



## Healthy Schools — Fit for Life!

A group of experts have been looking at the quality of the air inside your school, and perhaps even inside your classroom. They are part of a project called SINPHONIE, which stands for Schools Indoor Pollution and Health: Observatory Network in Europe. The experts visited your classroom and measured the amount of carbon dioxide and other gases, and the amount of dust in the air.

Experts also looked at children's health in many countries. Teachers were asked questions about their schools, and parents were asked about the family home and family illnesses. In some classrooms, doctors used a special instrument to measure children's lung capacity. Children being tested had to take a big breath and blow into a small pipe so that the doctors could see how much air they have in their lungs. Experts also examined the effect of poor classroom ventilation on breathing ability.

### MAKING A DIFFERENCE

It is important to keep the outdoor and indoor air clean. The indoor air can be improved by using clean products, engaging in clean activities, and by providing good ventilation. The air should be clean and not too warm in your classroom to help you learn better, pay more attention, work faster and make fewer mistakes. Cleaner indoor air means that:

- children and teachers will be less stressed and tired and have fewer headaches;
- fewer children will suffer from asthma;
- fewer children will need to see a doctor about respiratory infections;
- fewer children will need to miss school because of illness; and
- fewer teachers will be off work because of illness.



**Fresh air**

**Clean classrooms**

**Low-emission paints**

**Eco-label products**

**Healthy buildings**

### TOP TIPS

Your school will be a healthier place if it is clean and tidy. You and your friends can improve indoor hygiene by helping to keep your classroom clean, making sure that there is good ventilation, and avoiding smoking.

- Good ventilation has been shown to lower the concentrations of carbon dioxide in the indoor air, which helps you to think more clearly and study better. Good ventilation also lowers concentrations of indoor air pollutants.
- Your school should take care which cleaning products are used and should look for alternatives to toxic pesticides and cleaning chemicals. There are many environmentally friendly cleaning products that your school can choose from.
- Use chemicals carefully. Do not leave glue and paint jars open when you have finished using them.
- Your school should practice sun-safe behaviour by encouraging children to cover up, to use sun cream when playing outside on sunny days, and to stay out of the midday sun so as to avoid harmful UV rays.

### A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

How clean is the air in your school building? Read through the tips on the left and see how many things you can do each day to make sure you and your friends are breathing fresh air!

- Open the windows in each classroom during the break.
- Open several windows a little rather than one window wide.
- Do not block ventilation openings.
- If the air in your classroom smells stuffy, ask your teacher to open some windows during lesson time.

### CONTACTS

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