

Handouts for Families





Canada's Food Guide Tips

Eat at least one dark green and one orange vegetable each day

- Go for dark green vegetables such as broccoli, romaine lettuce, green beans and spinach.
- Go for orange vegetables such as carrots, sweet potatoes, yams, winter squash and orange peppers.

Choose vegetables and fruit prepared with little or no added fat, sugar or salt (sodium)

- Enjoy vegetables steamed, baked or stir-fried instead of deep-fried.

Have vegetables and fruit more often than juice

Make at least half of your grain products whole grain each day

- Eat a variety of whole grains such as barley, brown rice, oats, wild rice and quinoa.
- Enjoy whole grain breads, oatmeal or whole wheat pasta.

Choose grain products that are lower in fat, sugar or salt (sodium)

- Compare the Nutrition Facts table on labels of packaged food to make wise choices.

Drink skim, 1%, or 2% milk each day

- Drink fortified soy beverages if you do not drink milk.

Select lower-fat milk alternatives

- Compare the Nutrition Facts table on yogurts or cheeses.

Have meat alternatives such as beans, lentils, nut butters and tofu often

Select lean meat and alternatives prepared with little or no added fat or salt (sodium)

- Trim the visible fat from meats. Remove the skin on poultry.
- Use cooking methods such as roasting, baking or poaching that require little or no added fat.
- If you eat luncheon meats, choose those lower in salt (sodium) and fat such as turkey, ham or beef. Limit sausage, bologna or salami (circle meats), as they tend to be higher in salt (sodium) and fat.



Tips for Packing Healthy Snacks and Meals

Making healthy meals can be quick and easy. Planning can go a long way in helping you have healthy meals.

Planning ahead will help you:

- Eat well by varying your food choices throughout the day and week.
- Save time by reducing trips to the grocery store.
- Get meals and snacks prepared faster with less stress.



Follow these meal-planning steps:

- Follow Eating Well with *Canada's Food Guide* and make sure you include all four food groups every meal.
- Jot down your meal and snack ideas on paper, a calendar or a meal planner.
- Using your meal plan, make a grocery list of items you'll need to buy that you don't already have on hand.
- If possible, stock up on basics such as vegetables and fruit, whole grain bread, whole grain pasta and brown rice, milk, yogurt, lean meat, fish, poultry, eggs, beans, lentils, nuts and seeds.

Save time while making healthy meals

Here are some ideas to help you save time when making meals for yourself and your family.

- Plan your meals and snacks and make a shopping list so you have the ingredients in your kitchen to pull together meals quickly.
- Choose some healthy convenience products to help speed up preparation time. For example, canned or bottled low-salt (sodium) tomato-based pasta sauces, frozen or canned vegetables that are lower in salt (sodium), frozen or canned fruit, bagged salad greens, canned tuna or salmon, canned beans or lentils that are lower in salt (sodium).
- Prepare some foods in advance and keep in the freezer (such as soups, stews, casseroles, pasta dishes, cooked rice, or pizza dough).
- Cook once and eat twice. Purposely cook double the amount and freeze the leftovers for another meal night.
- Cook twice the chicken or ground beef you need and keep extras in the fridge to make chicken salad or sandwich, enchiladas, chili or spaghetti sauce the next day.
- Chop extra veggies and fruit when preparing meals, so you have extra for lunches, snacks or meals the next day.
- Ask your family to help get meals started. By involving children in planning and preparing meals, they'll appreciate the meal more and learn important life skills.

Adapted from www.healthycanadians.gc.ca



Lunch Ideas for the Whole Family

Tuna Salad

- Tuna salad (a bed of romaine lettuce, topped with flaked tuna, quartered cherry tomatoes, sliced black olives, onions, red bell peppers, yellow bell peppers and sliced radishes)
- Balsamic vinaigrette
- Piece of whole grain bread topped with a serving of sliced cheddar cheese.
- Sliced kiwi

Chicken Burrito

- Half of a Chicken and Veggie Burrito (fill a whole wheat tortilla with chicken, rice, lettuce, orange peppers and salsa)
- ½ cup (125 mL) of cottage cheese (or plain yogurt) topped with ½ cup (125 mL) blueberries (fresh or frozen).
- Mandarin orange.

