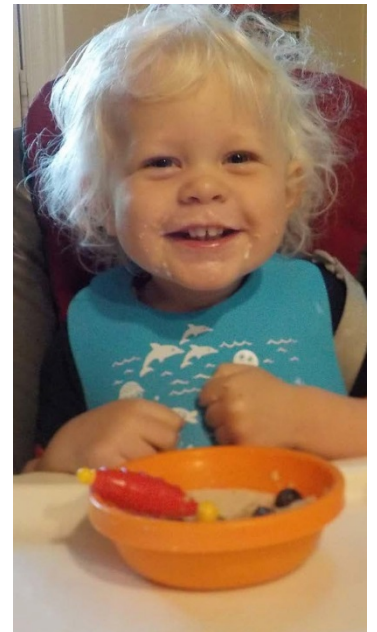


NUTRITION FOR YOUNG CHILDREN (AGES 1 TO 6 YEARS) IN COMMUNITY SETTINGS *BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES*



NUTRITION FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES

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Why Nutrition Best Practice Guidelines?

The formation of healthy eating habits begins in the early years. Healthy eating habits that start young can last a lifetime. Good nutrition and active play are essential for healthy growth and development. Staff and volunteers who work with young children in community settings can have a positive influence on the eating habits of young children and their parents/caregivers.

Simcoe County community service providers have been working collaboratively to improve the nutritional value of foods served to young children within programs since 2002. The Nutrition Best Practice Guidelines were created to help community staff and volunteers working with young children to:

- provide healthy food choices,
- apply the principles of a healthy feeding relationship,
- role model healthy eating practices,
- have a healthy and positive attitude towards food,
- encourage children to have fun with active play, and
- help parents/caregivers learn more about healthy eating and apply their learning at home.

The nutrition guidelines are based on “best practice.” This means the information in the guidelines are:

- based on current (up-to-date) information,
- taken from well-recognized sources, and
- based on scientific research whenever this is available, otherwise, on well-accepted practices.

The Nutrition Best Practice Guidelines complement Health Canada’s recommendations in *Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide* and *Nutrition for Healthy Term Infants 6 to 24 months*, as well as Ellyn Satter’s *Division of Responsibility in Feeding*. They consider the role of the program staff/volunteers/parents/caregivers in providing healthy food choices, role modelling healthy eating practices, and establishing healthy feeding relationships.

Objectives of the Nutrition Best Practice Guidelines

Staff and volunteers working with young children in community programs will:

- adopt the guidelines and receive the support necessary to incorporate the guidelines into their daily activities,
- have the knowledge and skills needed to plan, prepare and serve safe, healthy food,
- have the knowledge and skills needed to role model healthy eating practices and apply the concepts of the feeding relationship to promote a supportive eating environment, and
- be able to identify opportunities to share their knowledge about feeding young children.

DID YOU KNOW.....

Poor eating habits and low nutrient intakes during the first two decades of life have been linked to an increased risk for heart disease, cancer, diabetes and other chronic diseases later in life.

Foods that are mostly sugar, or mostly fat, as well as higher fat and /or higher salt snack foods represent almost one-quarter of the energy (calorie) intake of Canadian children and youth aged 4 to 18 years.

76% of children aged 1 to 3 and more than 90 % of children aged 4 to 8 exceed the Upper Limit for sodium in their age group. Excess sodium intake is associated with an increased risk of high blood pressure. High blood pressure is a major risk factor for stroke, heart disease and kidney disease.

59% of Canadian children 2 to 17 years of age consume less than 5 servings of vegetables and fruit a day.

For kids aged 1 to 18 almost half of daily sugar (44%) comes from beverages.

In Ontario, almost 1 in 3 children are at an unhealthy weight.

According to the Heart & Stroke 2017 *Report on the Health of Canadians*, experts predict “that today’s children may be the first generation to have poorer health and shorter lifespans than their parents.”

In Simcoe County

In 2014-2015: 28.5% of Junior Kindergarten and 52.0% of children in grade 2 had some kind of tooth decay (either active decay, a tooth missing/extracted due to decay, or filled due to decay).

In 2012: 16.6% (or 16,090) children under age 18 were living in families with low income.

In 2009-2014: 20% of single-parent families reported moderate or severe food insecurity in the past 12 months.

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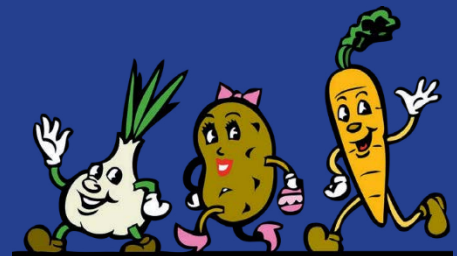
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HEALTHY EATING BASICS:

Children Ages 1 to 6 Years

- The Importance of Healthy Eating for Young Children
- A Healthy Feeding Relationship
- The Importance of Role Modelling
- Feeding Challenges
- Healthy Bodies
- Active Play
- Supporting Breastfeeding Mothers



HEALTHY EATING BASICS: CHILDREN AGES 1 TO 6 YEARS



Children grow and develop more quickly during the early years compared to any other time in their lives. Good eating habits learned in the early years can last a lifetime.

The Importance of Healthy Eating for Young Children

Helping young children learn and practice healthy eating habits based on Canada's Food Guide early in life is an important investment in their future. It sets the stage for good growth and development, helps them maintain a healthy weight and teaches them skills they can use to stay healthy throughout their lives.

Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide gives recommendations for the amount and types of food required each day, based on age and gender. It has been developed to help Canadians meet their nutrient requirements at every stage of life, including childhood.

Children aged two years and older can get the nutrients and energy they need by following the recommended number of servings within the four food groups in Canada's Food Guide. Serving nutritious small meals and snacks with food from these food groups and including a small amount of unsaturated fats, is the best way to make sure that children get the nutrients they need. It is important to limit foods high in unhealthy fat, salt and/or sugar.



For more information on how Canada's Food Guide applies to children, visit:

www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/food-nutrition/canada-food-guide/choosing-foods/advice-different-ages-stages/children.html

"During the early years, children are learning what, when and how much to eat. Their eating habits are shaped by cultural and familial beliefs, attitudes, and practices surrounding food and eating. Parents and caregivers play a vital role in helping young children establish eating habits that will shape their lives. Children tend to acquire their parents' healthy-related behaviours at a young age"

- No Time to Wait: The Healthy Kids Strategy



HEALTHY EATING BASICS: CHILDREN AGES 1 TO 6 YEARS

A Healthy Feeding Relationship

Building a healthy feeding relationship starts with understanding what roles parents/caregivers, program staff/volunteers and children have with feeding. Sharing the responsibility for eating during meal and snack times, framed in Ellyn Satter's *Division of Responsibility*, is one way to build and maintain a healthy feeding relationship. This will help children feel positive about food and mealtimes and prevent mealtime challenges

It is the parent/caregiver's role to decide what food is served (healthy choices from Canada's Food Guide), when it is served (set regular meal and snack times, about 2.5- 3 hours apart) and where it is served (ideally at a table with others, free from distractions such as toys, television and electronics).

