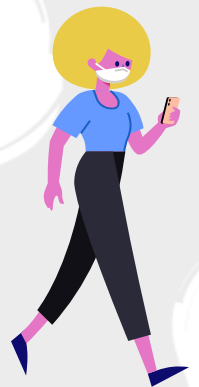
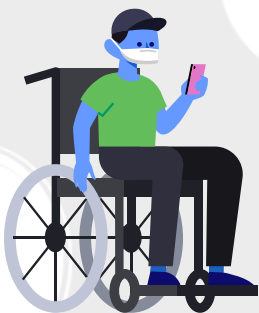
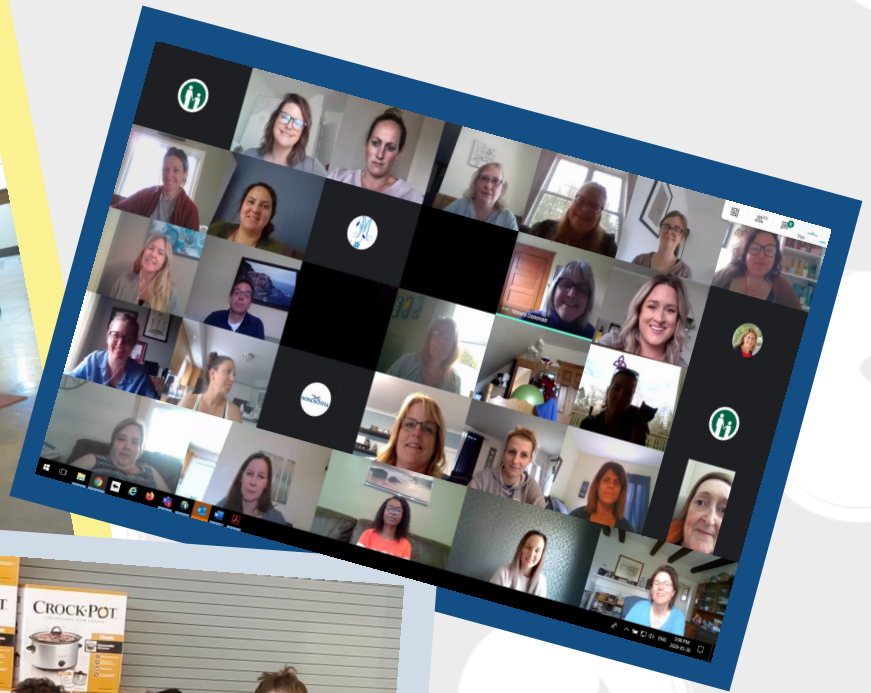


NEWSLETTER

January - April 2020



A Message from Tara



Welcome to our Jan-April edition of the SchoolsPlus newsletter. As the World Health Organization declared Covid-19 a pandemic on March 11th, throughout the world, countries stepped up measures to stop the spread and keep us safe. Our world has been transformed, and there has been an unprecedented impact on our daily lives.

Moments of crisis also present an opportunity to act collectively; throughout Nova Scotia, we see our communities come together to support students, families, the young, and the elderly. Both our Feature and Partnership stories are centred on Covid-19, which highlight the many collaborations of SchoolsPlus in mobilizing efforts around food security, supplies for children, and, most importantly, staying connected. Our communities have come together to take care of each other, especially those who are vulnerable, and we are happy to highlight many of the efforts started across our Province.

This March, we celebrated International Women's Day; we are featuring several stories in our newsletter about how our schools participated, learned about historical challenges facing women around the world, and celebrated female achievements. You will note we highlighted many "girls' groups" to honour this work, but at SchoolsPlus, we involve all genders in seeking equity. Throughout the year we created space for Boys' Groups for those who identify as male and Girls' Groups for those who identify as female, with those who identify under the non-binary umbrella free to join either group, with the goal of developing safe spaces for personal growth. Collectively, each one of us helps create a world of gender equity.

