

Teaching Nutrition in Saskatchewan



Health Education Grades 1-3

Developed by: Public Health Nutritionists of Saskatchewan

The purpose of *Teaching Nutrition in Saskatchewan: Concepts and Resources* is to provide credible Canadian based nutrition information and resources based on the Saskatchewan Health Education Curriculum (2010).

The **Nutrition Concepts and Resources** section, found on pages 4 -10 in this resource, identifies nutrition concepts and resources relating to grade-specific provincial Health Education curriculum outcomes. These lists only refer to the curriculum outcomes that have an obvious logical association to nutrition. They are only suggestions and not exclusive.

The **Nutrition Background Information** section, found on pages 12-21, provides educators with current and reliable Canadian healthy eating information.

For more information, contact your local public health nutritionist at:

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As you are aware, the 2019 version of Canada’s Food Guide provides a different approach to healthy eating recommendations than in the past. Although Canada’s Food Guide includes a large suite of online information, there are limited resources available for teaching healthy eating to children. In this update of Teaching Nutrition in Saskatchewan, we attempted to include resources that address general nutrition concepts with limited or no reference to the 2007 Food Guide.

This document is updated yearly however, due to the dynamic nature of the internet, some hyperlinks may no longer be active. If this has occurred, try searching for the resource on the internet through a search engine such as Google.

The Public Health Nutritionists of the Saskatchewan Health Authority work together to promote support and protect the nutritional health of people living in Saskatchewan. Dietitians who developed this resource are:

Audrey Boyer, Chelsea Belt, Chelsea Brown, and Barb Wright

Teaching Nutrition to Children

Teaching about food and nutrition is important for the health and wellbeing of students. Below are some tips for teaching nutrition to children:

- Use current and credible nutrition information. *Teaching Nutrition in Saskatchewan* and dietitians are great sources of reliable nutrition information. When searching for health information on the internet, refer to [Accessing Health Information On-Line](#) (page 21) for a few tips to make sure you get the best information.
- Include cross-curricular connections in the classroom. For example, when teaching fractions in math, illustrate the lesson using fruit instead of pie. Choose books and projects that show healthy food and eating habits. For examples of how to link nutrition to other Saskatchewan curricula, refer to The [Saskatchewan Curricular Outcomes and Nutrition](#), a resource from [Nourishing Minds Eat Well Learn well Live Well](#).
- Spread healthy eating lessons out throughout the year rather than in a short unit. Connect key messages to special events or classroom celebrations by offering or asking students to bring healthy options.
- Use experiential learning strategies to engage students. Let students work with food in the classroom, visit a grocery store, start a cooking club or a school garden. If you are considering offering taste tests, check out [Food Experiences](#) on page 14.
- Promote healthy eating in a positive way. For example classifying foods as ‘everyday’ and ‘sometimes’ foods rather than ‘good’ and ‘bad’ foods. Refer to [Teaching About Food in the Early Grades](#) (page 13) for more information.
- Emphasize healthy eating and active living for all, regardless of weight and shape, and ensure that all students are equally valued and respected. Enforce that it is not acceptable to make comments about people’s size or shape. For more information refer to [Weight Bias](#) on page 17
- Be a healthy role model for students. Demonstrate that you eat a variety of healthy foods. Avoid talking negatively about healthy foods or discuss dieting, weight loss or dissatisfaction of body shape or size.
- Encourage families to send healthy lunches and educate parents on healthy eating. Avoid making comments about student lunches or taking items away if they are not “healthy.” Children may have little control over what is in their lunch. Drawing attention to “unhealthy” choices can isolate children from their peers and cause them to feel shame. Remember, no one food or meal defines our eating habits.
- Allow all students to make their own decisions about *what* and *how much* to eat and drink from their lunches. There is no benefit to having children eat certain foods before others such as eating a sandwich before a cookie. Children eat better when they can pick from the available options in the order they want.

References

1. Algoma Public Health. Healthy Living Resources for the Classroom 2017/2018: Healthy Eating Elementary (grades K-8). [cited 2019 July 22]. Available from: <http://www.algomapublichealth.com/media/2502/healthy-eating-elementary-2017-2018-hyperlinked-sept-2017-2.pdf>
2. Ontario Dietitians in Public Health. Bright Bites: Tips for Teaching Nutrition. [cited 2019 July 22]. Available from: <https://brightbites.ca/tips-for-teaching-nutrition/>
3. Ellyn Satter, Nutrition Education in the Schools, 2008. Retrieved from: www.ellynsatterinstitute.org/wpcontent/uploads/2016/03/Secrets-Appendix-H-School-Nutr-Ed.pdf

Health Education Grade 1

Focus: Healthy behaviours, healthy relationships, pedestrian/street safety and healthy sense of self

Perspective: Building on what I already know

Health Education Goal 1: Develop the understanding, skills and confidences necessary to take action to improve health.

