



REMARKS

By

The Minister of Health and Seniors

The Hon. Jeanne Atherden, JP, MP

on Wednesday, 8 June, 2016, 3:00pm

at The Bermuda Society of Arts, City Hall

Healthy Schools Programme 2016

Good afternoon,

My colleague, Minister Scott, and I are honoured to be here today to acknowledge your schools' participation in the Healthy Schools Programme.

Minister Scott and I are here *together* because we know that the Healthy Schools programme is a vital link between education and health. In addition, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and our community health partners have a common goal: ensuring that our school students are healthy.

I believe that our strategy for a Well Bermuda must target every age group. Almost all of a child's growth takes place while he or she is a student, so schools are the perfect place to teach important lessons

about the relationship between nutrition, health and wellness. The simple fact is that when students are healthy, they are better able to achieve their potential. Students, I want you to know that you are well on the way to establishing lifelong healthy habits that will allow you to become viable and healthy members of our society, and I want to congratulate you all on your outstanding achievements.

Today, we celebrate and recognize the schools that have consistently promoted health to their students, staff and communities. Again, this year, schools will also be recognized for making great strides in promoting health. Through the ten components of health, the assessment process aims to help standardise health in schools.

The Healthy Schools Programme recognizes that the culture and philosophy of each school is somewhat unique. In addition, each school interacts with its community in different ways as it promotes health. I have no doubt that the Healthy Schools Awards Committee had a major challenge in assessing schools again this year!

This year, Healthy Schools moved from the Eight-Component Model to the U.S. Centres for Disease Control and Prevention's 10-Component Model, which places the student at the centre of many social influences that affect a child's development. These components enable Healthy Schools to standardize what health looks like in schools through school health policies and Bermuda Laws.

Last year, we recognized schools through the Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze Awards. From this year forward, Healthy Schools will assess schools through a 3-year cycle as follows: Year 1 - One Component; Year 2 - the first Five Components; and Year 3 - the second Five Components. This move was made to reduce the demands

and stress on schools to complete the Healthy Schools Assessment; and because Healthy Schools had achieved a historical health picture of each school since the assessments started in 2007.

This year, a total of 26 of 32 public and private primary, middle and senior schools were reviewed. Those schools will be recognized here today as we celebrate all school health promotion activities. Each school received a Gold Star and has been designated as a health promoting school.

In addition, 31 individuals were nominated as Health Champions by their schools and 8 school nurses have been recognised for their consistent support of Health Promotion in their schools.

Furthermore, this year, the number of government schools advocating a Water-Only Policy Policies or Practices increased from 3 to 13! These schools promote the consumption of water as the only beverage on campus and / or allow their students to sip water in the classroom throughout the day. Students are allowed to keep reusable water bottles on their desks and / or make frequent visits to filtered water fountains.

My colleague, the Hon. Minister Scott, and I will present to you the recipients who earned Health Champion Awards; Health Promoting Awards; Special Recognition Awards; and Healthy Schools Gold Star Awards.