I thank all SchoolsPlus staff, our school colleagues, and our many partners for their collaboration over the past few months. As Summer approaches, we know we must continue to work hard to readjust and adapt our programs, but we know the best is ahead of us.

-Tara Moore



FEATURE STORY

SchoolsPlus & Covid-19

SchoolsPlus is here for you! Starting with the declaration of the State of Emergency on March 15th, SchoolsPlus has worked to support students, families, and staff as we transition to a new way of learning. Isolation, loss of contact with friends and family is challenging, and our mental health and well-being is important. The following highlights are just a few of the key initiatives from SchoolsPlus and our partners.



Many SchoolsPlus hubs have worked with community partners to develop food and grocery delivery programs to support those who relied on school food programs. SchoolsPlus in Pictou county, in collaboration with Summer Street Industries, so far has delivered meals to more than 140 families in all seventeen schools in the area.



The hamper program in the Strait area, working with Seaside Communications, has delivered 130 hampers of food. SchoolsPlus in Cape Breton-Victoria are assisting with the Food for Thought program, working with the Departments of Business, Inspiring Communities, and Public Health to deliver 380 meals provided by local businesses in Glace Bay and Sydney.



FEATURE STORY

SchoolsPlus & Covid-19



In the South Shore, SchoolsPlus partnered with Staples to deliver school supplies to the doors of families who need them to learn from home. SchoolsPlus in the Annapolis Valley collaborated with Flying Squirrels to create nature activity boxes for families unable to get outdoors at this time.



FLYING SQUIRREL ADVENTURES
All Ages Nature Program in the Annapolis Valley

HRCE SchoolsPlus offers:

- Confidential support for families and students
- Help with services & agencies
- Strategies for managing at home

You don't have to do this alone.

Parents and students can self-refer by text, phone, or email, 12 months a year.

Auburn Family of Schools: Emma Pringle Boutillier 902-476-7651 epringle@boutilier@hrce.ca	Eastern Shore Family of Schools: Emma Pringle Boutillier 902-476-7651 epringle@boutilier@hrce.ca	Musquodoboit Rural Family of Schools: Kylie Hicklenton 902-399-8321 khicklenton@hrce.ca
Citadel Family of Schools: C/O Maura Donovan 902-471-6535 mdonovan@hrce.ca	Halifax West Family of Schools: Bonnie Pero 902-399-8314 bpero@hrce.ca	Prince Andrew Family of Schools: Rayla Turney 902-399-8325 rturney@hrce.ca
Cole Harbour Family of Schools: Jennifer Fouqere 902-483-8367 jfouqere@hrce.ca	Island View Family of Schools: Jennifer Fouqere 902-483-8367 jfouqere@hrce.ca	Sackville High Family of Schools: Cathy Kasper 902-240-1148 ckasper@hrce.ca
CP Allen Family of Schools: Melissa Puddicombe 902-471-2445 mpuddicombe@hrce.ca	J.L. Ilsley Family of Schools: Alicia Barrett 902-399-8317 alicia.barrett@hrce.ca	Sir John A. Family of Schools: Melissa Puddicombe 902-471-2445 mpuddicombe@hrce.ca
Dartmouth High Family of Schools: Bernice Arthur 902-497-3163 barthur@hrce.ca	Lockview Family of Schools: Kylie Hicklenton 902-399-8321 khicklenton@hrce.ca	HRCE SchoolsPlus Leader: Maura Donovan mdonovan@hrce.ca 902-471-6535
Duncan MacMillan School: Kylie Hicklenton 902-399-8321 khicklenton@hrce.ca	Millwood Family of Schools: Cathy Kasper 902-240-1148 ckasper@hrce.ca	SchoolsPlus Ecoles Plus

The CSAP team has been holding virtual group activities for students of varying interests, from their virtual Lego Club, Book Club, and Dance Parties, each working to build a sense of community during this time of isolation and encourage creativity among its participants.