Curriculum Outcome	Nutrition Concepts	Resources: Background Information and Sample Activities
<p><u>USC 1.1 Examine healthy behaviours and opportunities and begin to determine how these behaviours and opportunities may affect personal well-being.</u></p>	<p>What is Healthy Eating and Healthy Daily Eating Habits</p>	<p>Nutrition Background Information: <u>Canada’s Food Guide - 2019 p.12</u>; <u>Teaching About Food in the Early Grades p.13</u>; <u>Healthy Eating Habits in Children p.13</u></p> <p>Alberta Health Services Kindergarten – grade3 <u>www.albertahealthservices.ca/nutrition/Page2918.aspx</u>. <i>Balanced Breakfast, Healthy Foods Placemat</i></p> <p>Bright Bites. <u>brightbites.ca/paint-plate-lesson-plan-grade-1-im-hungry/</u>. <i>Paint Your Plate Lesson Plan Grade 1 - I’m Hungry</i></p> <p>Hamilton Public Health Services. Nutrition Resources for After School Programs. <u>www2.hamilton.ca/NR/rdonlyres/97ABAF2F-02F4-4195-B5E8-1AF420A95BA1/0/ActivitiesresourceJan2011.pdf</u> <i>Everyday Foods and Sometimes Foods p.6; Food Buzz p. 18;</i></p> <p>Health Canada. <u>food-guide.canada.ca/en/</u>. <i>Canada’s Food Guide</i></p> <p>Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA). Discover Healthy Eating: A Teacher’s Resource For Grades 1-8. <u>opha.on.ca/Resource-Documents/DiscoverHealthyEatinggr1-8_2009.aspx?ext=.pdf</u>. <i>One of these doesn’t belong; Colouring Maze, Breakfast wall hanging; Concentration; Talking vegetables and fruit; Snack talk p.41-45</i></p> <p>Saskatchewan Health Authority. Unlock the Potential of Food with New Canada Food Guide Toolkit for Educators 2019. <u>http://www.rqhealth.ca/department/health-promotion/nutrition-and-healthy-eating</u> <i>Canada’s Food Guide p. 3 and My Food Guide Placemat p. 6</i></p>
	<p>Food Experiences</p>	<p>Nutrition Background Information: <u>Food Experiences p.14</u></p> <p>Action Schools BC <u>www.actionschoolsbc.ca/</u> <i>Tasting Parties Fruit and Vegetable Extension Activity</i></p> <p>Alberta Health Services Kindergarten – grade 3 <u>www.albertahealthservices.ca/nutrition/Page2918.aspx</u> . <i>Family food choices, What Food Am I?</i></p>

Health Education Grade 1

Health Education Goal 1: Develop the understanding, skills and confidences necessary to take action to improve health.

