Meghan is an energetic, curious and engaged Grade 4 student from West Springs School whose class spent an exciting week at Healthy Living School (HLS) this year. Teachers at West Springs (like other participating schools) developed inquiry questions to test at HLS and build a year-long study of curriculum connections. The inquiry that Meghan’s class selected was, “How to live your best life?” Collectively, the students determined the answer: be happy, eat healthy and exercise. By all accounts, Meghan took the learnings to heart, translating them into her daily life and ultimately impacting her family’s attitudes and choices.

Meghan is a very active 10-year-old, playing soccer in the spring and basketball throughout the fall and winter. She rides her bike, bounces on the family’s trampoline and even enjoys skiing. However, she has come to understand that living a healthy active lifestyle is about more than just participating in organized activities a few times a week. After dinner is a good time for the whole family to play outside. Reminding her parents that walking to do errands – rather than taking the car – is the smarter choice. Meghan’s mother Jody has noticed a real change in her daughter since HLS. Now, her awareness of healthful choices is at the forefront. Journaling during her intensive week at HLS has helped Meghan retain the knowledge.

The great granola bar debate
Meghan’s awareness of nutrition now permeates family life. Joining her Mom grocery shopping, she is an advocate of reading the labels of snack foods scanning for additives and sugar content. This recently led to the great granola bar debate wherein Jody had kyboshed Meghan’s selected snack, deeming it unhealthy. Surely her honey and oat bar must be more nutritious than Meghan’s choice of honey and oat with yogurt. But, the proof was in the label and Mom’s pick was loaded with sucrose. Meghan’s choice prevailed!

One of the unique aspects of HLS is the variety of guest speakers that students are exposed to. Meghan has difficulty picking her favourite speaker, calling it a tie between the climbing instructor, the nutritionist and the police officer.

Police Interrogation – The Good Kind
Meghan was delighted to interview the visiting officer, declaring “I want to be a police officer when I grow up.” She noted that policemen need to eat a LOT of nutritious food in order to carry 25 pounds of equipment. Constable Steve Kelly has caught a few hundred bad guys in his 19 year career, mostly using his brain. Patience and being able to approach people were key messages communicated to the future recruit.
Smart Risks
As part of the curriculum developed to address the chosen inquiry, students at West Springs School explored the 16 Habits of Mind throughout the year (for more info, see the diagram on page 3). A Habit of Mind means having a disposition toward behaving intelligently when confronted with problems, the answers to which are not immediately known: dichotomies, dilemmas, enigmas and uncertainties.

The students were asked to use the habits as a guide to select the top five activities they wanted to do during HLS at Vivo. One student made an impassioned appeal for the class to try the climbing wall – reasoning that it fit in perfectly with habit number 13, Taking Responsible Risks. This habit encourages kids to expand their horizons by being adventuresome and living on the edge of one’s competence. Meghan was a natural at climbing (see the photo on the inside cover), scampering up the wall with no fear. Eyes wide, she explains that the activity qualifies as a responsible risk. It was carefully monitored by trained staff and the kids wore safety equipment. And, each student was encouraged to participate within their comfort zone.

The Voice of a New Generation
Mount Royal University and Vivo hosted a roundtable, engaging leaders from a variety of sectors to discuss solutions to the national crisis of child and youth inactivity. The students from West Springs School were invited to be the generational voice, working with a group of adults to design an active space for seniors.

To close the roundtable session, each student was invited to share one word to describe their experience at the Healthy Living School. Meghan chose fun.

Walking Tall Happily
Jody sums up HLS’s impact on her daughter this way, “She is walking tall with a sense of purpose and comfort! And, the happiness part! “It’s about family and friends,” Meghan grins. Nicely done Meghan, nicely done.
As previously noted, teachers use the inquiry questions to develop the year’s curriculum; one example is Building Our World.

Teachers asked students to create a community using bulletin boards. The kids identified that there are houses in a community, then they decorated those houses. Next, they added a school. They changed the board up with the seasons and for major holidays. After they came to Vivo and explored the community, the students added a “Vivo,” a grocery store and other amenities. Near the end of the year, they built a small city for ladybugs. Included in that city was a ladybug-sized Vivo!