It is the child's responsibility to decide which foods to eat from the healthy choices offered and how much to eat.

Pressuring children about their eating will not help them try a food or eat more or less of something. See the chart below (adapted from York Region's *Managing Mealtimes* handout):

Type of pressure that will not help	What you can do or say instead that might help a child's eating
<p>Praising</p> <p>A child tried a new food and you want to acknowledge it. You say, "You are a good girl for trying the peas."</p>	<p>"I see you tried it."</p> <p>"What did you think?"</p> <p>Children are more likely to try a new food if they do not feel pressured and are able to make their own choices from the foods offered</p>
<p>Bribing or rewarding with fun activities or food</p> <p>"If you try this, we will go to the play area."</p> <p>"If you eat your vegetables, you can have dessert."</p>	<p>"We can have these vegetables again another time. Next time would you like them raw instead of cooked?"</p> <p>If rewarded with dessert for eating more vegetables, the desire for dessert is increased. They may eat more food even if they aren't hungry, just to get dessert.</p>

HEALTHY EATING BASICS: CHILDREN AGES 1 TO 6 YEARS

Type of pressure that will not help	What you can do or say instead that might help a child's eating
<p>Persuading or coaxing</p> <p>"You've tried it before."</p> <p>"Don't forget to eat your meat."</p> <p>"These will make you grow big and strong."</p>	<p>"You don't have to try it or swallow it if you don't want to." "Do you like that?"</p> <p>Provide a napkin so the child can politely spit out the food. Phrases like the ones above help a child feel like they are making choices. Coaxing only makes the food even less desirable to them.</p>
<p>Comforting with food</p> <p>"I know what will make that boo boo go away - have a little snack."</p>	<p>Use words and hugs to comfort children rather than food, otherwise it teaches them that in order to feel better they should eat.</p>
<p>The one-bite or two-bite rule</p> <p>"You don't have to like it, but you do have to take a bite of every food."</p>	<p>The one-bite rule does not respect a child's job with feeding.</p> <p>The child decides what foods to eat. Sometimes new foods take 10-15 tries before it is accepted.</p>
<p>Punishment for not eating</p> <p>"Since you didn't eat that, we can't go outside and play."</p>	<p>Say nothing about what a child eats or does not eat. Let them focus on eating because they are hungry and stop when they are full.</p>
<p>Scolding or Shaming</p> <p>"You are wasting food."</p> <p>"Why don't you finish your food like your brother?"</p> <p>"If you do not eat all the food on your plate, I'll be upset."</p>	<p>Prepare smaller amounts of food.</p> <p>Do not compare one child to another.</p> <p>Allow them to focus on their own hunger and fullness signs.</p>

For more information of The Division of Responsibility and feeding young children, visit www.ellynsatterinstitute.org

Please note these suggestions are geared for a general population and may not be suitable for children who have a health or developmental diagnosis.

HEALTHY EATING BASICS: CHILDREN AGES 1 TO 6 YEARS

The Importance of Role Modelling

Role modelling is a powerful teaching tool. Children learn a lot from what adults say and do and children will try to copy that example. Here are a few ways staff and volunteers can role model healthy eating practices for children and their parents/caregivers while in program:

- Serve healthy food choices at meals and snacks.
- Offer only water and milk at meals and snacks (no coffee, tea, juice).
- Sit down at a table and eat the snack/meal together as a group.
- Be willing to offer and try new foods with the children.
- Refrain from making negative comments about the food and beverage choices served and remain positive about these choices.
- Limit distractions at the table, e.g. toys, cell phones, tablets, etc.
- Refrain from using personal electronics (e.g., cell phones) during snack and meal times.
- Avoid bringing in food and beverages (e.g. coffee) from outside food premises when children are present or consume these in an area not accessible by children.
- Model healthy eating and positive body image by refraining from conversations about body size, amount of food eaten, dieting and weight loss, or making assumptions about how well or poorly a child will eat based on their weight.
- Treat all children the same way regardless of their body size or shape (e.g., avoid making judgement on the amount of food a child chooses to eat).
- Avoid food company branding and/or advertising on toys, placemats, utensils, etc.
- Follow safe food handling practices!

Supporting Healthy Eating Environments

Health messages directed towards families will be more effective if they can see that team members' actions in program settings are consistent, so it is important that:

- Management recognizes the value of healthy eating and its impact on the workplace.
- Management supports and provides learning opportunities about healthy lifestyles to program staff and volunteers.
- Healthy snacks are offered at meetings. Examples include more water and less coffee, foods from at least two food groups instead of high fat/sugar/salt options.
- Healthy foods or non-food items are used as fundraisers and for special occasions.
- All team members are aware of the nutrition guidelines and reasons for them.

Creating a supportive eating environment for children can be just as important, if not more important than the foods offered during program. The environment children eat in can have lifelong impacts on their relationship with food. This environment includes staff attitudes and behaviors toward food and the social atmosphere during snack time.

HEALTHY EATING BASICS: CHILDREN AGES 1 TO 6 YEARS

Feeding Challenges

While feeding challenges are common and normal, they can be frustrating and stressful for everyone. By developing and maintaining a healthy feeding relationship and role modelling healthy eating practices, many feeding challenges can be prevented or overcome.

Common feeding challenges include:

- Child wants to eat the same food all the time.
- Child doesn't want to eat/eats very little.
- Child doesn't like vegetables.
- Child is coaxed to eat all of her food.
- Child refuses to try a new food.
- Child refuses to eat meat.

A child could refuse a new food for the following reasons:

- the shape, feel or smell of the food,
- the colour of the food,
- the texture of the food, and/or if
- the food is mixed together vs. separated.

Refusing to try or eat a new food is a way for a child to take control. It may have little to do with the actual food. Offer a variety of healthy choices at mealtimes, including a food the child enjoys eating. Respect their role in the feeding relationship – they decide whether to eat and how much to eat of the foods offered. Instead, focus on spending time together and engaging in conversation. If a child sees you eating the food, they may be more willing to try it. New foods offered many (10-15) times without pressure may encourage children to try them.

Avoid using labels such as “picky eaters”. If a child is labeled as a picky eater, they may be more inclined to “live up” to that label.

Learning eaters is more acceptable.

When offering a new food, you can try these strategies:

State, “I’d like to introduce a new food to you.”