Quesadilla:

- Quesadilla (Whole wheat tortilla, cheese, black beans, sundried tomato pesto and sliced avocado – if pesto and avocado are not available replace them with red pepper and broccoli).
- Shredded cabbage and carrot salad with low-fat dressing.
- Strawberries (frozen or fresh) or orange wedges.

Spinach Salad:

- Spinach salad with balsamic vinaigrette (spinach, sliced hard boiled egg, quartered cherry tomatoes and sunflower seeds).
- Stone ground wheat crackers with mozzarella cheese cubes.
- Quartered grapes.

Pesto Pasta:

- Whole-wheat pasta (such as penne or bowtie noodles) tossed with pesto or tomato sauce.
- Chicken breast slices.
- Steamed broccoli.
- ½ cup (125 mL) of plain milk.
- Orange slices.

Fruity Bagel:

- Blueberry cream cheese on half a whole-wheat bagel.
- ½ cup (125 mL) Strawberries and cucumber slices
- Hard-boiled egg peeled and sliced in half.

Tofu and Fruit:

- ½ a whole-wheat croissant.
- Baked or smoked tofu (or grilled chicken)
- ½ cup (125 mL) Cucumber and red pepper slices.
- ½ cup (125 mL) of plain yogurt with fresh or frozen blueberries on top.





Baked Beans and Rice:

- Baked beans in tomato sauce (or any type of beans).
- Shredded romaine lettuce with grated cheese, shredded carrots and vinaigrette.
- Steamed brown rice.
- Fresh Kiwi (or sliced grapes, banana, orange segments, etc.).

Falafels:

- 3 mini falafel balls.
- Cherry tomatoes quartered and steamed carrot sticks.
- Hummus or cottage cheese dip.
- ½ whole-wheat pita.
- ½ cup (125 mL) of plain milk.



Breakfast for Lunch

- Whole grain blueberry pancakes.
- Hard-boiled egg peeled and sliced in half.
- Yogurt.
- Orange and banana slices.

Ham and Cheese Sandwich

- Whole wheat bread, hard cheese and ham (reduced fat, roasted or baked preferred)
- Plain yogurt with banana slices
- Water

Breakfast Muffins

- Whole Wheat English Muffin with nut butter
- Plain yogurt, sweetened with honey
- Banana or apple slices
- Water

Pita Packs

- Whole wheat pita stuffed with shredded cheese, cubed meat, tomato and cucumber
- Grapes
- Water

Crackers and Hummus

- Stone wheat crackers
- Hummus
- Vegetable sticks (peppers, broccoli, cucumber, etc)
- Yogurt and berries

Traditional Lunch

- Dry fish or meat
- Baked bannock
- Pear sliced
- Plain milk (½ cup/125 mL)