Curriculum Outcome	Nutrition Concepts	Resources: Background Information and Sample Activities
<p>USC 1.1 Examine healthy behaviours and opportunities and begin to determine how these behaviours and opportunities may affect personal well-being.</p>	<p>Food Experiences</p>	<p>Ecosource. Rerooted in Play - Activity Guide. https://ecosource.ca/about-us/publications/Veggie and fruit bingo; <i>That Makes Scents</i> p.13; <i>Taste Tests</i> p. 17; <i>Mystery Can</i> p.19; <i>Psychic Powers</i> p. 20</p> <p>OPHA. Discover Healthy Eating: A Teacher’s Resources for grades 1-8. .pdf. <i>Mystery box, show and tell food, tasting station, Breakfast potluck, snacks of the world, A class-Y Snack</i> p.41-44 <i>Snazzy Snacks</i>, p.61; <i>Supermarket Trip</i>, p.63</p> <p>Foodshare Lesson plans https://foodshare.net/program/educator/Nourishing with Nursery Rhymes</p> <p>Hamilton Public Health Services. Nutrition Resources for After School Programs. http://www2.hamilton.ca/NR/rdonlyres/97ABAF2F-02F4-4195-B5E8-1AF420A95BA1/0/ActivitiesresourceJan2011.pdf <i>That Makes Scents</i> p. 13, <i>Taste Tests</i> p. 17, <i>Mystery Can</i> p. 19,</p>
	<p>Opportunities for and Barriers to Healthy Eating</p>	<p>Nutrition Background Information: Factors Influencing Food Choices p.15</p> <p>Alberta Health Services. Kindergarten – grade3 www.albertahealthservices.ca/nutrition/Page2918.aspx. <i>Family Food Choices</i></p> <p>Canada’s Food Guide food-guide.canada.ca/en/healthy-eating-recommendations/marketing-can-influence-your-food-choices/limiting-kids-exposure-to-food-marketing/ <i>Limit Kids Exposure to Food Marketing</i></p> <p>Media Smarts mediasmarts.ca <i>Adversmarts: Introduction to Food Advertising Online Looking at Food Advertising;</i></p>
	<p>Nutrient influences on the body</p>	<p>Nutrition Background Information: Go, Grow and Glow p.16</p> <p>Alberta Health Services Kindergarten – grade3 www.albertahealthservices.ca/nutrition/Page2918.aspx. <i>Body Foods</i></p>
	<p>Beverages to Quench Thirst</p>	<p>Nutrition Background Information: Water and Other Beverages p.16</p> <p>Bright Bites. Water at School Toolkit. brightbites.ca/wp-content/uploads/Water-at-school-toolkit Rev July 2016.pdf. <i>Passport to Hydration Scavenger Hunt</i> p.8-9</p>

Health Education Grade 1

Health Education Goal 1: Develop the understanding, skills and confidences necessary to take action to improve health.		
Curriculum Outcome	Nutrition Concepts	Resources: Background Information and Sample Activities
USC 1.1 Examine healthy behaviours and opportunities and begin to determine how these behaviours and opportunities may affect personal well-being.	Beverages to Quench Thirst	Canada’s Food Guide. food-guide.canada.ca/en/healthy-eating-recommendations/make-water-your-drink-of-choice <i>Make water your drink of choice</i>
USC1.5 Explore the association between a healthy sense of self and one’s positive connection with others and the environment.	Healthy Bodies Come in Different Shapes and Sizes	Nutrition Background Information: Weight Bias p. 17
	Where Food Comes From	Action Schools BC www.actionschoolsbc.ca <i>Pumpkins Pumpkins! Activity Gr 1</i> Agriculture in the Classroom - Little Green Thumbs www.littlegreenthumbs.org Agriculture in the Classroom Resources aitc.sk.ca/educational-resources/find-order-resources Ag Scape. agscape.ca/resources . <i>Healthy Eating Habits Gr 1 Health and Physical Education</i> Saskatchewan Health Authority, www.rqhealth.ca/department/health-promotion/nutrition-and-healthy-eating and CHEP www.chep.org/en/programs/the-big-crunch . <i>Big Crunch Challenge</i> Book link: <i>Growing Vegetable Soup</i> by Lois Ehlert FoodShare. foodshare.net/program/educator . Lesson Plans: <i>Can you dig it?; Pollination Patrol; Roots and Shoots; The Big Crunch</i> Kids Stir. kidstir.com/where-food-comes-from-game . <i>Where food Comes From</i> Saskatchewan Vegetable Growers’ Association. SK Local Foods list www.svga.ca/images/pdfs/GrowingChart082514.pdf .
	Culture Influencing our Sense of Self	Nutrition Background Information: Factors Influencing Food Choices p.15 Alberta Health Services. Kindergarten – grade 3 www.albertahealthservices.ca/nutrition/Page2918.aspx <i>Family Food Choices</i> Book Links: <i>My Mom Loves Me More than Sushi</i> by Filomena Gomes; <i>Yoko</i> by Rosemary Wells

Health Education Grade 1

Health Education Goal 1: Develop the understanding, skills and confidences necessary to take action to improve health.

Curriculum Outcome	Nutrition Concepts	Resources: Background Information and Sample Activities
<u>USC1.5 Explore the association between a healthy sense of self and one's positive connection with others and the environment.</u>	Culture Influencing our Sense of Self	<p>Hamilton Public Health Services. Nutrition Resources for After School Programs. http://www2.hamilton.ca/NR/rdonlyres/97ABAF2F-02F4-4195-B5E8-1AF420A95BA1/0/ActivitiesresourceJan2011.pdf <i>International Food Passports p. 12.</i></p> <p>Health Canada. food-guide.canada.ca/en/healthy-eating-recommendations/enjoy-your-food/cultures-food-traditions-and-healthy-eating. <i>Cultures, food traditions and healthy eating.</i></p>

Health Education Goal 2: Make informed decisions based on health related knowledge.