SchoolsPlus First Ever Weekly Virtual Social

While dogs and immediate family are great! Would you like to chat with someone else for a while?

Let's Connect

Date: Wednesday March 25, 2020
Time: 11:00 am
Where: Your own internet access source
How To: Message West Hants SchoolsPlus
A private link will be sent to you to join

Cumberland SchoolsPlus At Home Scavenger Hunt!

Have each member of your family find these things around your home, and then have a show and tell! Show each other what you chose, and tell each other why you chose it!

<input type="checkbox"/> Something Hard	<input type="checkbox"/> Something with eyes
<input type="checkbox"/> Something that starts with "H"	<input type="checkbox"/> Something clear
<input type="checkbox"/> Find a battery	<input type="checkbox"/> Something colorful
<input type="checkbox"/> Find a coin	<input type="checkbox"/> Something round
<input type="checkbox"/> Find something sharp	<input type="checkbox"/> Two things that belong in the garbage
<input type="checkbox"/> A picture of an animal	<input type="checkbox"/> Something you cook with
<input type="checkbox"/> Something you can wear	<input type="checkbox"/> Something you need for winter
<input type="checkbox"/> Something that floats	<input type="checkbox"/> Something that makes you smile
<input type="checkbox"/> Something you can eat	

Take a Break with the 3 Bs

- Body
- Breathe
- Begin

My tail was stiff and my ears were stiff too.

I can hear a dog barking outside.

I will take more breaks from the neighborhood watch.

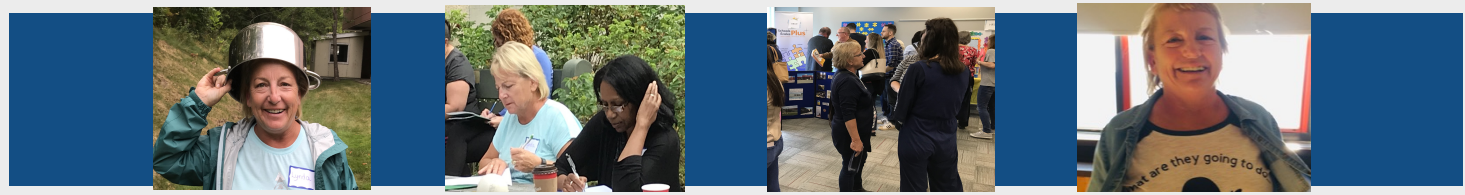
A star has arisen out of the Strait Regional Centre: Bella. Bella the dog offers students activities to keep them entertained throughout the week and engaged during school closures with her Boredom Busters, with activities ranging from Wellness Bingo to backyard scavenger hunts.



Celebrating Our Staff

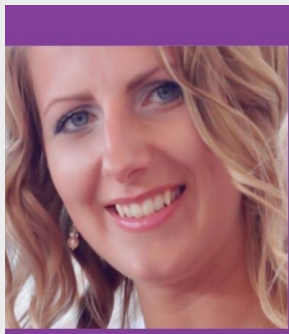
Lynda Brake

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, family, friends, students, parents and colleagues did not get an opportunity to wish farewell to Lynda Brake at a planned gathering. We take this opportunity to pay tribute to Lynda, who retired on March 31st, 2020 following close to a 30 -year career with Halifax Regional Center for Education, and with SchoolsPlus, as a Community Outreach Worker, since its inception in 2009. Lynda is an incredibly dedicated, committed and professional staff person. She embodied the "outreach" part of her role by connecting families to resources, offering parenting programs, accessing grant funding to carry out special initiatives, facilitating communication between home and school, advocating for students, and being actively engaged in the community. Lynda always had a strengths-based lens and approach with both parents and students. Furthermore, Lynda often went above and beyond in terms of offering programs outside of her Family of Schools, enhancing the Babysitters course to include CPR, volunteering countless hours, whether it was watering and weeding gardens through the summer or building a garden shed; she assisted where she saw unmet needs. Lynda was always thinking on her feet, looking for solutions, and innovative ways to partner or problem-solve. Equally outstanding was Lynda's ability to put people at ease, approach serious and sensitive situations without judgment and with great caring. Throughout all this work, Lynda brought a smile, an encouraging word to students, positive messages to parents, and an energy that motivated everyone around her. We wish Lynda and her family all the best in her well-deserved retirement.