**How to live your best life? Be active!**

**Connecting to my world by sharpening my saw – A student enjoys snow play.**

**Developing a sense of self and community – The students are captivated at fire station #31.**

**Character building through sport – National sports athletes Dylan Marineau (Alpine Skiing) and Nina Hill (cycling) share how their hard work and dedication to training has helped them build character.**

**See, touch, taste, smell and hear – How do we make sense of health? A student examines apples with interest.**

**How can healthy choices improve quality of life? – HLS kids talk to yoga instructor Nina Van Staden about the benefits of yoga.**

**How do we go from ‘me’ to ‘we’? Students from West Springs School spoke at the Leadership Roundtable hosted by Vivo and Mount Royal University. As the generational voice, the students participated in groups discussing how to make Calgary more active.**

**Collaboration within our community – During the week students gathered data from experts about collaboration and community. Using their new knowledge they created metaphors for community during the week. The students proudly present their metaphors to Vivo’s retired CEO, Sue Scott.**

**How to live your best life? Be active!**

**Connecting to my world by sharpening my saw – A student enjoys snow play.**

**Developing a sense of self and community – The students are captivated at fire station #31.**

**Character building through sport – National sports athletes Dylan Marineau (Alpine Skiing) and Nina Hill (cycling) share how their hard work and dedication to training has helped them build character.**

**See, touch, taste, smell and hear – How do we make sense of health? A student examines apples with interest.**

**How can healthy choices improve quality of life? – HLS kids talk to yoga instructor Nina Van Staden about the benefits of yoga.**

**How do we go from ‘me’ to ‘we’? Students from West Springs School spoke at the Leadership Roundtable hosted by Vivo and Mount Royal University. As the generational voice, the students participated in groups discussing how to make Calgary more active.**

**Collaboration within our community – During the week students gathered data from experts about collaboration and community. Using their new knowledge they created metaphors for community during the week. The students proudly present their metaphors to Vivo’s retired CEO, Sue Scott.**
The program focuses on the ways healthy living contributes to a vibrant community and highlights kid’s roles within that community. Through a combination of active sessions, journaling and special presentations, students learn essential skills in relationship building, nutrition, environmental studies, goal setting and leadership development. Through a holistic approach to well-being, students will discover a sense of self that builds strong communities and sparks a lifelong commitment to improving quality of life.

“We’re very pleased to support programs that invest in the health of children and youth as they are the future. The Healthy Living School gives students and teachers the opportunity to learn about healthy behaviours and establish life-long habits that will continue to support a vibrant community now. We feel fortunate to be able to support programs like this one that have a positive impact on the communities where we live and work.”

Leanne Courchesne, Cenovus Group Lead, Community Affairs.

“Vivo we’re all about community; coming together to connect, celebrate, educate and play. We couldn’t provide innovative and transformative learning opportunities like Healthy Living School without the generous support of like-minded community leaders such as Cenovus. Together we really can raise healthier generations and make a measurable difference in lives of children and families now and in the future.”

Cynthia Watson, Vivo CEO

ABOUT HEALTHY LIVING SCHOOL

21 WEEKS
11 SCHOOLS
GRADES 1–9
444 STUDENTS
436 VOLUNTEERS

THANKS TO OUR FOUNDING SPONSOR, CENOVUS
The students were surveying the people around Vivo. One group spoke to a man with little English. Some of the students were able to ask this man the survey questions in Punjabi. The students were so proud to use their native language to communicate.

"Ms. Leigh! I asked him all the questions in Punjabi! I am so proud of myself!"
Grade 3 Student

"The weird thing since I started Healthy Living School. In my sandwich, I normally have just ham and cheese, but since I am at HLS I wanted healthier foods so I put cucumber in my sandwich. I will continue to do this after HLS. Maybe a little while down the road I will add tomato."
Grade 3 Student

"I only play my iPad on the weekend and that makes me feel impressed."
Grade 2 Student

"My class tried what we learned at HLS into our Building and Testing unit. Students designed their own healthy classrooms. They included a lot of features that were discussed during our week at HLS. The most surprising part for me was their ability to communicate how the features they placed in their classrooms would promote health. The language they used was eloquent and convincing."
Grade 4 Teacher

"I’m freaking out! I’m going to have to go home and go through my entire pantry."
Parent Volunteer

Thanks to individuals, organizations and program partners who contributed their valuable time and expertise both in the classroom and in the community.

Thanks to our guest presenters who helped bring the curriculum to life with their informative and engaging presentations:

- Art Therapy – Yasmine Valim
- Brain Gym – Patricia Elford
- Calgary Police Services – Constable Steve Kelly, Constable Dennis McHugh and Constable Roy Moe
- Cenovus Energy, Community Investment – Leanne Courchesne
- Energy Experts – Angela Bianco, Michael Cody
- DANCEPL3Y Kid’s Instructors – Brook Farkas, Gordon Lam, Matt Leung, Sarah England and Vanessa Paglione
- Fire Station #31
- Holistic Nutrition – Sam Rafoss
- Lobby Tree Idea Generation – Adam Weir and Devon Hamilton
- National Sports School Students
- Notre Dame High School – Chris O’Neil
- Panther Physio – Stacey Tessier
- Poppy Innovations – Sharon McCormick
- Superstore Community Kitchen – Pam Graf
- Tai Chi – Jessica Poje
- Vivo Team: Cynthia Watson, Lorrie Lancaster and Tracey Martin
- Yoga – Nina Van Staten