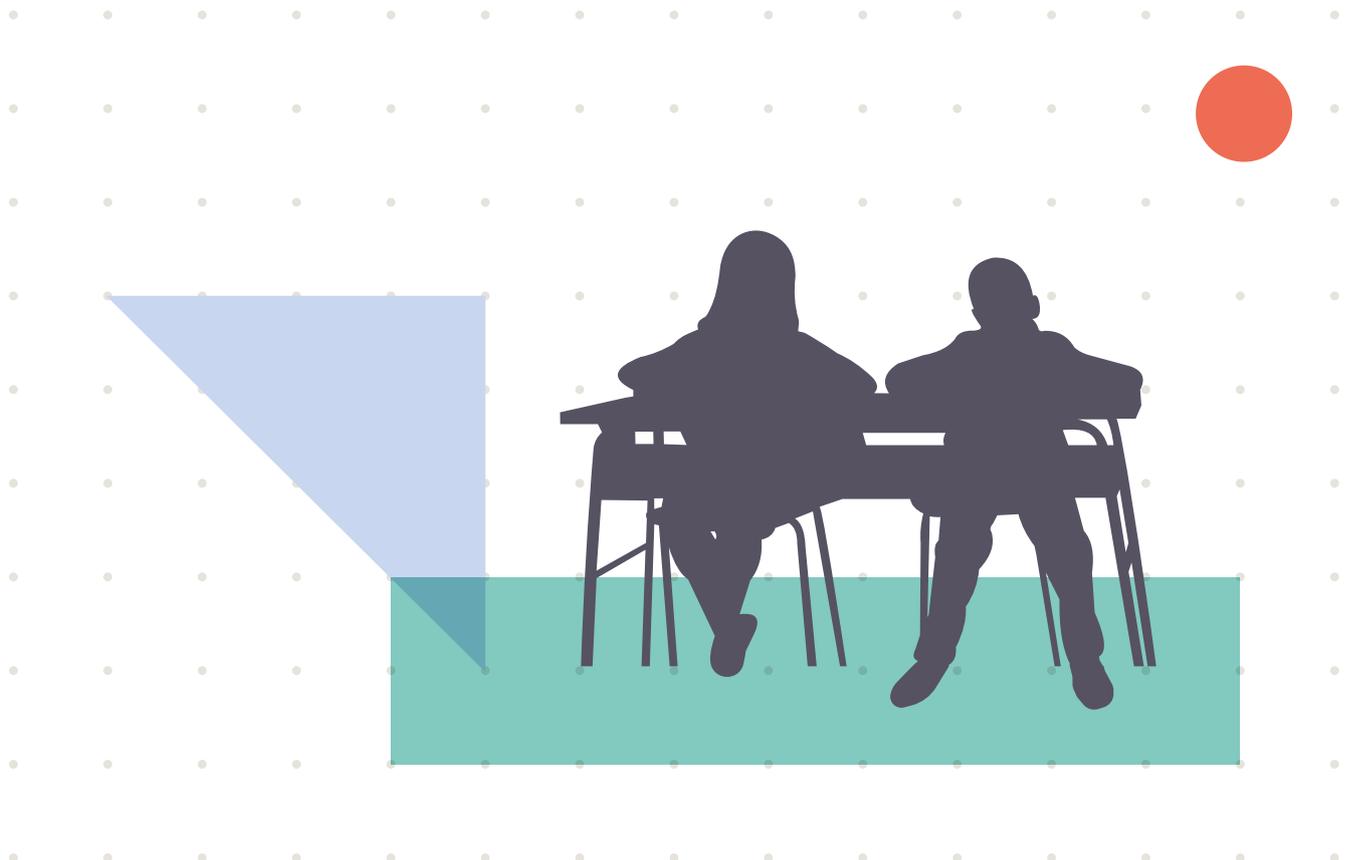
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Abbreviations and acronyms

COVID-19	coronavirus disease 2019
HPS	health-promoting schools
HSS	healthy school strategy
LMIC	low- and middle-income countries
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
UKS	<i>Usaha kesehatan kekolah</i> (school health programme in Indonesia)
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WASH	water, sanitation and hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

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