



HPS Evaluation Framework

Adult/Staff Champion Focus Group Guide from UpLift

August 2024

BACKGROUND

The following document provides the focus group guide used in UpLift to facilitate focus groups with staff/adult champions to explore their experience with UpLift, specifically their experience with developing and implementing the HPS UpLift Student Action Grant to support youth engagement in Health Promoting Schools (HPS).

FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

Items in italics are scripts for the focus group facilitator.

Welcome and Introductions (5 min)

- The facilitator will introduce themselves and explain the purpose of the focus group as follows:

Purpose

- I am here to learn from your experience with UpLift (which is about making NS schools healthy places to learn). For example, through work on food and nutrition, physical activity/play, active transportation, or inclusivity, mental health, and well-being including supporting student engagement (the term often used to refer to this work is Health Promoting Schools). The UpLift project included support from Youth Engagement Coordinators (YECs) and the UpLift Student Action Grant that funded your project. The YEC's may have provided various supports in addition to developing the grant such as learning opportunities for you or your students, resources (e.g., newsletters, one pagers or other information on Health Promoting Schools, linking with other funding opportunities, links to partners, etc.). UpLift and support from a YEC and grant is not available everywhere in Nova Scotia yet (not every school has a Youth Engagement Coordinator) and we want to learn what is and is not working and suggestions for improvement, as well as any outcomes or impacts as a result of the work through UpLift over the last three years.
 - With your permission, I would like to audio-record the session so I can ensure I capture all feedback. The audio recording will be transcribed, and I will use the transcript to analyze the data then the transcript will be deleted. I am conducting several focus groups in your region and the data will be summed across all focus groups. No names (individual or school names) will be used. I may use some quotations to illustrate themes but all identifying information will be removed from the quotations to ensure confidentiality. Do I have your permission to audio record? If permission is not granted, ask about taking notes.
 - Participants will introduce themselves – name, school and role at their school
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Focus Group Discussion

- The facilitator will begin the focus group discussion, using the questions outlined below.

Questions

I would like to begin by asking some general questions.

1. What were the main benefits of participating in UpLift?

Probes:

- For your school? For you? For students?
- What have been the main accomplishments or impacts as a result of your school's participation in UpLift?
- What, if any, changes have there been in the school environment – physical and/or social? (facilitator to explain what changes to the physical or social environment mean – can refer to HPS Assessment tool to help describe potential changes)

2. What facilitated the accomplishments? or What helped to make these happen?

Probes:

- How has the YEC supported you in your UpLift/HPS work?

3. What were the main challenges of participating in UpLift?

Probes:

- How did you overcome these challenges? or How could the challenges have been addressed?

I would now like to ask a couple of questions about the grants.

4. What supports (if any) did you receive to develop the grants and then complete your projects?

Probes:

- How helpful were these supports?
- What other supports did you need?

5. What were the main outcomes of the student action grant and associated project?

Probes:

- How will the student action grant project support your Health Promoting School work in the longer term?

I would now like to ask a couple of questions about student engagement and leadership

6. How have students been engaged in the Uplift project (grant development, carrying out the project, other aspects of the work)

Probes:

- How were you supported by the YECs to engage students?
- Please describe any successes or challenges in terms of engaging students and/or student leadership as a result of Uplift?
- Did participating in UpLift help you to identify other areas and/or ways to engage students as leaders in the school?

The next couple of questions are about capacity building.

7. What resources did you use to support your UpLift or YE in HPS work (UpLift resources included several frameworks on topics such as outdoor classrooms, outdoor play, etc. as well as communication tools – newsletter, website; linkages to other funding sources).

Probes:

- How useful were these resources (overall versus individually)?
- What else did you need?

8. What learning opportunities or professional development did you participate in to help you build your understanding and knowledge about Health Promoting Schools? Please describe.

Probes:

- How useful were these learning opportunities (overall versus individually)?
- What else did you need?



9. Did your participation in UpLift help to build your understanding, knowledge and/or skills to support Health Promoting School work? How? Please describe.

The last questions are about partnerships

10. Who are new partners you have engaged with because of UpLift and the YEC?

Probes:

- What organizations/community members did you not know about prior to UpLift or the YEC?
- Please describe who your relationships are stronger with because of UpLift and the YEC?

Thank you for taking the time to participate in the focus group and share your feedback. Your feedback is critical to helping us to improve UpLift and HPS moving forward.