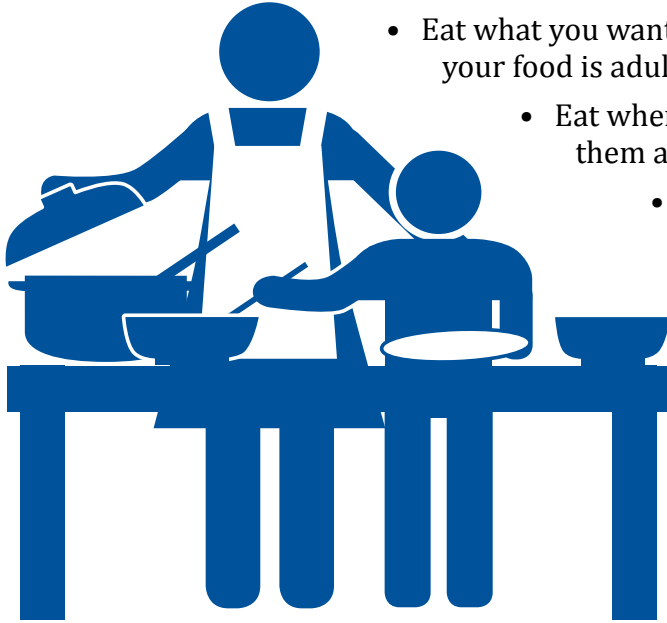


Adapted from Laptop Lunches



Parents as a Healthy Role Model

Parental attitudes towards healthy lifestyle choices, as well as the nutrition choices that parents make, have a huge influence on children's lifestyle and nutrition habits. Here are some tips to help parents model healthy eating for their children.



- Eat what you want your children to eat. Avoid telling them your food is adult food.
 - Eat where you expect your children to eat. Sit with them at mealtime and enjoy your meals together.
 - Discuss what you are eating – what are you enjoying, what textures are in your food? Ask children if they have eaten what you are eating and encourage them to ask questions about their meals.
 - Eat portions recommended by *Canada's Food Guide* (see page 118 for children's portions). Point out that your meal might be larger, but it contains the same food groups in adult portions.
- Try new foods with your children. If there is a food you avoid, explain why.
 - If possible, grow or prepare food together.
 - Encourage kids to try new foods, but do not force them.
 - Involve your children in meal planning and grocery shopping.

Additional tips for modeling positive physical activity behaviours include:

- Participating actively with your children. Do not passively supervise their active times.
- Create active games with your children. Be creative with equipment and surroundings and encourage them to as well.
- Enjoy the physical activities you are participating in with your children.
- If there is a physical activity you avoid or do not want to participate in, explain why.
- Expose your children to a wide variety of physical activity options. Discuss preferred activities and let children pick an activity for the family.

Adapted from http://kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition_center/, www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/ and decoda.ca/children-families/leap-bc/



Sample Newsletters

Sample Newsletter #1 – Vegetables and fruit

Snacking On Vegetables And Fruit – A Rainbow Of Choices

Dear (insert centre name) parents,

This week your child will explore a rainbow of vegetables and fruit in the Healthy Beginnings 2-5 program. The key messages will be the following:

- Vegetables and fruit come in different colours, so try them all!
- Each coloured fruit or vegetable gives your body different nutrients to grow healthy and strong.
- Go for five! Eat five or more servings of vegetables and fruit each day.

An Apple a Day? Here's how:

Everyone knows the old saying, “An apple a day keeps the doctor away.” Even so, many Canadian’s could still include more vegetables and fruit in their diets. Vegetables and fruit provide vitamins, minerals and fibre essential for proper growth and development in children. A diet abundant in vegetables and fruit protects against heart disease, diabetes,

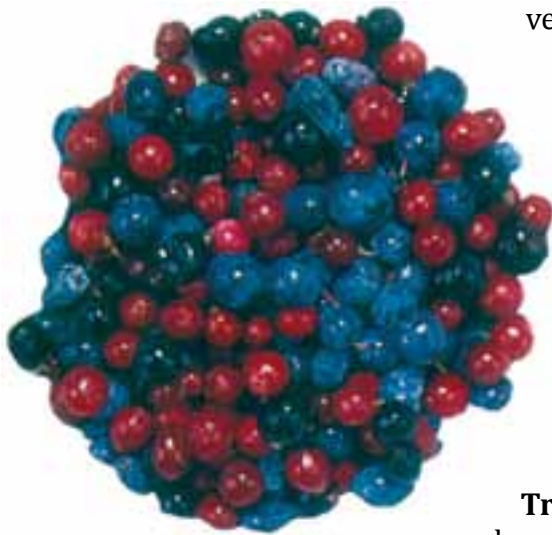




stroke and possibly some cancers. Everyone can benefit from the fibre and water in vegetables and fruit that fill you up and keep your digestive track working well.

To boost the amount of vegetables and fruit in your family's diet, make the foods more available and accessible, and model healthy habits yourself. The following are some tips for success.