"It has been a true pleasure working with Lynda over the years! She reminds me of the Queen worker bee who never stops helping others. I am really going to miss running groups with her in school as she is a wealth of knowledge. Our students and surrounding community are surely going to miss a key cog that keeps things running. I know she will somehow continue to help others as it's just in her nature to do so. Best of luck in your retirement Lynda!"
-Dan O'Leary, Guidance Counsellor, A.J. Smeltzer Jr. High and Hillside Park Elementary School

Lindsay Latham



#BecauseOfYou
“Students and families know you will do all you can to ensure they receive the help and support they need. You are one of their biggest advocates for their well-being. You understand the challenges students face daily. Your empathy and understanding is reflected in the impact you make in their lives.”
- Paul Gartland, Principal, on Lindsay Latham
International Women's Day 2020

Lindsay Latham
SchoolsPlus Facilitator
Sherwood Park Education Centre



International Women's day is a great time to pause and honor the many contributions of women in their field. Cape Breton Victoria Regional Center for Education launched a unique campaign to celebrate women employees, called #BECAUSEOFYOU. SchoolsPlus is pleased to congratulate Lindsay Latham , SchoolsPlus Facilitator, for her selection as a recipient of this campaign. Congratulations Lindsay!



ANNAPOLIS VALLEY REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

Mindfulness Cafe



Partners: Dragonfly Haven Therapeutic Farm, Lahara Yoga, and Superstore

Who: SchoolsPlus Horton Family of Schools with the help of some of our partners.

When: Jan 20 to 24 (One week prior to exams)

Where: Horton High School

Why: To offer a positive experience, focusing on mindful and relaxing activities to students who might feel stressed about upcoming exams. Throughout the week students could choose to take part in Yoga sessions accompanied by some miniature animals such as bunnies, goats and a pig, or just pet and cuddle with some animals. Other activities included learning about healthy food choices, or drop ins, just to share hot chocolate and chill with friends while doodling on a piece of paper.



CAPE BRETON-VICTORIA REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

International Women's Day with Amnesty International

Who: Students at Glace Bay High School.

What: SchoolsPlus partnered with the Amnesty International Group at Glace Bay High to celebrate International Women's Day. Students delivered presentations throughout the day, outlining the significance of International Women's Day, and how it is honored and celebrated throughout the world. Students and faculty attended presentations and were able to nominate inspirational women in their community; awards were presented during the event.

When: March 6th

Where: Glace Bay High School

Why: This event highlighted the significance of women's struggles throughout the world. It followed an event held in December to honour the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. During both ceremonies the students involved in the Amnesty group highlighted that we cannot fully achieve human rights until gender equity and equality is realized. We hope to continue this partnership in honouring important milestones to promote a culture of gender equality within the school community.





CHIGNECTO-CENTRAL REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

Grief Support

Who: SchoolsPlus partnered with the Colchester East Hants Hospice Society, and the NSHA to deliver a professional development opportunity on Grief Support

What: Serena Lewis, the Grief, Bereavement and Wellness Coordinator with the NSHA, led a day long workshop for healthcare, education and social service professionals working with families who experience grief, loss and bereavement.

When: Feb 28th, 9:00 to 3:00

Where: Debert

Why: To provide professionals with a wider range of grief concepts and skills. Serena uses a broad definition of grief counselling, to include the skills of recognizing anticipatory and post loss grief; normalizing vs treating grief, supporting through a family centred and strength-based approach.