- Look at it.
- Smell it.
- Do you feel like tasting it?
You don’t have to eat it if you don’t want to.
- You can take it out of your mouth if you want to.
- You don’t have to swallow it.
- You can spit it into the napkin.
- You can eat it now if you like.



HEALTHY EATING BASICS: CHILDREN AGES 1 TO 6 YEARS

Remember:

- Never force a child to eat.
- Don't give up! Children may need to try a new food 10 to 15 different times before they will like it.

It's never too late to start having healthier and more enjoyable mealtimes. For more tips on managing common feeding challenges, visit:

- 1) <http://opha.on.ca/getmedia/4d17db3c-03f5-4d11-813c-255055e3eb91/ERBA-12-36-months-EN-FINAL.pdf.aspx>
- 2) <http://opha.on.ca/getmedia/d74865eb-f177-4bf4-ba7d-818652b38da2/ERBA-3-5-EN-FINAL.pdf.aspx>
- 3) www.eatrightontario.ca/en/Articles/Child-Toddler-Nutrition/Say-Goodbye-to-Picky-Eating!.aspx
- 4) www.eatrightontario.ca/en/Articles/Child-Toddler-Nutrition/Picky-eating--10-fun-tips-to-get-kids-to-try-new-foods.aspx

Healthy Bodies

Healthy bodies come in different shapes and sizes as children grow and develop at different rates. It is important to help all children feel good about themselves. Talking about physical appearance may be viewed as a criticism by the child or a parent/caregiver. Comments such as “he is short/tall/fat/thin for his age,” may make a child feel badly about themselves. Show children that you appreciate them for their personal qualities rather than for anything to do with appearance. Teach them to love and value themselves!



Overweight and obese children are often targets of teasing and harassment from strangers, peers and even friends and family. Some people may think “negatively” about an overweight or obese person *because* of their weight. These are examples of a term called weight stigma. Weight stigma can be expressed verbally, through physical aggression or through social exclusion from activities. Having weight bias or negative stereotype about weight has negative consequences for the emotional well-being in children who are overweight and obese. Some consequences include shame and guilt, anxiety, depression, poor self-esteem and body dissatisfaction that can lead to unhealthy weight-control practices. The first step to help reduce weight stigma is to become aware of our own biases. Obesity is a medical condition that can be caused by multiple factors. To help broaden your understanding and knowledge about obesity, visit the Canadian Obesity Network www.obesitynetwork.ca/understanding-obesity

Staff and Volunteers can help parents learn more about healthy eating and how to make healthy choices at home

HEALTHY EATING BASICS: CHILDREN AGES 1 TO 6 YEARS

Active Play

Healthy eating and active play go hand in hand. Healthy eating in combination with daily physical activity supports growth, development and a lifetime of healthy habits. Play with children and help them try a variety of activities to find ones they really enjoy. Encourage children to move and play. For information and resources on active play, see the Resources section at end of this document.



TIP

Fun and easy activities for young children:
(There are lots more! Let the children lead you!)

- Dancing
- Hokey Pokey
- Head and shoulders, knees and toes
- Running and Jumping
- Walking



Supporting Breastfeeding Mothers

Health Canada suggests breastfeeding be supported for up to two years or beyond, as long as mother and child want to continue.

Some ways in which you can support breastfeeding mothers attending your programs include:

- Encouraging mothers to breastfeed and/or express milk comfortably wherever they choose, and at their convenience.
- Displaying supportive breastfeeding materials from credible sources such as the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit.



For more information on making your program a breastfeeding friendly place, visit
www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Topics/Breastfeeding/Friendly-Places

DECIDING WHAT AND HOW MUCH TO SERVE

- Healthy Food Choices: The Four Food Groups
- The Importance of Snacks in Program
- Snack Guidelines
- Healthy Beverage Choices
- Sample Snack Menu
- Snack Recipes
- Snack Ideas
- Child-Size Portions
- Planning Snacks on a Budget



DECIDING WHAT AND HOW MUCH TO SERVE

Healthy Food Choices: The Four Food Groups

It is important that meals and snacks served in program settings provide foods that help children meet their nutrition needs. *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* is a suitable tool for planning meals and snacks for children.

Snacks should include foods from at least two of the Food Groups in Canada's Food Guide. One of those foods should include a choice from the Vegetables and Fruit Food Group. Serving milk or water with snacks or meals is encouraged. Lunches/other meals should include two vegetables and/or fruit, one grain, one milk or milk alternative and one meat or meat alternative.

Some tips to help you choose healthy food choices from the four Food Groups:

Vegetables and Fruit

- Offer dark green vegetables and orange fruit and vegetables when feasible.
- Buy fresh, local vegetables and fruit whenever possible.
- Use frozen vegetables and fruit in recipes for cooking or baking.
- Choose canned fruit packed in water, or juice, drained, instead of sugar syrup. Rinse and drain canned vegetables before serving to remove excess salt.
- Offer whole fruit instead of juice.
- Vegetables can be served grated or partly cooked.
- Serve vegetables with a healthy dip such as hummus or yogurt.
- Prepare vegetables and fruit without any added sugar or salt.



Dried fruits like raisins, figs and apricots are not recommended. Sticky sweet foods like these can stick to teeth and set the stage for tooth decay.

DECIDING WHAT AND HOW MUCH TO SERVE

Grain Products

- Choose whole grain products most of the time (whole grain should be the first ingredient in the ingredient list). Whole grains include: whole grain whole wheat, cracked wheat, wheat berries, whole grain rye, barley, whole grain corn, wild or whole grain brown rice, bulgur, whole oats, rolled oats, whole grain couscous, flax seed, kamut, amaranth, millet, quinoa, sorghum, spelt, buckwheat, and whole triticale.
- Offer a variety of grain products, like pita bread, quinoa, couscous, wild rice, naan bread, tortillas or English muffins. Stuff pitas with a favourite filling. Top an English muffin with cheese, or spread with hummus.
- Prepare muffins with whole wheat flour. Add vegetables such as shredded carrots or zucchini, or fruit such as raspberries, blueberries, bananas, pineapple, oranges and apples to increase nutritional value.
- Read the % Daily Value on the Nutrition Facts table of packaged foods to help you choose items higher in fibre (15% Daily Value or greater) and lower in fat, salt and sugar (5% Daily Value or less).
- Try different types of pasta: fusilli, ravioli, bow tie, penne or fettuccini.
- Prepare grain products without any added sugar or salt.