Start early. Introduce fruits and vegetables to children when they're young, and continue serving fruits and vegetables with every meal and snack. Preschoolers need five servings of vegetables and fruit daily.



Be prepared. Always have a supply of cut, prepared vegetables and fruit in the refrigerator for easy snacking. Store them in clear containers at eye level.

Pack 'em up. Include washed, single servings of vegetables or fruit in your child's packed school lunches every day. Try packing a variety of colour.

Focus on vegetables and fruit. Instead of drinking juice, eat fresh, frozen or canned fruit. Most options are easy to pack and take with you anywhere.

Trade up. Substitute fruit or a salad for a side of fries when eating out.

Add 'em in. Add extra vegetables to foods you prepare from scratch or to prepared foods.

Set a good example by eating and serving fruits and vegetables every day. This is important in an age of fast food and intense food advertising aimed at children.

Vegetables and Fruit Make Easy Snacks!

- Steamed baby carrots and yogurt dressing
- Apple or orange wedges
- Cucumbers and cheese
- Applesauce
- Pepper strips

For more information and great recipe and snack ideas, visit www.healthycanadians.gc.ca

**Sample Newsletter #2- Sugar sweetened beverages****Sugar Is Sweet – And Drinks Are Too?**

Dear (insert centre name) parents,

This week your child will explore sugar sweetened beverages in the Healthy Beginnings 2-5 program.

What is the largest source of added sugar in children's diets? It's not cake or candy – it's drinks sweetened with sugar. Children are drinking more soft drinks, juice, punch, and sports drinks than ever before. The added sugar in these drinks provides few nutrients for growing bodies; in fact, a diet high in sugar increases a child's chance of becoming overweight, getting dental cavities or not getting enough calcium (from food and drinks like plain milk, which is an excellent source of calcium.).

Did you know?

- A large pop (730 mL) has enough sugar to equal 21 sugar cubes
- A 355 mL can of pop or sports drink contains 10 sugar cubes
- Iced tea (355 mL) contains eight sugar cubes

The problem is that most of the time people don't realize how much sugar is added to their favourite drinks. Teaching kids to be sugar smart while they are still young can help them make better choices for years to come. With so many sugary products available, setting a good example at home is more important than ever.

What can you do to make sure your family is sugar smart?

Water should always be the first option

Serve your children water and plain milk during snack and meal times.

Serving 100 % juice is okay if it is in moderation; no more than ½ cup (125 mL) a day. Read drink labels in order to avoid purchasing drinks high in added sugars. Added sugar can be listed on the label as sucrose, high fructose corn syrup, dextrose or fruit juice concentrate.

Fresh, frozen or dried fruit instead of juice can be great options and have so many nutrients to keep young bodies healthy.

For more information, visit Sip Smart at dotcms.bcpeds.ca/sipsmart/welcome/index.dot





Sample Newsletter #3- Healthy snacks

Super Snacks – Snacking The Healthy Way!

Dear (your centre name) parents,

This week the Healthy Beginnings 2-5 program will focus on super snacks. Our key message is to choose healthy snacks that include at least one fruit or vegetable.

We'll talk about what makes a healthy snack, how to identify healthy snacks and which foods should be eaten only sometimes. For children, snack time is not only enjoyable but also necessary. Make sure that your kids' snack foods pack a nutritious punch.

So, what makes a healthy snack? Think of snacks as a mini-meal. Here are some qualities to keep in mind when planning and serving foods to children for a snack:

- Include a vegetable or fruit with every meal and snack.
- Mix it up! Include an option from one of the other three food groups to accompany your vegetable and fruit selection. For example, serve cheese cubes (milk and alternatives), with apple slices (vegetables and fruit).
- Read the Nutrition Facts table on the products you buy. Choose foods low in fat, salt (sodium) and sugar.

How much snacking is okay? This depends on your child's overall diet. But a good rule of thumb is to provide three meals a day and two to three snacks every few hours as needed.

