

THIRD IBERO-AMERICAN CONTEST FOR HEALTH PROMOTION PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS SETTINGS (2011)

The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) in alliance with PROINAPSA-UIS convokes the **Third Ibero-American Contest for health promotion practices in schools settings**.

This year's competition is designed to identify how the countries in Latin America and specifically through different experiences of health promotion in schools, are responding to the challenges and commitments proposed in three major conferences of the Region:

1. **The High-Level Meeting on Non-communicable Diseases** held 19 and 20 September, 2011 in New York, which concluded with a political statement on prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (cancer, diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular diseases and chronic respiratory diseases), which committed governments to set goals for surveillance of these diseases and their risk factors such as smoking, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and harmful use of alcohol.
2. **World Conference on Social Determinants of Health- World Health Organization** celebrated on October 19 and 20, 2011 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The objective was to determine the impact of economic, social and environmental determinants of health on quality of life, decreasing the inequality gap in access to health and advancing the Millennium Development Goals.
3. **Rio +20 - United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development** to be held 4-6 June, 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. This summit is a new UN effort in the beginning of the millennium to move forward with the commitment of States and the world community in the great changes of this century, including three priority areas: (1) strengthening of political commitment to support sustainable development, (2) progress and difficulties related to the implementation, (3) responses to new emerging challenges in society.

1. Objectives

- To identify experiences of health promotion in Latin American schools that respond to the proposed challenges and commitments in the three conferences in which the contest is based.
- To identify and encourage best practices of health promotion in schools.
- To identify the work of health promoting school networks at the national level.
- To promote horizontal cooperation among countries through the exchange of experiences and lessons learnt regarding school-based health promotion.

2. Who can Participate

- All **schools** and educational institution (public or private, preschool, elementary, primary or secondary levels, rural or urban) from countries in Ibero-America. Schools must have developed experiences in school-based health promotion or have implemented the Health Promoting School Strategy and Healthy and Friendly Schools, for more than 2 years, and that meet the criteria for best practices s in school-based health promotion.

The contest seeks to identify, disseminate and reward best practices s within health promotion in schools, and not individual experience of those who developed them. There is no limit as to the number of schools or educational institutions that could compete in a country, city, state, department or province; however, each school can only register one experience.

- In addition, all national networks of health promotion initiatives in schools of Ibero-America created and functioning, for a minimum of two years can participate.

3. Conceptual Elements of Best practices s of School-Based Health Promotion.

In general the concept of "best practices s" refers to any experience that is guided by principles, objectives and appropriate procedures or advisable guidelines adjusted to a given regulatory perspective or an agreed parameter, as well as any experience that has shown positive results demonstrating its effectiveness and usefulness in a particular context¹.

¹ Tomado con modificaciones del documento ORGANIZACIÓN PANAMERICANA DE LA SALUD, INSTITUTO PROINAPSA (2007). Concepto de Buenas Prácticas en Promoción de la Salud en el Ámbito Escolar y la Estrategia Escuelas Promotoras de la Salud. Elaborado para el Primer Concurso Iberoamericano de Buenas Prácticas en Promoción de la Salud en el ámbito escolar.

In the case of health promotion in schools and the implementation of Health Promoting Schools Strategy, the experience for over a decade in different countries in Europe, North America and Latin America and the Caribbean, has made it possible to accumulate valuable evidence on these interventions and characteristics associated with their effectiveness. Other evidences have emerged pointing out the most effective ways to promote health in schools and from schools. Based on the contents of four recent publications^{2 3 4 5}, we understand now that such programs can be more effective when they bring together characteristics as the ones described below.

- To have direct relation with the objectives of the school

Better results are achieved when health promotion is linked or integrated with the essential activity of educational institutions: to develop knowledge, skills and competencies, i.e. the task of educating for life. In these cases, the educational community does not perceive health promotion as an unrelated activity to its mission, but rather incorporated into the curriculum, school culture and daily life.

This characteristic is reflected in facts such as the inclusion of the vision of health promotion within the Institutional Educational Project, the insertion of content into the curriculum and a permanent attitude to take advantage of any space and opportunity to intervene on the determinants of health and thus improve the quality of life of those who spend much of their time at school.

- Involve the entire educational community

A program that convenes, involves and promotes the participation of the entire educational community is more effective. When the programs are sustained as isolated initiatives of a few people, teachers or enthusiastic health workers the opposite effect takes place.