Curriculum Outcome	Nutrition Concepts	Resources: Background Information and Sample Activities
<u>DM 1.1 Examine initial steps (Stop, Think, Do) for making basic choices regarding healthy behaviours and a healthy sense of self</u>	Food Tracking Activities	<p>Nutrition Background Information: <u>Food Tracking p.18</u></p> <p>Action Schools BC www.actionschoolsbc.ca/ <i>Collect Your Colours Vegetables and Fruit Extension Activity ; Vegetables and Fruit Journal Extension Activity</i></p> <p>Manitoba physical and Health Education. Healthy Lifestyle Practices www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/physhlth/foundation/gr1-healthy.pdf. <i>(Grade 1) Journal Activity p.113.</i></p> <p>Hamilton Public Health Services. Nutrition Resources for After School Programs www2.hamilton.ca/NR/rdonlyres/97ABAF2F-02F4-4195-B5E8-1AF420A95BA1/0/ActivitiesresourceJan2011.pdf <i>Breakfast Bonanza, p. 15</i></p>

Health Education Grade 2

Focus: Connections related to thoughts-feelings-actions, healthy snacking, effects of illness/disease, respect, safety and diversity

Perspective: Discovering connections between self and wellness

Health Education Goal 1: Develop the understanding, skills and confidences necessary to take action to improve health.

Curriculum Outcome	Nutrition Concepts	Resources: Background Information and sample activities
<u>USC2.1 Demonstrate a basic understanding of how thoughts, feelings, and actions influence health and well-being.</u>	Healthy Daily Eating Habits	<p>Nutrition Background Information: <u>Canada's Food Guide - 2019 p.12</u>, <u>Teaching About food in Younger Grades p.13</u> and <u>Healthy Eating Habits for Children p.13</u></p> <p>Action Schools BC <u>www.actionschoolsbc.ca/</u> <i>Collect Your Colours Vegetable and Fruit Extension Activity</i></p> <p>Canada's Food Guide <u>https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/healthy-eating-habits/</u> <i>Healthy Eating Habits</i></p> <p>Saskatchewan Health Authority. Unlock the Potential of Food with the New Canada Food Guide Toolkit for Educators 2019. <u>http://www.rqhealth.ca/department/health-promotion/nutrition-and-healthy-eating</u> <i>Canada's Food Guide p. 3 and My Food Guide Placemat p. 6</i></p>
<u>USC2.2 Determine how healthy snacking practices influence personal health</u>	Role of water in being healthy	<p>Nutrition Background Information: <u>Water and Other Beverages p.16</u></p> <p>Canada's Food Guide. <u>https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/healthy-eating-recommendations/make-water-your-drink-of-choice/</u> <i>Make water your drink of choice</i></p>
	Healthy Snacks	<p>Nutrition Background Information: <u>Healthy Eating Habits for Children p.13</u></p> <p>Alberta Health Services. Kindergarten – grade 3 <u>www.albertahealthservices.ca/nutrition/Page2918.aspx</u> <i>Food Guide Bean Bag Toss; Snack Attack; Snack Talk</i></p> <p>Canada's Food Guide <u>food-guide.canada.ca/en/tips-for-healthy-eating/healthy-snacks/</u> <i>Healthy Snacks</i></p>
	Food Experiences	<p>Nutrition Background Information: <u>Food Experiences p.14</u></p> <p>Action Schools BC <u>www.actionschoolsbc.ca/</u> <i>Tasting Parties Fruit and Vegetable Extension Activity; Food Tasting Chart</i></p> <p>Bright Bites. <u>brightbites.ca/paint-plate-grade-2-lesson-plan-colours-rainbow/</u>. <i>Paint Your Plate Lesson Plan Grade 2 - Colours of the Rainbow</i></p>