"Our community is truly recognizing that grief is all around us, and as professionals and community partners, we need the tools and strategies to respond effectively, no matter what stage a student, family or community are with their grief. The workshop provided us with additional proactive strategies, understanding the anticipatory phase of grief; and is another way to move us forward in this approach."
-Tracey Shay, SchoolsPlus Facilitator, CCRCE



CONSEIL SCOLAIRE ACADIEN PROVINCIAL

Cooking Skills Program



Who: Grade 9 and 10 students from École du Carrefour

What: The SchoolsPlus Outreach worker offered a cooking class, providing students with basic cooking skills, trying new recipes, and learning about nutritious food choices. The program was facilitated by a former graduate from École du Carrefour.

When: January, 2020

Where: École du Carrefour

Why: This course was designed to build new skills, enabling students to gain independence and build confidence. Students tried a variety of new recipes, everything from soup to chicken with pesto, with an emphasis on nutrition.



Partners: Halifax Region Children's Aid Foundation.



HALIFAX REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

Sackville SchoolsPlus Girls Retreat 2020



Who: Grades 6, 7, and 8 students from AJ Smeltzer, Leslie Thomas, and Sackville Junior High.

What: A full day retreat for junior high girls and female-identifying youth. Participants got to step out of their comfort zone to try a cycle, zumba, tabata, or yoga class. Additionally, there was an opportunity to lead a group, talk about female identity, peer influences, healthy coping skills, learn about community resources, and express themselves artistically.

When: Saturday, January 18th and Saturday, February 22nd

Where: Sackville Sports Stadium

Why: Junior High can be a challenging time in a youth's life. Students walk a bridge between childhood and adolescence which brings new experiences, risks, and expectations. Families can use some additional supports, and informal networks, to help their children sort through some of these challenges.

Partners: CCHB, HRM Rec/ Sackville Sports Stadium

STRAIT REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

MSVU Girls Conference



Who: Girls Club, St Mary's Education Center, Grade 7 Girls

What: MSVU Girls Conference. This Girls Club had been together since grade six and was focused on social action activities and topics such as healthy relationships and puberty. The club included a monthly display board created by the girls focusing on women changemakers.

When: March 6, 2020

Where: Mount Saint Vincent University in Halifax.

Why: This was an exciting opportunity for the girls to travel to Halifax, partnering with another school to help with transportation costs. Prior to the Conference, the girls set SMART goals, and selected the workshops of most interest to them, including topics such as self love, body positivity, periods, etc. The conference experience gave the girls an opportunity to try something new, learn about themselves and others and have fun with over 300 other girls from around the province. They had an incredible day and made many memories!



Partners: The Youth Health Centre Nurse and a CYCP.



SOUTH SHORE REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

Monday Moms



Who: Moms in the New Germany area

What: SchoolsPlus started a "Monday Mom's" Group to bring together families from more rural areas, to increase awareness of services, supports and connection. This group met every other week for 2 hours and met in the school. Moms worked on journals, financial support, scrapbooking, mindfulness, sharpie mugs. Over tea, coffee and snacks, moms were able to connect with other moms and learn more about their community.

When: January – March 2020

Where: New Germany Elementary School

Why: This program helped Moms seeking networks and friendships, at a location and time that worked for them, in their school community. In addition to a variety of new skills and information sharing, Moms have an opportunity to share their knowledge with each other, while making new friends.

TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

100 Guys Who Share Yarmouth County



Who: SchoolsPlus team in Yarmouth

What: The 100 Guys Who Share, Yarmouth is a local organization that meet four times a year, inviting three registered charities to make a presentation for support for their organization. SchoolsPlus was selected through a draw, and Yarmouth SchoolsPlus, and Facilitators Dani Gallagher and Jeanine Collier made a presentation at the January meeting of 100 Guys Who Share. This resulted in SchoolsPlus becoming the recipient of a charitable donation of \$12,700.

When: January 30, 2020

Why: This financial support goes to the SchoolsPlus Student Emergency Fund to help support families in emergency situations such as travel expenses, eyeglasses, dental care, clothing, etc.



