

How the National Lung Health Framework's Database Can Help You

Many programs and initiatives currently listed in the National Lung Health Framework's **Respiratory Resources Canada (RRC)** database promote strong partnerships, develop and apply best practices, and may be implemented in your area.

Educators and health care professionals are eager to cooperate by sharing their experiences. Your health region, organization, or program may benefit from the experience of others. By connecting with successful programs, children's programs can be established more quickly and more successfully than if they were developed in isolation.

- Over 5,900 Canadians will die this year due to air pollution
- Only a small handful of Canadian jurisdictions monitor air quality for health impacts

The Challenge

From the moment we are born, we use air. From our first breath to our last, air quality affects our health.

The Air We Breathe Can Hurt Us

- People living with lung disease are “canaries in the mine” – when they are affected by air quality problems, we are all at risk
- Young, active children are particularly at risk from air pollution
- Elderly adults are at increased risk due to weakening of the lungs, heart, and immune system

Health Canada estimates that there will be 5,900 deaths this year in Quebec City, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Hamilton, Windsor, Calgary and Vancouver alone – due to air pollution.

The Response

The **National Lung Health Framework** is a Canadian initiative designed to improve lung health across the country by promoting collaborative and coordinated action among health care professionals, policy makers, researchers, clinicians, advocates and others.

Within the **National Lung Health Framework**, as it relates to air quality, key groups and individuals work together to achieve:

- An increased awareness of the impact of environmental issues on respiratory health, at work, at home, at school, and at play;
- A reduction in exposure to environmental air contaminants;
- A reduction in indoor and outdoor air contaminants; and
- Increased awareness, knowledge and understanding of respiratory health issues by related respiratory groups, individuals as well as the general public.

HIGHLIGHTED PROGRAMS

Air Quality programs are available in various places in Canada. Here is a small sample of successful programs in action, from the **Respiratory Resources Canada** database:

BC State of the Air Report British Columbia

Annual initiative designed for the general public – unites BC health and environment researchers, physicians and public policymakers

- Provides a snapshot of air quality issues, pollutant levels, health implications, and new research findings
- Features emerging issues, profiles of community citizens and relative highlights from local organizations

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Air Aware Ottawa, Ontario



Educates youth and adult audiences about the importance of adopting practices which enhance both personal and environmental health

- Features presentations by Champion athletes who speak to the Government of Canada's Air Quality Health Index related to air quality and active living
- Curriculum connected program for grades 10-12 in most provinces
- New website includes games, exercise calculator, and greenhouse gas reductions from *Air Aware Acts of Green*.

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HIGHLIGHTED INITIATIVES continued

A Breath of Clean Air Montreal, Quebec – nationwide

A video conference program at The Biosphère Environment Museum

- Offers free videoconferences to high schools across Canada
- Educational activity helps young people understand the phenomena of smog and acid rain
- Provides concrete actions they can take to limit negative impact on the environment

René Brunet, The Biosphère Environment Museum
Environment Canada
514-496-8282 1-866-487-8282 (toll-free) EDL-EDE.Biosphere@ec.gc.ca

SIMPLE – Driver Stewardship Program New Brunswick



Recruits and trains youth as SIMPLE Ambassadors who carry the SIMPLE message to their peers and communities

- Ambassadors solicit pledges towards the SIMPLE driving behaviours
- Influences Canadians to reduce fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions by the way they drive, maintain, and even buy their vehicles

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Idle-Free Campaigns

Campaigns like Idle-Free Calgary seek to reduce vehicle idling (vary somewhat by host city)

- Some campaigns target individuals, schools, commercial or city vehicle fleets, and workplaces to pledge to be idle-free
- Some promote and help with the creation of bylaws or policies

403-230-1443 x222 idlfree@greencalgary.org

How You Can Make a Difference

If you would like to help make a difference and improve the lung health of Canadians there are things you can do.

Promote what is happening in your field and in your community. Share information about successful activities with others across Canada through the **Respiratory Resources Canada** database. The information will be seen by people across the country working in respiratory health.

Make it happen. Have you wanted to start a much-needed initiative in your community and were not sure where to get started or how to make it happen? Make use of **Respiratory Resources Canada**. It is a searchable database where you can find out what is happening all across Canada. You can also use the database to connect with individuals who can provide you with helpful information and share their own successes.

Go to www.lunghealthframework.ca for more information on the database and what it can do for you.

The National Lung Health Framework is chaired by and housed at The Lung Association, with the support of a multi-stakeholder Steering Committee.

Working Together Makes a Difference

- *The right to breathe clean air is something we all must protect. The National Lung Health Framework is something long needed in Canada to help protect this right and to ensure clean air, and in turn, good lung health for all. – Deirdre Laframboise, Executive Director, Clean Air Champions*
- *When the air quality is so much better, I can have a decent walk and get some exercise. I breathe easier, sleep better and can even do some cleaning. – Karlleen Robinson, BC resident living with COPD*