Milk and Alternatives

- Offer at least one child-size portion of pasteurized cow's milk (1/2 cup /125 mL) at meal or snack time. Homogenized cow's milk (3.25% M.F.) is recommended until children are two years of age. After two years, 1% or 2% M.F. can be offered.
- Do not serve flavoured milks or vegetarian beverages.
- Add milk to soups, or baking to increase nutritional value.
- Add plain yogurt to fresh or frozen fruit to add flavour and increase nutritional content. Use in a homemade dip, as a dessert topper, or in place of sour cream. For example, try peach slices or whole grain cereal topped with yogurt.
- Offer a variety of cheeses. Grate cheese to top potatoes or other vegetables. Slice cheese to top crackers, or offer small cheese cubes. For budgeting reasons, buy block cheese instead of individual packets.
- Avoid fat-free or low fat milk products for children under the age of 2 years.
- Avoid milk products with artificial sweeteners. Pay attention to the amount of sugar in some milk products, such as yogurt (Note: 4 g of sugar = 1 tsp of sugar).
- Note that cream cheese, processed cheese slices, ice cream and frozen yogurt are not a part of the Milk and Alternatives Food Group.



“Sugar free” products that contain artificial sweeteners are not recommended for children since these products may replace more nutritious foods.

DECIDING WHAT AND HOW MUCH TO SERVE

Meat and Alternatives

- Choose from a variety of meats like, chicken, turkey, tuna, and beef. Cut meat into bite-size pieces or slice it thinly for sandwiches.
- Add cooked legumes (e.g. chickpeas, split peas, beans and lentils) to soups, salads, casseroles or pasta sauce. Beans can be mashed and used as a dip or sandwich spread.
- Offer cooked eggs and tofu cubes – they make great finger foods.
- Select lean meat and alternatives prepared with little or no added fat or salt.
- Trim the visible fat from meats. Remove the skin on poultry before cooking.
- Use cooking methods such as roasting, baking or poaching that require little or no added fat.
- Avoid processed meats such as luncheon meats, sausages or prepackaged meats.
- Nuts, nut butters, seeds and seed spreads may be added to snacks to increase nutrition content and add variety. Keep in mind your facility's policies about nuts and food allergies. Spread smooth nut and seed butters thinly and finely chop nuts and seeds to avoid choking.



Where do “other” foods fit?

Limit foods that are low in nutrients and high in fat, sugar and/or salt. Some examples include, but are not limited to, potato chips, French fries, processed cheese, donuts, cupcakes, chocolate, candies, pop and fruit flavoured drinks. Set a good example and try to limit your own intake of these foods.

What about fat?

Toddlers and preschoolers need more high fat food than adults do because their brains and bodies are growing. It's okay to include higher fat foods in children's meals and snacks as long as they are nutritious foods. Cheese, nuts/nut butters, seeds/seed butters, and avocados are examples of some nutrient rich choices that are high in healthy fats.

To learn how you can use nutrition information on foods to help you make healthier food choices for your program, review Health Canada's website on nutrition labels:

www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/eating-nutrition/label-etiquetage/understanding-comprendre/interactive-tools-outils-interactifs/label-etiquette-eng.php

DECIDING WHAT AND HOW MUCH TO SERVE

The Importance of Snacks in Program

Children need three meals plus two to three snacks per day to help them meet their nutrient and energy needs. Snacks should be offered about 2.5 to 3 hours before the next meal.

There are many reasons why children may be hungry when they come to your program. Children who are very active or are going through a growth spurt may have bigger appetites at snack time. You may also notice bigger appetites in children who have not had breakfast or lunch. A child may be hungry because they have missed a meal at home. There are many reasons why a child may have missed a meal at home, such as family time pressures, meal planning issues, lack of money to buy food, or simply refusing to eat or eating very little.

When a designated snack time is established, children can eat as much as they want provided there is enough to share with everyone. Remember to not make assumptions, judgements or comments on how much (or how little) a child is eating.

If a parent/caregiver expresses concern about not having enough food for the family, direct them to call “211” (www.communityconnection.ca/211.page.45.html) for more information about community food programs/services/free and low costs meals in their area.

Snack Guidelines

- Establish a snack time and snack menu for your program.
- Offer snacks that include foods from at least two or more Food Groups in Canada’s Food Guide;
 - > Include a vegetable or fruit.
 - > Include a protein source (e.g meat or alternative, milk or alternative).
- Ensure water or pasteurized cow’s milk is available.
 - > No other beverage choices should be offered.
 - > Homogenized cow’s milk (3.25% M.F.) is recommended until children are two years of age.
 - > Offer beverages in open cups.
- Ensure texture of foods are modified when appropriate, e.g. steamed vegetables or raw grated vegetables.
- Offer child-size portions.
- Ensure snacks promote good dental health.
- Eat snacks together as a group, seated at the table.

When planning a program, consider when a snack is scheduled. Does it cross over into a mealtime? If so, it may be more appropriate to serve a meal than a snack.

DECIDING WHAT AND HOW MUCH TO SERVE

Healthy Beverage Choices

In program, offer children water from a safe source, or cow's milk instead of juice or other sweetened beverages. Pasteurized homogenized cow's milk (3.25% M.F.) is recommended for children until the age of two. After the age of two, 1% or 2% M.F cow's milk can be offered.

Beverages should be provided in open cups. Infants as young as six months can start practicing drinking from an open cup, with assistance. Offering open cups promotes development of drinking skills and good dental health.

Children like the sweet taste of juice, but their nutrition needs can be met without it. Too much juice can interfere with good nutrition by replacing other nutritious foods and decreasing a child's appetite for meals and snacks. Too much juice can also lead to diarrhea, bloating/flatulence, overweight or obesity and early childhood tooth decay. If a parent/caregiver chooses to give their children juice, encourage them to choose 100% juice, offer it in an open cup, as part of a meal or snack, and to limit it to no more than half a cup (125 mL) per day.

Sample Snack Menu

This sample snack menu is only a guide for planning. Adapt it to suit personal and cultural food preferences. Have milk and/or water available with snacks, served in open cups. When planning snacks, remember to follow the snack guidelines.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Vegetables and Fruit	homemade apple sauce unsweetened	melon	mango and black bean salad	canned mixed fruit, in water/juice drained	orange slices
Grain Products	small oatmeal muffin	whole grain pita cut in wedges			whole wheat naan
Milk and Alternatives	milk		milk	cottage cheese 2% M.F.	
Meat and Alternatives		hummus	(black beans in salad)		homemade dahl

DECIDING WHAT AND HOW MUCH TO SERVE

Snack Recipes

Hummus

- 750ml or 2 cans of garbanzo beans (also known as chickpeas), rinsed and drained.
- 5-6 garlic cloves, minced (optional)
- 3 scallion or green onions, finely minced
- 60ml lemon juice
- pepper to taste

Put all ingredients into a food processor and puree or put all ingredients into a bowl and use a potato masher or pastry blender to mash until well blended. Serve as a dip or sandwich spread.

