Gym class HerOes

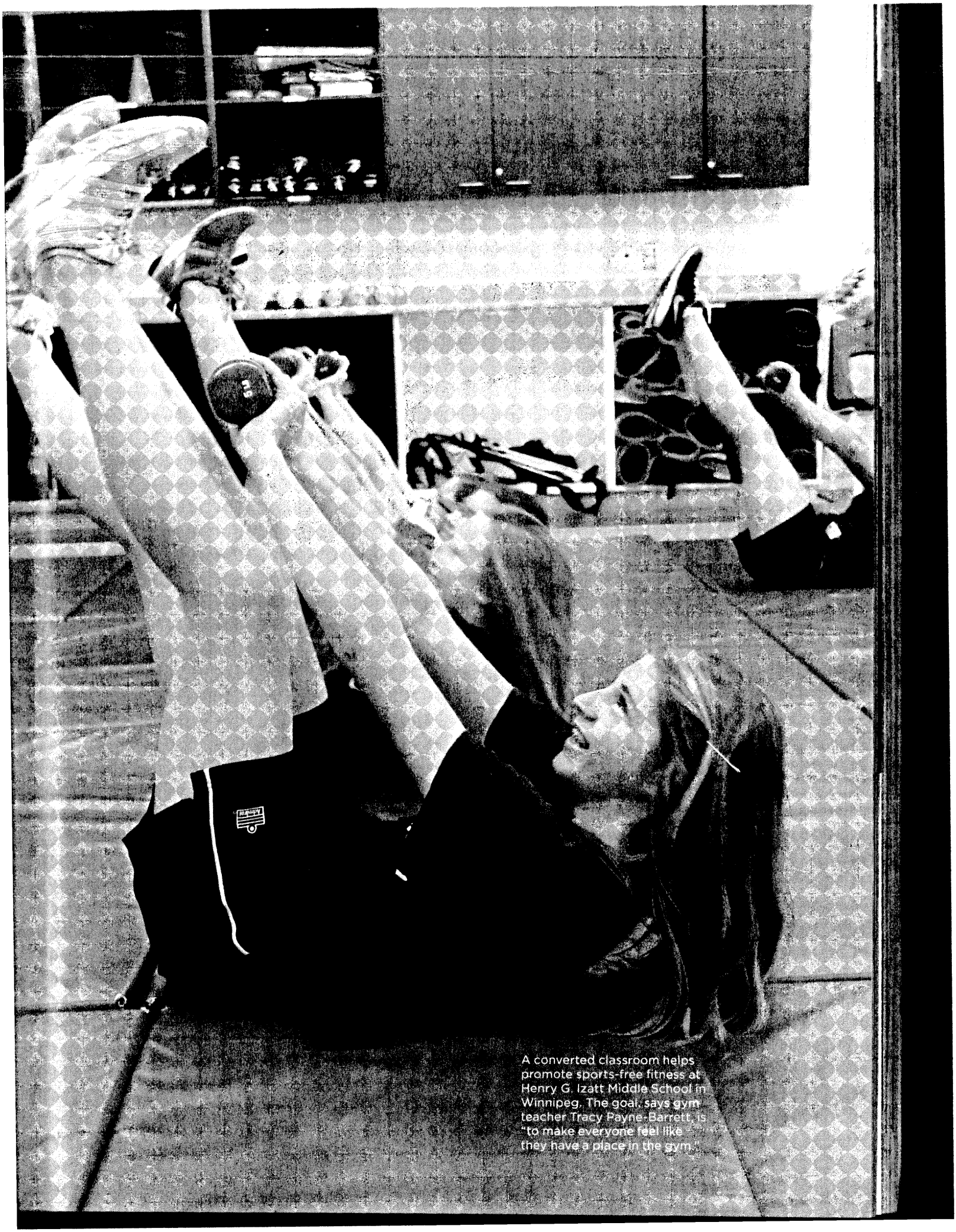
Good riddance, rope climbing. Ciao, chin-ups. So long, sit-ups. These Canadian schools are getting their students psyched for phys-ed.

BY JENNIFER POWER SCOTT

Things have changed since the days of tough-talking, whistle-wielding gym teachers who high-fived the jocks as the athletically challenged kids trembled in their tracksuits. With one in four Canadian children being overweight or obese, some schools are finding imaginative ways to get Generation Text on the move.

In Golden, B.C., kids from Alexander Park Elementary School take walks by the Kicking Horse River. Teenagers from St. Peter's Academy in tiny Benoit's Cove, N.L., glide across shiny ponds during school canoe trips. At École Pine Grove Public School in Oakville, Ont., students juggle pins, scarves and rings. "Physical activity doesn't have to mean sports," says Jennifer Benoit, a physical education teacher in Niagara Falls, Ont. "It's not just for the athletes anymore."

Here are three other Canadian schools with heart-pumping programs that are inspiring kids to fall in love with fitness – for life. »



A converted classroom helps promote sports-free fitness at Henry G. Izatt Middle School in Winnipeg. The goal, says gym teacher Tracy Payne-Barrett, is "to make everyone feel like they have a place in the gym."