What is a health promoting school?
It is a school that promotes a healthy environment to learn, to teach, to work and to live contributing to maximize one's strengths and abilities.

Fig 1.1

What do you feel when you see the entrance area of a small school in a village as shown in the picture? What are your suggestions to make the place more pleasant and welcoming? This school had about 60-70 students at the beginning which has increased up to 300 at present.

What could be the reason for this? It is the result of the joint efforts of the principal, staff, students, old pupils and parents. Out of many, one important project implemented was on health promotion. This included not only the school environment but also the health of the children.

A Health Promoting School Campaign

What is a health promoting school?
It is a school that promotes a healthy environment to learn, to teach, to work and to live contributing to maximize one's strengths and abilities.

Main aims of a health promoting school campaign:

- Make the school, a pleasant place.
- Provide opportunities to improve the skills and abilities of students.
- Create a student-friendly environment where the optimally utilize the opportunities available for learning.
- Make children as well as their families healthy.
Characteristic feature of a health promoting school is the implementation of policies designed by the same school community.

Basic Policies

A basic policy of a health promoting campaign of a school is not going to be imposed by the government or any other institute. Appropriate policies for the school are decided by the staff and the students based on the strengths of the school and the community. The policies designed should be practicable. This is done under three main areas.

![Fig 1.2 - attractive environment](image)

**1. The physical environment:**
Cleanliness and safety will be priorities which make the school environment more attractive.

**2. Mental health:**
School should be a peaceful place for the children to learn and for the teachers to teach. You should have the opportunities and facilities to learn and develop your thinking skills.

**3. Social environment**
Opportunity should be provided to develop friendly and helpful behavior of the students encouraging positive interactions with the community.

**Activity 1.1**
Form three groups. Each group should select one of the above sections and list out what needs to be improved and identify other components belong to each section.
1. The physical environment

   Improvement of physical factors
   - Purified clean water supply
   - Encourage home prepared meals
   - Home prepared food to be brought to school by the students.
   - Clean canteen and healthy food
   - Home gardening, school gardening
   - Landscaping
   - Safety of buildings and sports equipments.
   - Proper disposal of garbage
   - Clean toilets, proper sanitation
   - Clean gutters and ditches

2. Mental health

Tidy environment alone will not make a health promoting school, but it is an important factor to develop mental health.
**Improvement of mental factors**
- Necessary equipment and teaching aids in the classroom.
- Adequate ventilation and light in the classroom
- Keeping the classroom neat and tidy.
- Encourage group work with self planning
- Programmes to develop competency, observation, research work, and evaluate and appreciate the academic, aesthetic, sports skills, and positive contribution to the school community during assignments and field work.
- Ensure safety in the school
- Improve friendly relationship between students and teachers

**3. Social Environment**

**Improvement of social factors**
- Train the students to work in harmony with other students, parents, and the community.
- Teach the negative impact of anti social behavior, substance abuse, smoking and alcohol.
- Awareness programmes for the students & parents about the correct use of television, computer, mobile phones, papers, magazines, story books.
- Encourage student participation in interactive societies, sports clubs, competitions, voluntary health campaigns and co-curricular activities.
- Safety in travelling to school by buses, vans, three wheelers
- Road rules

**Student contribution:-**

You can contribute to the health promoting programme in many ways. In addition to the activities given below, students should plan how to participate actively and give a useful contribution to the school health promotion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity 1.2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve and plan how to contribute in the following activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>contribution to the school environment</td>
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</table>

- Keep the environment clean.
- Keep the class room and your utensils tidy
- Protect the class room and the entire school.

**Activities as a group member**
- Carry information about the health promotion to the family and to the community.
- Positive relationships with important and helpful people in the community.
- Fulfil the duties and responsibilities.
- Follow the principles of the school.

**Personal activities**
- Recognize your abilities and improve them.
- Contribute to all possible activities in the school.
- Take special interest in sports activities.
who can help your health promotion programme in the school?

What are the institutions that can help you to implement your health promoting programme? Some are given below.
Activity 1.3
List out what these institutions can do to support your school programme. Enrich your suggestions with the information given below. Identify which officer or organization is responsible for the following services.

- Prevention of diseases
- Medical examinations
- Diseases related to mal-nutrition
- Vaccinations
- Prevention of Dengue, Chikungunya
- Mental problems
- Sanitation
- Safety of children on the road and in vehicles.
- Nutrition and diseases related to mal-nutrition
- Safety of children from abusers and exploiters
- Home gardening
- Landscaping
- First-aid
- Sports activities
- Protecting the natural environment to make it healthy and friendly.

School health management committee

To implement a programme successfully you should plan ahead what you can do. You cannot do this alone. A few people should get together to discuss and plan it properly. This group will be called a committee. The principal will nominate a person to preside the committee. He/She will discuss with the group and plan out the programme. The group may consist of teachers of Health and Physical Education, Agriculture, Life skills, teachers in charge of co-curricular activities such as scouting, cadeting and student leaders or any others who would volunteer to help to implement the programme.

The advantage of a school health promoting programme.

- Pleasant and attractive environment will be created in the school.
- Student safety will be assured.
- A peaceful learning environment will be created.
Strong interpersonal relationships will exist
Students will be free from diseases, accidents, injuries, abuse and exploitation
Less conflicts among students
Students will be able to carry life long concepts and attitudes about your own health

Write a list of rules to be observed by the students (to display at the entrance.)

**Assignment 1.1**
Plan out a programme with your friends to make your class a healthy place. Implement it and maintain the standard.