Mango and Black Bean Salad

1 can (540ml) black beans, rinsed and drained
1 diced mango
125ml diced red onion (or red pepper)
60ml lemon juice
30ml canola oil
60ml chopped cilantro

Mix ingredients together and chill one hour before serving.

Dahl

This is a recipe for a thick, lentil stew which can be used for a spread or enjoyed alone.

- 1 clove garlic
- 1 small onion
- 250ml red lentils
- 15ml oil
- pinch of chili powder (optional)
- 15ml tumeric or cumin powder
- 375ml water

Crush garlic, peel and chop onion, rinse lentils in a sieve. Put oil in a deep pan, cook garlic, onion and spices 3-5 min in pan until soft. Add lentils and water. Bring to boil, stir consistantly. Turn down the heat and let simmer for 20 min until lentils are soft. Take off heat. Beat mixture with wooden spoon until smooth.

Measurement Conversions:

2.5ml = 1/2 tsp
5ml = 1 tsp

15ml = 1 Tbsp
30ml = 2 Tbsp

60ml = 1/4 cup
125ml = 1/2 cup

250ml = 1 cup
375ml = 1 1/2 cups

DECIDING WHAT AND HOW MUCH TO SERVE

Snack Ideas

Yogurt Crunch - top plain yogurt with fresh fruit and crushed whole grain cereal

Smoothie - blend fresh or frozen fruit with milk or yogurt

Cottage Cheese with assorted seasonal fresh fruit or fruit canned in water or juice, drained

Sandwiches - closed or open-faced. Spread tuna and avocado on a slice of whole grain bread or roll. Try tuna with grated apple on a tortilla wrap

Fruit quesadilla, served with plain yogurt

Red pepper slices and cheese cubes

For more recipe ideas, see the Resources Section at the end of these guidelines.

Child-Size Portions

Growing children need to eat three meals plus two to three snacks every day, but different children need different amounts of food depending on their age, activity level, stage of growth and development and appetite. Feeling ill, excited or tired can also affect the amount of food a child will eat. When hungry, young children will focus on eating. When satisfied, their attention turns elsewhere.

A child-sized portion is the amount of food you choose to serve at each meal or snack. Children have small stomachs that tend to fill up quickly, which means portion sizes should be smaller than adult portions. Offer foods in small portions and let the child decide if more is needed.

As a guide:

toddlers aged 12-24 months can be offered about 1/4 to a 1/2 of a Food Guide Serving

toddlers aged 24 months and older can be offered about 1/2 to one Food Guide Serving

To learn more about Food Guide Serving sizes, visit

www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/food-nutrition/canada-food-guide/food-guide-basics/what-food-guide-serving.html

Remember:

Sometimes a child will eat a little, sometimes a lot. This is normal. Children know best how much they need to eat. Remove uneaten food without comment.



DECIDING WHAT AND HOW MUCH TO SERVE

Planning Snacks on a Budget

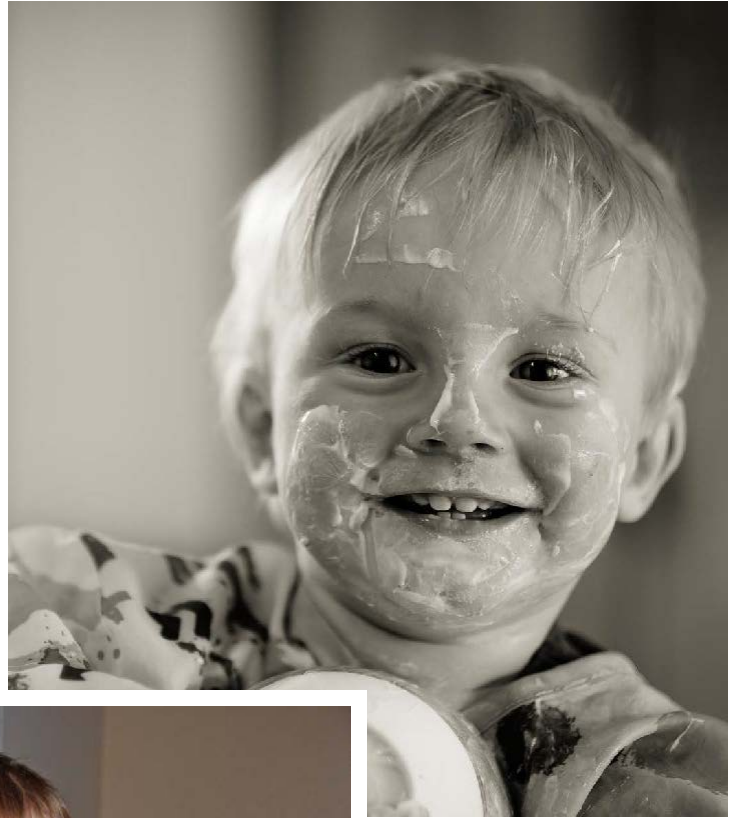
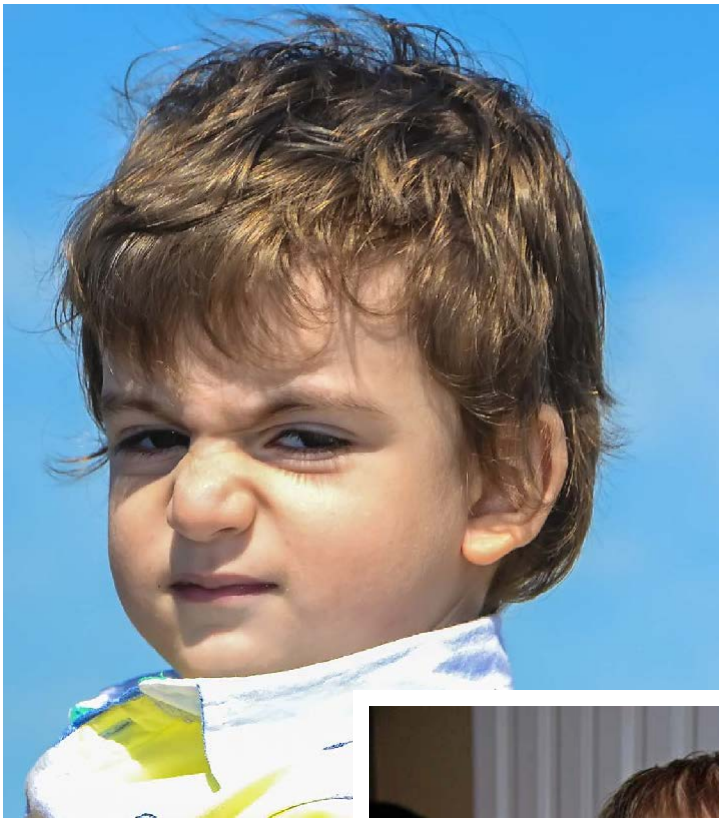
Planning ahead saves time and money.