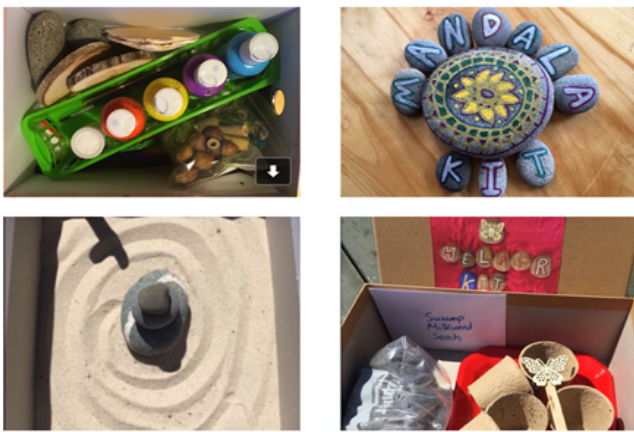
Regional Advisory Committees



The SchoolsPlus Regional Advisory Committees play a key role in the SchoolsPlus model from its inception and through expansion to full scale. The Regional Advisory Committees are representative of multisector partners and cross departmental staff, including Health, Justice, Recreation, Community Services, and many others. Community leaders play an active role at the SchoolsPlus tables. They strategize and collaborate on the numerous initiatives required to support students, families, and their communities. They identify gaps and work within their communities to seek resolutions to food security, transportation, and a myriad of other issues which create barriers to students' success within school and community. The SchoolsPlus Regional Advisory model is able to respond to current and changing needs in a geographic location or community.



By mid March, Covid-19 abruptly changed our lives, both at work, school, and in our communities, as we follow public health directions to reduce the spread of Covid-19 and stay safe. As the SchoolsPlus Advisory Committees moved to virtual platforms, this “meeting place” became critical in coordinating, partnering and moving resources to support students and families. The “virtual hub” of the SchoolsPlus Regional Advisory Committees have become a key centre of knowledge exchange and action in the Covid-19 crisis. On a local level, the Regional Advisory Committees are guiding us through the challenges of working in new ways. The Regional Advisory Committees have representatives from diverse communities and understand local needs and priorities.



All regions began to create Resource Lists- a compilation of all the available community supports and information that is available for individuals and families during COVID-19, and the resulting isolation. This enables advisory members to view up-to-date information in one accessible location, in nicely formatted charts, with ongoing updates as required so that they may better support students and families.

Écoles Plus région Nord Est
Services disponibles pour nos familles

Voici une liste de services disponible dans les régions de vos écoles ainsi que les informations contacte pour le personnel d'écoles plus

Responsable pour les Nord EST : Annette Kehoe 902 631 4570 annette.kehoe@csap.ca

Intervenante École NDA : Céline Poirier 902 224 0352 gceline@sejpe.ca

Intervenante Centre Scolaire Étoile de L'Acadie : Stéphanie Godin 902 237 1565 gosteph@sejpe.ca

Intervenante École Acadienne de Pomquet : Gina Delorey 902 870 1511 gina@sejpe.ca

Intervenante École Beauport : Monika Quigley 902 631 4063 monika@sejpe.ca

Regional Advisory Committees



As physical and social distancing began, students lost important access to breakfast and lunch programs, and more families began to experience financial challenges. All partners recognized the need for mobilization around food security, and other essential services for families. SchoolsPlus Regional Advisories have received multiple grants, for example, the Yarmouth Children's Aid foundation, Breakfast Clubs of Canada, and the NSTU to help with costs. Local restaurants, United Way, and Inspiring Communities have also been key partners in the food distribution movement, with SP staff involved in distribution of food hampers and gift cards to help support students and families.

