

# Marketing Wellness through curriculum, collaboration, and technology at Elgin Park Secondary School

## School:

Elgin Park Secondary School

## Contact:

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## Process:

The primary goal and challenge this year at Elgin Park Secondary School was finding a way to raise funds for the school through 100% healthy food sales and encourage the student body to adopt healthy living practices.

Students in the Business Education class were asked to help their peers make healthy eating habits for life to counter the growing health epidemic facing students. The students then used their marketing skills to create wellness advertisements using technology such as word processor flyers and slideshow advertisements. Students were not just selling products they were also promoting “healthy living” by creating advertisements in a three part unit based on brain trivia (-mind), physical activity (-body), and school community involvement and celebration (-spirit).

This project made them reflect on what their peers would buy and the learning process included self-reflections of their own eating habits in order to help them psychologically understand the eating patterns of their fellow students.

In the end, students at Elgin Park Secondary learned to successfully market wellness to students through the use of collaboration, leadership and technology to sell healthy products to the school student population.

After completing this process with his students, Business Education teacher Jay Mundi had the following advice to share with other educators interested in similar initiatives:

## TEACHERS:

- Begin with a strong vision and philosophy in mind
- Set your goals high
- Research and understand the impact of unhealthy lifestyles
- Be a role model of health for your students- practice what you preach

## MARKETING 4 STORES:

- Try a number of products
- Take calculated risks- do not just buy and try any product –get your students to survey your target population
- Product tests- Ask distributors for free samples of healthy products to try
- Give free samples- everyone loves free stuff
- Price items on sale



- Create healthy “loss leaders”- items sold for less than cost but recover the cost from a profitable product
- Use your marketing students to run and operate your school store
- Think outside the box and sell items other than food, like electronics, stationary and clothes

#### COLLABORATION:

- Work together with your school community
- Involve all stakeholders: students, parents, teachers, administrators, etc.
- Approach community members for financial assistance
- Ask advice and information from local health experts

#### TECHNOLOGY

- Set increasing digital literacy as a school, departmental, or personal goal
- Find creative ways to include technology in your curriculum
- Allow students to use different programs to illustrate their work
- Research and list pre-approved websites for students to search rather than allowing unlimited internet searches
- Go over proper search engine techniques with students
- Monitor the room every 15-20 minutes to ensure students are on task
- Check on both their progress & understanding
- Use technology in your daily life to become more fluent

#### LEADERSHIP

- Use distributed leadership to assign tasks to others
- Empower others in your school community
- Create chances for students to take leadership roles
- Take risks- you can not always learn from the mistakes of others
- Be a trendsetter- take chances to set the standard for others to follow
- Good ideas sell themselves- you should not have to “sell” them

#### **People Involved:**

In order to begin this initiative at Elgin Park, a “wellness committee” was created to address marketing wellness within the school community. This team was expanded to include students and parents. The team quickly realized that trying to resolve community problems requires community involvement. As a result health experts from the community were requested to join the mission. The school received assistance from the Fraser health Authority, Surrey schools Foods Management and BC Cancer Society.

#### **Key Changes or Results:**

At the beginning and end of the unit a wellness survey was conducted to assist students to visualize and assess their current lifestyles. The same survey was used again at the end of the units to assess if any changes had occurred in their lifestyles. The results revealed a majority of

students reported positive changes in their own lives due to making better wellness choices. Informal interviews conducted by the teacher-researcher also illustrated students had replaced unhealthy choices with more positive habits by the end of the study period.

**Challenges:**

Collaborative work is not easy to coordinate and conduct, but Elgin Park found it to be vitally important and imperative for finding solutions to pervasive problems in society.

**Solutions/Keys to Success:**

Keys to success included gaining support from several community champions, such as financial support from the Parental Advisory Committee to buy technology equipment, technical and financial support from local corporations and recognizing the Business Education class for their dedication and commitment to excellence.