To boost the nutrition in your children's snacks, follow these healthy eating tips:

- Choose snacks wisely. Children need energy between meals, and snacks can provide about 25 % of your child's nutrition.
- You can limit the amount of low-nutrition foods such as candy, cookies and chips, by serving only as occasional options. It's easier to say no if you don't keep those foods in the house.



Try packing these super snack ideas!

- Steamed baby carrots and yogurt
- Cucumbers and cottage cheese
- Applesauce and graham crackers
- Hard-boiled eggs and orange wedges
- Hummus and quartered mushrooms
- Dry cereal and raspberries/bananas/blueberries and plain milk

For more information, visit www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/eating-nutrition/healthy-eating-saine-alimentation/children_go-enfants_actifs-eng.php

**Sample Newsletter #4- Grains****Go For Grains!**

Dear (insert centre name) parents,

This week your children will explore the world of whole grains through the Healthy Beginnings 2-5 program. Our key messages will be the following:

- Flavour and fibre: Get it all with whole grains.
- Processed grains do not have as much good stuff, especially fibre.
- Breakfast is a great time to try whole grains (e.g., cereals, waffles or whole wheat bagels).

Whole-grain breads and cereals are packed with fibre, vitamins, minerals, and flavour. They keep you feeling full longer, and they have many benefits for disease prevention and healthy digestion. Examples of whole grains are whole wheat, cracked wheat, barley, oats, rye, brown rice, whole cornmeal, and millet.

You can help your family enjoy whole grains by following these tips:

- Serve whole grain breads, breakfast cereals, brown rice, bulgur, barley, and oats.
- When purchasing whole-grain cereals and breads, read the label to be sure that a whole grain is the first or second ingredient listed and that the product has at least 3 grams of fibre per serving.
- Know that not all whole-grain (ready-to-eat) breakfast cereals are equally nutritious. Many cereals labelled whole grain are also very high in sugar. Choose cereals that are low in sugar (5 grams or less) per serving.
- Set a good example by serving whole grains with meals and snacks.



Examples of ready-to-eat cereals with high fibre or low sugar:

- Cheerios – 3 g fibre, 1 g sugar
- Total – 3 g fibre, 5 g sugar
- Wheaties – 3 g fibre, 4 g sugar

For more information, visit www.healthycanadians.gc.ca



Sample Newsletter #5- Marketing to children

Making Healthy Food Choices And Being Aware Of Unhealthy Advertising

Dear (insert centre name) parents,

This week in the Healthy Beginnings 2-5 program, your child has learned about making healthy food and beverage choices. An important part of this is the marketing of unhealthy food choices to children. This newsletter will cover:

- Becoming aware of food-based marketing to children. Many advertisements promote unhealthy food products.
- Learning about the frequency of unhealthy food advertising. This advertising can be harmful.
- Strategies to help teach children about marketing.

What is so bad about food-based advertising?

- The marketing of food and beverages to children impacts their food and beverage choices.
- The majority of food and beverages marketed to children are unhealthy.
- Unhealthy food and beverage choices contribute to childhood obesity.

(CDPAC, 2008)

What does food and beverage based advertising try to sell?

Food and beverage advertising promotes unhealthy food. A Canadian study found that 73 % of food products marketed to children did not fit into *Canada's Food Guide* (Laurendeau & Marque, 2006). Sugar sweetened beverages, such as pop or juice cocktails, are heavily marketed to young children.

Why does food and beverage based advertising work?

Children are too young to understand and question the information provided to them through media. Advertisers spend a great deal of money targeting young children, who they hope will convince their parents to purchase an advertised food product.





How does food-based advertising work?

Advertising helps to make some brands familiar, such as large fast-food chains. Children learn about these brands and often ask their parents for these foods. Free gifts, likeable characters, catchy music, bright colors and toys are advertising strategies targeting young children. Repetition of a commercial also increases its marketing power. Advertising can occur through TV, radio, signs, displays or Internet. It can also occur at childcare or in the community through sponsorships.