SchoolsPlus+ Annapolis County Community Supports and Information during COVID-19 April 2020

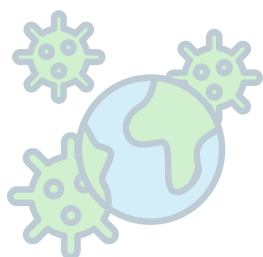
Annapolis SchoolsPlus Advisory Committee Member Highlighted in Yellow

This is a list of some community support available for individuals and families who are self-isolating during the COVID-19 pandemic in Annapolis County and VIC. Thank you to Digby SchoolPlus for sharing their information and template. The Annapolis SchoolsPlus Facilitator, Patricia Connors can be reached at: Patricia.Connors@nsd.ns.ca or 1-802-532-9933 for requests.

Category	Community	Organization	Support/Information	Contact Information
Community Organizations	Annapolis Valley	Annapolis NS	Annapolis Valley Chapter of Annapolis Nova Scotia's "webook" v.101 reads: "We can be reached by phone (902-242-2035), or email (annapolistvalley@bairns.ns.ca), to support families. All updated resources and COVID-19 related information: http://www.annapolisvalley.ca/annapolistvalleyresourcesfordevelopmentwithchildrenintheannapolistvalley The Department of Community Services is making a policy exception to provide any family already in the Direct Family Support (DFS) for Children or Plan Funding (PFL) at home living with Family and Plan Insured program with additional mobile funding (above their current approved limit) This can be used to assist with support while schools and Day programs are closed. Please contact your care coordinator to ensure you are eligible for additional funding and for further information. The Big Brothers Big Sisters Mentoring programme provides children and youth with a supportive adult they can talk to and share the experience of growing up with. Through regular meetings, a relationship is developed between the Big and the Little, that is built on trust and common interests, and is supported by our experienced Mentoring Coordinator. The result is life changing experiences for both the mentor and the mentee. BBBS continues to work remotely at this time to accept intakes and support current matches with ideas to maintain relationships while respecting social distancing. Their FB page is maintained with information and ideas for child and youth activities.	http://www.annapolistvalley.ca General Email: annapolistvalley@bairns.ns.ca Phone: 902-478-8041
	Yarmouth West Hants, Wigo and Annapolis Counties	Big Brothers, Big Sisters of the Annapolis Valley		Agency Website: http://www.bbbs.org/annapolistvalley.ca General Email: annapolistvalley@bairns.ns.ca Phone: 902-478-8041
	All Areas	Community Sector Council of Nova Scotia	Resources, updates and information available for Employers, Nonprofit & Voluntary Organizations as it relates to COVID-19.	Website: www.csc.ns.ca/cscnsd-223666-284666



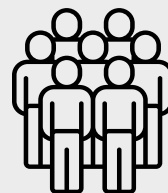
Working with a wide range of partners to help families secure food, fuel, or deliver school supplies to young families, the SP Regional Advisory Committee members have been central to problem solving, networking and supporting SP staff and their communities every day since the Covid-19 crisis. Their guidance has been invaluable as we find new ways to support our students and families, as lives have been upended. We salute them and we thank them for their valued partnerships during this challenging time, proving we are “all in it together.”



STATISTICS

The stats below are based on approximately 91 per cent response rate of all monthly reports provided by the SchoolsPlus Facilitators and Leaders.

January through April 2020



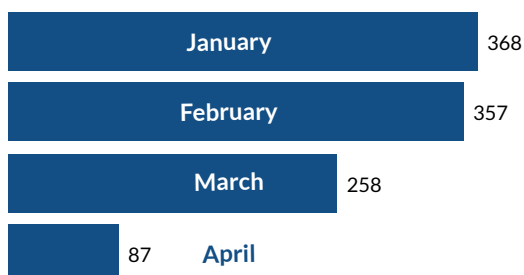
222 NEW REFERRALS

178 NEW SERVICES REALLOCATED/CO-LOCATED

1070

EXTENDED HOURS

the amount of time SchoolsPlus supported children, youth, and families outside of regular school hours which includes non-instructional time such as summer, evenings, before school, and holidays.



GROUP PROGRAMMING

The total number of children and parent attendances in group programming.