Parents and other family members of the school community have key roles as leaders who support health promotion in schools. A significant aspect of the program effectiveness is the genuine participation of children and young people in all stages of the design, implementation and evaluation of the health promotion activities at schools.

² STEWART-BROWN, S. (2006). What is the evidence on school health promotion in improving health or preventing disease and, specifically, what is the effectiveness of the health promoting schools approach? Copenhagen, WHO, Regional Office for Europe (Health evidence Network report; <http://www.euro.who.int/document/e88185.pdf>).

³ ANDERSON, A., KALNINS, I., y RAPHAELI, D. (1999). Socios para la salud. Escuelas, comunidades y jóvenes trabajando juntos. Un proyecto conjunto de la Universidad de Toronto, la Asociación Canadiense para la Salud, la Educación Física, La Recreación y la Danza (CAHPERD), la Asociación Canadiense para la Salud Escolar (CASH) y Health Canada. Disponible en: www.cahperd.ca/eng/health/documents/PartnersForHealth.pdf

⁴ UIPES (2000). La Evidencia de la Eficacia de la Promoción de la Salud. Configurando la Salud Pública en una Nueva Europa. Partes Dos. Libro de Evidencia. Un informe de la Unión Internacional de Promoción de la Salud y Educación para la Salud para la Comisión Europea. Madrid: Rumagraf, S. A. p. 116.

⁵ ORGANIZACIÓN MUNDIAL DE LA SALUD, CONSORCIO PAN-CANADIENSE DE SALUD ESCOLAR. (2007). Declaración Escuelas por la Salud, la Educación y el Desarrollo un llamado a la acción. OMS: Vancouver.

- Develop processes that continues over time

Promoting health is a process that seeks fundamental changes in educational settings, in attitudes of those who attend school, and in social aspects that determines health and promotes learning. Therefore, health promotion goes beyond the specific activism, the sporadic action or the response to crisis. The most effective way is to use long term processes that promote health, linked to an educational project and school curriculum at different grade levels.

- Include variety of components

The most effective programs are those that acknowledge multiple causes because they take into account the sum of the different and complementary actions that achieve transformation of situations. For this reason, we have stressed the integral nature of programs to promote health, taking into account the different determinants of health and not only focus on the actions of individual life styles.

Addressing a single factor is ineffective. These interventions focus on personal transformation and forget the social determinants that affect health.

- Serve the needs of young people

Programs of health promotion in the educational institutions that meet the learning needs and interests of its students are more effective than those that adhere to standard procedure or to motivations and interest outside the school or only for adults.

- Create healthy settings

The school is a place to strengthen the ability to create physical and psychosocial settings that are healthy and support people in improving their quality of life, physical health and especially mental health.

Evidence has shown that the processes that include the design and transformation of settings that provide healthy results are more effective, achieve their collective and personal goals, empowerment and inclusion.

- Implement comprehensive health promotion services

Health services in school are more effective when they are part of a comprehensive health promotion and when healthcare professionals and teachers work together in cooperation to complement the education. It is important to remember that the availability of workers or healthcare professional in the educational center (e.g., nurses, dentists, etc.), does not guarantee that a school is healthier or a health promoting setting.

- Establish effective mechanisms of cooperation or partnerships

When a health promotion program is certain that synergies are created by collaborating with other sectors, and by different viewpoints, the next step will be to establish mechanisms for such collaboration to be effective.

Such mechanisms will be more effective if different sectors have the opportunities to intervene in the school achievement goals, in coordination with common goals and specific responsibilities. It means that the effectiveness increases as the school builds a social network that supports the achievement of its objectives and the strengthening of human development process.

These intersectoral partnerships allow for the integration of schools, families, NGOs, local community and health services. These collaborations can create a powerful and sustainable partnership.

- Allocate adequate resources to strengthen the capacities of the educational institution

Evidence shows that health promotion programs that depend, mainly or exclusively, on external personnel to the educational community are less effective and sustainable.

When designing training programs for different people in the educational community – especially its faculty and leadership- it empowers each school and improve the quality of life and the professional intervention as educators.