How can I teach my preschooler about marketing?

Teach your child media literacy skills. This helps them to understand the tactics and impact of advertising.

- Talk to them about commercials. Discuss what they like about commercials and what they think the intent of the commercial is (i.e. What is the advertiser trying to do?).
- Together, check to see if advertised food and beverage choices are present in *Canada's Food Guide*.
- Teach children to resist products promoted in advertising. If a specific food or beverage product appeals to them, work together to create a healthy alternative.
- Encourage children to question advertisements. If a food or beverage is advertised as healthy or part of a balanced meal, ask children to explain why it is healthy and work together to learn about how advertised food and beverage products might benefit (or not) their growing bodies.

Try playing Snappy Foods

- Play this game in the grocery store, while driving, or while watching TV.
- When a child sees a product advertised to them, they call out “snappy food” and snap their fingers or clap their hands. See how many they can spot on each shopping trip, or have two siblings play to see who spots the advertised foods first.
- o Good hints to give children are to look for anything with their favourite TV or book characters on it or foods that are brightly packaged
- This game can also be adapted to I Spy in the grocery store – ‘I spy something healthy that is red’, and have your child guess it.

For more information, visit the Concerned Children’s Advertisers website at <http://cca-arpe.ca/>

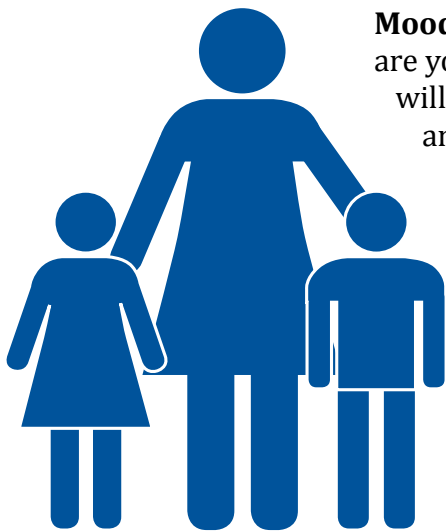
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Newsletter Extensions

Insert these short paragraphs into your newsletter to inform parents about the week's activities, games and recipes:

Vegetable and fruit show and tell – This week, your child will be asked to select a vegetable or fruit to bring with them to school. Help your child select their favourite vegetable/fruit by taking them grocery shopping with you. Talk about what the food tastes like, what colour it is and how it could be served. Explain to your child why eating fruits and vegetables is an important part of their diet to grow up strong and healthy.



Moody vegetables – This week, your child will be reading, *How are you Peeling, Foods with Moods* by Saxton Freymann. The class will make a moody vegetable collage using cut up pieces of fruits and vegetables. Explore various fruits and vegetables with them at home this week (hint: show your child a vegetable or fruit and talk about what mood that piece might be in (happy, silly, angry etc.)).

My food guide – This week, your child will learn about the four food groups. Help your child learn about the four food groups at home by visiting *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* and building My Food Guide online at www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/myguide-monguide/index-eng.php

Snacking – This week, we will be teaching children about healthy snacks that include a vegetable or fruit as well as a serving from another food group. Make healthy snacks at home this week – try one of these simple recipes by preparing it with your child and enjoying it together.

- Hummus (attach recipe) with veggie sticks
- Fruit Smoothie (attach recipe)
- Fruit Fondue with Yogurt Dip (attach recipe)

Meal Planning – This week, we will be teaching your child about healthy snacks and meals. To help your child learn at home, involve them in the menu planning for the week. Look at cookbooks with your child or visit one of many online resources to get ideas for healthy meals. Talk to you child about involving all four food groups in the meal, and which food is in which group. Take your child grocery shopping with you, or have them help prepare the meal by getting ingredients for you, counting vegetables/portions or mixing. Visit the Dietitians of Canada website for some great, healthy meal ideas: www.dietitians.ca/Your-Health/Plan-Shop-Cook/Cook-Healthy.aspx