- Plan snacks and meals in advance using the four Food Groups from Canada's Food Guide.
- Use store flyers or Smartphone apps to find the best buys or price match items.
- Make a grocery list based on this plan.
- Compare unit pricing and nutrition labels (note: look at top and bottom shelves for lower cost foods).
- Store foods properly to prevent waste.
- Check out local food purchasing groups such as The Good Food Box in your area. (www.communityconnection.ca/211.page.45.html)
- Buy vegetables and fruits in season and choose locally grown foods when you can.
- Consider canned and frozen vegetables and fruits.
- Buy meats on sale and freeze any extra.
- In place of meat, substitute beans, lentils, canned fish, tofu or eggs.
- Look for store brands in larger packages and compare them with bulk store prices.
- Use convenience foods and processed foods less often if at all.



DECIDING WHEN, WHERE AND HOW TO SERVE

- Food and Eating - When and Where
- Helping Young Children Learn to Enjoy Food and Eating
- Mealtime Behaviours
- A Note on Special Food Considerations
- What To Do for Special Celebrations



DECIDING WHEN, WHERE AND HOW TO SERVE

Food and Eating - When and Where

Set a regular time for snacks/meals in your program and keep that time consistent. Try to ensure that snacks do not interfere with a meal time. Think of snacks as “little meals” with foods you have chosen to offer at a time that will allow children to become hungry by the time the next meal is offered. Encourage parents/caregivers to sit together to enjoy their food with the children. Sitting down with children allows them to have your undivided attention for a period of time. They will also learn from your example. Minimize distractions such as cell phones, tablets, toys. Allow children to take the time they need to feed themselves. Fifteen minutes for snacks and thirty minutes for meals is a suggested amount of time.

At snack or meal time, encourage staff, parents and caregivers to sit at the table with the children and talk about the food being offered (colours, shapes, smells, textures, tastes). This teaches us to be mindful of what we are eating and fosters a positive attitude toward food. Make it a rule that only one person at a time speaks so that learning to listen becomes an expected part of this time together. Enjoy learning from children and their parents as you are sharing different experiences, cultures, and foods.

Talking with and listening to children is important because it:

- helps with language development,
- helps children develop good social skills so they get along better with others, and
- builds their self-esteem so they feel better about themselves. It lets children know that they are important and that others care about what they have to say.



DECIDING WHEN, WHERE AND HOW TO SERVE

Helping Young Children Learn to Enjoy Food and Eating

The early childhood years are a time to discover new foods and to develop a love and appreciation for healthy eating. Build on the fact that young children are eager to learn. Even simple activities such as helping to cut open a pumpkin or making muffins are ways children learn about food. Preparing food gives children a feeling of accomplishment and encourages them to try these foods. For example, potatoes that a preschooler has helped mash or radishes they picked from the garden are more appealing than those that just appear on the table.

Staff, volunteers, and parents/caregivers can help young children learn to enjoy a wider variety of foods by:

- being good role models (Children are more eager to eat foods that they see other people enjoying),
- serving foods in appealing ways by combining different colours, textures and shapes,
- offering small quantities of a new food alongside a familiar one, without pressure to eat the new food,
- letting children help with choosing and serving meal and snack items,
- being patient. If a new food is not accepted the first time, it can be offered again later. The more often children are exposed to new foods, the more likely they will learn to accept them.
- encouraging children to pay attention to the shape, colour, smell, texture and taste of the foods they are eating,
- learning about food through games and activities, and
- including songs and stories about food in program activities.



Respect that every child has likes and dislikes. Encourage parents/caregivers to continue offering new foods and to offer them repeatedly. It can take 10-15 times of offering a new food before it is accepted.

DECIDING WHEN, WHERE AND HOW TO SERVE

Mealtime Behaviours

Encourage parents to show their child what behaviours are expected when eating. Set up daily mealtime routines and explain as well as role model what good mealtime behaviour looks like. Children should be able to choose and eat foods offered during scheduled meals and snack times, while allowing the child to eat as much or as little as she/he needs. Sometimes you may notice parenting behaviours during snack times that could be improved. You may even feel the need to intervene. If you encounter a parent/caregiver who could benefit from some general parenting support, please encourage parents to contact Health Connection by calling 1-705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520 Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., by email to learn about available parenting programs and supports.



www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/healthunit/contact/healthconnection.aspx

A Note on Special Food Considerations

Some children have special food considerations because of health, cultural, or religious reasons. A child may have a medical condition, a food allergy, food aversions due to sensory issues, food sensitivities/intolerances, or follow a vegetarian diet.

You may need to determine if your program location is a “nut aware” zone. If so, this will have an impact on the type of snacks offered.

- Be sure to clearly post foods and/or ingredient lists at the sign in area of each program and have parents with concerns check this with each visit.
- Be sure to ask parents/caregivers about food allergies or any other special conditions a child may have.
- Encourage parents/caregivers to seek nutrition information and advice from reliable sources like a Registered Dietitian.
- Help the parents/caregivers of other children understand special situations and how they can help ensure that the child with special needs is not accidentally exposed to the offending food(s).

In a program setting, staff can be aware and do their best, but parents/caregivers need to be ultimately responsible for their child.

DECIDING WHEN, WHERE AND HOW TO SERVE

What To Do For Special Celebrations

Food served at special celebrations and holidays can be nutritious and fun. There are lots of ways to be creative and celebrate in a healthy way. Traditional holiday foods may not always be served in a child's home setting so the program setting is a perfect opportunity for children to try new ideas and customs.

Some examples:

Valentine's Day: cut watermelon slices into heart shapes (using a cookie cutter) and insert a popsicle stick at the bottom for an easy and less messy grip. Or put smaller watermelon heart on a kabob stick (for older children), alternated with fresh strawberries.



Mother's/Father's Day: wash clementines and using a food marker, label each one with a word describing the parent/caregiver or put on a saying (e.g. loving, awesome, caring, I love you, hug me, xoxo).

Thanksgiving: pear or apple cinnamon crisps (cored, thinly sliced crosswise, sprinkled with cinnamon and baked).



Halloween: serve clementine pumpkins (use celery for the stem) and ghost bananas (food marker to make the face), sweet potato cut outs (slice sweet potatoes crosswise, use cookie cutters to make desired shape in the center, sprinkle with pumpkin spice and bake).