4. Registration process, qualification and selection of winning experiences

Registration of experiences

All schools, educational institutions, and school networks that would like to participate in the contest must formally register by completing the **Registration Form**, which can be downloaded from the website: <http://paho.org/saludyescuelas/concurso>

The completed form must be uploaded on this webpage with all the necessary evidence or it can be sent by e-mail at concursoiberoamericano2011@gmail.com

All registration forms will be accepted until 6:00 pm (Colombia) on Tuesday January 31, 2012.

Registrations will not be accepted past the established deadline.

Evaluation of Competition Requirements

Within five (5) business days of receiving the *Registration Form*, the PRONINAPSA-UIS Institute, collaborating center of PAHO/WHO in Colombia, will review if the experiences meet the requirements.

If the experiences meet the requirements, they can formally participate in the contest. The PROINAPSA-UIS Institute will register the experience with an identification code prior to the delivery to the national evaluation committee.

If the health promoting school networks experiences meet the requirements, they can formally participate in the contest. The PROINAPSA-UIS Institute will register the experience with an identification code and will be deliver only to the international evaluation committee.

Qualification and Selection of winning experiences at National Level

The PROINAPSA - UIS Institute will send each experience to the jury in each country, for review and rate according to the instructions and the established format.

National juries, with representatives from different sectors summoned by PAHO/WHO will select the best experience from each of the contest categories, **between February 1 and 17, 2012.**

A country may decide to award more than one experience, but only one experience from each category can qualify as a candidate for the international contest.

On **Monday February 20, 2012**, the International Evaluation Committee will forward the winning experiences from each category to PROINAPSA-UIS Institute for registration before submitting it to the jury in charge of selecting the winning experiences at the international level.

The decisions made by the national juries are considered definite and indisputable.

Selection of winning experiences at international level

Members of the International Evaluation Committee, determined by the PAHO/WHO Regional Office in Washington, will select the winning school from each category.

In March 2012, the International Evaluation Committee will send the winning experiences from each category to the PROINAPSA-UIS Institute, for registration and PROINAPSA will send them to PAHO - Washington for review and publication.

The International Evaluation Committee will also select the best health promotion schools networks.

The decisions made by the international evaluation committee are considered definite and indisputable.

Publication of results

The results of the contest will be announced through the webpage in April 2012.

5. Categories of participation

All winning experiences must meet the best practices criteria set out above and emphasize some of the four (4) following categories.

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	NUMBER OF PRIZES
Focus on vulnerable population	Outstanding experiences that influence the determinants of health and advance towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) in neglected areas and among vulnerable populations: indigenous, Afro- descendants, migrants or displaced.	1
Focus on the environment	Schools with experiences in environmental protection, waste reduction and recycling, energy conservation, reforestation, or having access to clean water.	1
Focus on chronic non-communicable diseases	Experiences that promote healthy eating habits and nutrition; physical activity; drugs, alcohol, and tobacco free schools.	1
National networks of health promotion initiatives	Networks' experiences will be evaluated on the following criteria: documents that endorse the establishment of the network, organization, work plan, evaluation and systematization.	1

6. National Awards

- Each winning experience from each category will receive a recognition Diploma accredited by PAHO/WHO, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education.
- Each country will decide on the number of winning experiences.

7. International Awards

The International Committee will determine the winning experience from each of the four (4) categories, which will receive the First Prize consisting of:

- A certificate awarded by PAHO/WHO Director, Dr. Mirta Roses Periago.
- The winning experiences will have the opportunity to be videotaped and disseminated through different PAHO/WHO media.

In addition, all the selected experiences from the international competition will be documented and shared through the website: [Health and Schools](#) .

8. Important Dates

SCHEDULE	ACTIVITY
until January 31, 2012	Dissemination and convocation for the registration of experiences.
February 1 to 17, 2012	Qualification and selection of winning experiences, judged by the National Evaluation Committee.
February 20, 2012	Submission of winning experiences from each country to PROINAPSA-UIS Institute.
January-March 2012	Selection of winning experiences by the International Committee.
April 2012	Publication of the competition results.

9. Where can I find more information?

For more information about the Third Ibero-American Contest of *Good Health Promotion Practices in School Settings* please contact the Sustainable Development and Environmental Department (PAHO/WHO) in Washington, DC, by writing to Mrs. Pilar Vidal gshs@paho.org or by consulting our Health and Schools website <http://paho.org/saludyescuelas>

Also, more information may be requested information from the representative of the PROINAPSA - UIS institute, by writing to Mary Constance Silver Hakspiel concursoiberoamericano2011@gmail.com