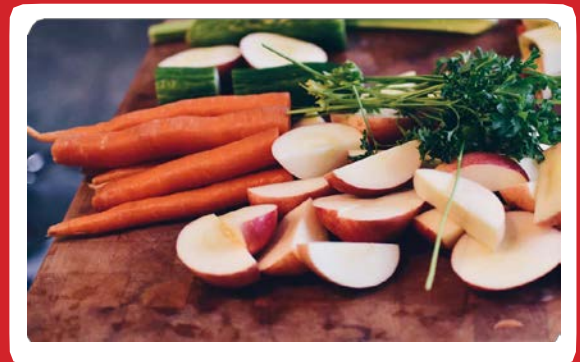


Canada Day: serve red and white food (strawberries, dipped in plain yogurt, frozen).



FOOD PREPARATION AND SAFETY

- Safety in Selecting and Preparing Food
- Safety in Serving Food
 - Choking Hazards
 - Tips to Prevent Choking
- Involving Children in Preparing Food



FOOD PREPARATION and SAFETY

Safety in Selecting and Preparing Food

Having staff and volunteers trained in safe food handling will produce the safest and highest quality food possible. Employees and volunteers must fully understand the risks involved in food service or the need to meet food safety requirements, like personal hygiene, avoiding food contamination and keeping foods at safe temperatures. The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit offers a provincial course, Food Safety: A Guide for Ontario's Foodhandlers, routinely in all health unit offices throughout the year. This is a minimum standard in the food industry of Ontario. For more information on the Foodhandlers course, please contact your health care provider or contact Health Connection by calling 1-705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520 Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., or by email www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/healthunit/contact/healthconnection.aspx

Safe Food Selection

Potentially hazardous foods are those that support bacterial growth because they are rich in protein and have high moisture content. Moist foods, dairy products, meat, fish, poultry, eggs, raw-cut fruit and vegetables are all potentially hazardous foods. These foods need to have their time and temperature watched very carefully to keep bacteria from multiplying. Try to choose low hazardous foods like grain products, whole fruits and vegetables. Packaged foods should have a "best before date." This date tells you how long an unopened food product will have the best flavour and nutritional value – as long as it has been stored properly. Expiry dates indicate when foods are unsafe for consumption; these dates should be followed strictly.

All meats, dairy, eggs and canned goods must come from inspected sources.

Safe food preparation and storage

1. Wash hands with soap and water before preparing food and routinely during service.
2. Keep hot foods hot (60C/140F) and cold foods cold (4C/40F).
3. Use probe thermometers when cooking potentially hazardous foods. All potentially hazardous foods should be prepared in the inspected/site kitchen.
4. Use tongs, spoons, forks when serving food.
5. Wash and sanitize work surfaces at the start, during, and after food preparation. A chemical sanitizer that is meant for food contact surfaces must be used. Follow manufacturer's instructions. A chlorine solution may also be used. For use on food contact surfaces, add 2 mL of 5.25% bleach to 1 L of water.
6. Store all raw meats on lower shelves and other foods on higher shelves.
7. Cover and protect all food in storage. Label food with dates, especially foods to be frozen or that have been opened.

- 1) Wash all vegetables and fruits before preparing or serving
- 2) Use a clean produce scrub brush and cool running water to wash your fruits and vegetables.
- 3) Serve dip in individual, single use portions. Keep dips refrigerated before and immediately after serving.
- 4) Raw vegetables can be a choking hazard for young children. Some need to be grated or steamed first to soften them.

FOOD PREPARATION and SAFETY

Safety in the food preparation area is very important.

- Keep kitchen tools like knives and vegetable peelers as well as appliances like kettles, blenders, microwave ovens and stoves strictly off limits. One way to do a safety check is to get down at toddler eye level and look for any dangers in the work area that could be missed at adult level.
- Make sure everyone washes their hands well before preparing food and eating. Keep soap and paper towels on hand at a sink that is to be used for hand washing only.
- Foods like milk, milk products, meat, poultry and fish (as well as food containing these ingredients) **MUST** be kept refrigerated at 4 degrees Celsius (40 degrees Fahrenheit) or below to keep them safe. Remember, you can't see, smell or taste organisms that can cause foodborne illness.



Tips on cleaning food preparation areas

- ✓ Wash hands before and after handling any food.
- ✓ Use separate utensils and cutting boards for raw meat, poultry and fish. Keep these foods separate from ready-to-eat foods.
- ✓ Wash surfaces with warm soapy water. Then let surfaces air dry.

Questions to consider:

- Where did the food item come from (grocery store, farm, home)?
- Are you confident that the food comes from a clean, safe source?
- Has the food been kept cool or stored safely on its way to you?

When in doubt throw it out!!

For other important information about food safety, please refer to www.simcoemuskokahealth.org.



FOOD PREPARATION and SAFETY

Safety in Serving Food

Choking Hazards

Foods that are hard, small, round, smooth and sticky are more likely to cause choking in young children. Do not serve the following foods to children under 4 years of age:

- Gum, gummy candies and chewable vitamins
- Hard candies and cough drops
- Marshmallows
- Popcorn
- Snacks using toothpicks or skewers
- Wieners (hot dogs) and sausages



Tips to Prevent Choking

Choking can happen with any food, but some foods are more of a choking risk than others. Children should always be safely seated when eating and closely watched. Discourage talking or laughing when food is in their mouth. Eliminate distractions like loud music, toys and electronics so that children can pay attention to food and eating.

You can make some foods safer for children under 4 years by:

- Chopping foods with fibrous or stringy textures finely (e.g., celery, pineapple).
- Chopping nuts and seeds that are larger than sesame seeds.
- Grating or thinly slicing raw vegetables or hard fruit.
- Spreading nut or, seed butters thinly on crackers or toast (not soft bread).
- Cutting grapes and grape tomatoes into quarters or lengthwise.
- Removing pits or seeds from fruit and cut into bite-size pieces.
- Serving boneless fish or remove bones from fish before serving.



FOOD PREPARATION and SAFETY



INVOLVING CHILDREN IN PREPARING FOOD



LET THEM CHOOSE!

Children are more likely to try foods if they have had a chance to help with choosing or preparing them



SUGGESTIONS ANYONE?

If possible, get their suggestions for foods they would like to see on the menu



I WANT TO HELP!

Depending on the ages of the children in your care, they may be able to help you prepare some of the foods



SCRUB-A-DUB-DUB!

Make sure children wash their hands with warm water and soap before they are allowed to help



LET'S DO IT TOGETHER!

Children should always be closely supervised when helping to prepare foods



WHAT CAN I DO?

Due to safety, when children help with meals or snacks in a program setting, give them jobs that don't involve handling food directly. Any child feeling unwell should not be allowed to help.



THIS IS MY JOB!

Give children simple tasks to do, such as stirring, pouring COOL liquids, measuring or putting plates on the table.



Infographic Created by: Tami Clark, Communication Coordinator, Catulpa Community Support Services

RESOURCES AND KEY DOCUMENTS

Resources:

Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit

www.smdhu.org

For more information on feeding your toddlers/preschoolers, physical activity, parenting, food safety, child health and services in Simcoe Muskoka, please contact your health care provider or contact Health Connection by calling 1-705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520 Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., by email or connect with us wherever you are on Facebook or Twitter.

<https://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/healthunit/contact/healthconnection.aspx>

EatRight Ontario

www.eatrightontario.ca

Nutrition information on a variety of topics, meal planning tips and healthy recipes. E-mail or call a Registered Dietitian for free at 1-877-510-5102, Monday to Friday 9 am-5 pm EST. Phone service available in 100 languages

211 Community Connection

www.communityconnection.ca/211.page.45.html

Find local produce, farmers' markets, food cooperatives, food closets, food banks, food action programs, free and low cost meals in Simcoe County.

Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide

www.canadasfoodguide.net

Order copies of Canada's Food Guide or view it online. The Guide is available in 10 additional languages.

Healthy Canadians, Government of Canada

www.healthycanadians.gc.ca

General healthy eating, nutrition labelling, food safety and food allergy information from Health Canada.

Dietitians of Canada

www.dietitians.ca

For information on healthy eating, menu planning resources and online tools, recipes, etc.

Foodland Ontario

www.ontario.ca/foodland

Find out which vegetables and fruit are in season. Get recipes and information about Ontario grown food.

Ellyn Satter Institute

www.ellynsatterinstitute.org/

Learn more about how to feed children, including the Division of Responsibility in Feeding

RESOURCES AND KEY DOCUMENTS

Food Allergy

Health Canada - Food Allergy: www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/iyh-vsv/food-aliment/allerg-eng.php

EatRight Ontario: www.eatrightontario.ca/en/Articles/Food-allergies-intolerances/?page=1

Food Allergy Canada: www.foodallergycanada.ca/

Food Safety for Children ages 5 and Under

www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/food-safety-vulnerable-populations/food-safety-information-children-ages-5-under.html

Information from Health Canada on how to prepare foods safely for young children

Nutri-eSTEP

www.nutritionscreen.ca/

Online questionnaire for parents and caregivers of toddlers and preschoolers about their child's nutrition and activity habits, to find out "What is Going Well" and "What to Work On", and be linked to resources and community services.

Nutrition Resource Centre: Ontario Public Health Association - Eat Right be Active

<http://opha.on.ca/getmedia/4d17db3c-03f5-4d11-813c-255055e3eb91/ERBA-12-36-months-EN-FINAL.pdf.aspx>

<http://opha.on.ca/getmedia/d74865eb-f177-4bf4-ba7d-818652b38da2/ERBA-3-5-EN-FINAL.pdf.aspx>

Resources aim to help parents/caregivers bring physical activity and healthy eating to life with their children.

Nutrition Resource Centre: Ontario Public Health Association – Busy Bodies

www.opha.on.ca/getmedia/8b5a8044-feda-44f9-8b1d-2f7f07b71d69/Busy-Bodies.pdf.aspx

Encourages a variety of experiences related to healthy eating and physical activity presented in an easy-to-use "activity card" format.

Physical Activity

Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology

Canadian 24-hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years (0-4 Years)

http://store.csep.ca/Canadian-24-Hour-Movement-Guidelines-for-the-Early-Years-0-4-years_p_89.html

24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth

www.csep.ca/en/guidelines/canadian-24-hour-movement-guidelines

RESOURCES AND KEY DOCUMENTS

Ontario Physical and Health Education Association

Physical Health and Literacy Videos:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_okRtLv-7Sk

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e4PjX9mXYq8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cDudzvfZdBs>

Nutrition Resource Centre: Ontario Public Health Association - Eat Right be Active

<http://opha.on.ca/getmedia/4d17db3c-03f5-4d11-813c-255055e3eb91/ERBA-12-36-months-EN-FINAL.pdf.aspx>

<http://opha.on.ca/getmedia/d74865eb-f177-4bf4-ba7d-818652b38da2/ERBA-3-5-EN-FINAL.pdf.aspx>

Resources aim to help parents/caregivers bring physical activity and healthy eating to life with their children.

Nutrition Resource Centre: Ontario Public Health Association – Busy Bodies

www.opha.on.ca/getmedia/8b5a8044-feda-44f9-8b1d-2f7f07b71d69/Busy-Bodies.pdf.aspx

Encourages a variety of experiences related to healthy eating and physical activity presented in an easy-to-use “activity card” format.

Best Start Resource Centre

www.haveaballtogether.ca

Have A Ball! A Tool kit for Physical Activity and the Early Years. This kit contains a variety of materials in a handy, ready-to-go ‘briefcase’ for promoting and delivering physical activity opportunities for young children.

Recipes

Dietitians of Canada -

<https://www.dietitians.ca/Your-Health/Nutrition-A-Z/Cooking/Make-your-Tastebuds-Tingle.aspx>
www.cookspiration.com

EatRight Ontario: <http://www.eatrightontario.ca/en/Recipes.aspx>

Foodland Ontario: www.ontario.ca/foodland/recipes

Half Your Plate: www.halfyourplate.ca/recipes/

Heart & Stroke Foundation of Canada: <https://www.heartandstroke.ca/get-healthy/recipes>

RESOURCES AND KEY DOCUMENTS

Key Documents Used for Nutrition Best Practice Guidelines

Ellyn Satter Institute. Divisions of Responsibility. Available from:

<https://www.ellynsatterinstitute.org/how-to-feed/the-division-of-responsibility-in-feeding>

Government of Ontario. No Time to Wait: The Healthy Kids Strategy. 2013. Available from:

www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/ministry/publications/reports/healthy_kids/healthy_kids.pdf

Health Canada. Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide. 2007. Available from:

www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/pubs/res-educat/res-educat-eng.php.

Health Canada. Nutrition for Healthy Term Infants: Recommendations from 6 to 24 Months. A joint statement of Health Canada, Canadian Paediatric Society, Dietitians of Canada, and Breastfeeding Committee for Canada. 2014. Available from:

www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/nutrition/infant-nourisson/recom/recom-6-24-months-6-24-mois-eng.php

Heart & Stroke 2017 Report on the Health of Canadians. Available from:

www.heartandstroke.ca/what-we-do/media-centre/report-on-health

Nutrition Resource Centre. How to Build a Healthy Preschooler and Toddler. 2015. Available From:

www.eatrightontario.ca/en/Articles/Child-Toddler-Nutrition/How-to-Build-a-Healthy-Preschooler