Health Education Grade 2

Health Education Goal 1: Develop the understanding, skills and confidences necessary to take action to improve health.		
Curriculum Outcome	Nutrition Concepts	Resources: Background Information and sample activities
<u>USC2.2 Determine how healthy snacking practices influence personal health</u>	Food Experiences (continued)	Hamilton Public Health Services. Nutrition Resources for After School Programs www2.hamilton.ca/NR/rdonlyres/97ABAF2F-02F4-4195-B5E8-1AF420A95BA1/0/ActivitiesresourceJan2011.pdf <i>Psychic Powers, p. 20; What am I, p. 28</i>
<u>USC2.6 Examine how communities benefit from the diversity of their individual community members</u>	The diversity of eating habits	<p>Nutrition Background Information: <u>Factors Influencing Food Choices p.15</u></p> <p>Alberta Health Services. Kindergarten – grade 3 www.albertahealthservices.ca/nutrition/Page2918.aspx <i>Family Food Choices</i></p> <p>Bright Bites. brightbites.ca/wp-content/uploads/Stone-soup-grades-2-4.pdf. <i>Stone Soup</i></p> <p>Canada’s Food Guide food-guide.canada.ca/en/healthy-eating-recommendations/enjoy-your-food/cultures-food-traditions-and-healthy-eating/ <i>Enjoy your Food cultures and traditions</i></p> <p>Government of Saskatchewan. publications.saskatchewan.ca/#/products/100215. Cultural Foods and Food Practices.</p> <p>Government of Saskatchewan. publications.saskatchewan.ca/#/products/100216. First Nations and Métis Traditional Practices and Foods</p> <p>OPHA. Discover Healthy Eating: A Teacher’s Resource for grades 1-8 opha.on.ca/Resource-Documents/DiscoverHealthyEatinggr1-8_2009.aspx?ext=.pdf. <i>Snacks of the world p.77, vegetables and fruit of the world p.78</i></p>

Health Education Grade 3

Focus: Healthy foods and physical activity, one’s “inner self”, healthful and harmful substances, healthy family and home, safety at home and the impact of violence.

Perspective: Investigating health knowledge and Information

Health Education Goal 1: Develop the understanding, skills and confidences necessary to take action to improve health.

Curriculum Outcome	Nutrition Concepts	Resources: Background Information and sample activities
USC 3.1 Determine the role of a variety of healthy foods and physical activity on the health and development of the mind, body and immune system	Immunity and Nutrition	Nutrition Background Information: Vitamins, Minerals and Immunity p.18
	Food and Nutrient Link	Nutrition Background Information: Canada’s Food Guide - 2019 p.12, Vitamins, Minerals and Immunity p.18 Alberta Health Services. Kindergarten – grade 3 https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/nutrition/Page2918.aspx <i>Body Foods</i>
	Food Choices that influences mind and body	Nutrition Background Information: Water and Other Beverages p.16 Bright Bites. brightbites.ca/grade-3-lesson-plan-vegetables-fruit-come/ <i>Where Do Our Vegetables and Fruit Come From</i> Canada’s Food Guide food-guide.canada.ca/en/ <i>Food Choices and Eating Habits</i>

Health Education Goal 2: Make informed decisions based on health related knowledge.

Curriculum Outcome	Nutrition Concepts	Resources: Background Information and sample activities
DM3.1 Demonstrate the importance of investigating information for making informed decisions related to healthy foods and physical activity, one’s inner self, helpful and harmful substances, healthy family and home, safety at home and impact of violence.	Canada’s Food Guide	Canada’s Food Guide. food-guide.canada.ca/en/ Ophea teachingtools.ophea.net/activities/level-up/child-6-9-years . <i>Understanding Healthy Eating, Hunger and Thirst Cues, Making Healthy Food Choices.</i> Bright Bites. brightbites.ca/wp-content/uploads/Stone-soup-grades-2-4.pdf . <i>Stone Soup</i>

Health Education Grade 3

Health Education Goal 3: Apply decisions that will improve personal health and/or the health of others		
Curriculum Outcome	Nutrition Concepts	Resources: Background Information and sample activities
<p><u>AP3.1 Use the understandings, skills, and confidences related to healthy foods and physical activity, and helpful and harmful substances.</u></p>	<p>Nutrition Goals for Health</p>	<p>Nutrition Background Information: Taking Action on Healthy Eating p.20</p> <p>Ophea. teachingtools.ophea.net/activities/level-up/child-6-9-years <i>Understanding Healthy Eating</i></p>

Canada's Food Guide – 2019

Canada's Food Guide has provided Canadians with healthy eating recommendations since the 1940's. Over the years, the Food Guide provided guidance around the types and amounts of foods to eat for health. Rather than identifying the specific amounts of foods to consume each day, the healthy eating recommendations for the 2019 version of the Guide provide key messages in choosing healthy foods and eating habits.

Canada's Food Guide Healthy Eating Recommendations

Healthy Food Choices

Make it a habit to eat a variety of healthy foods each day.

- **Eat plenty of vegetables and fruits, whole grain foods and protein foods.** Choose protein foods that come from plants more often. Protein foods include legumes, nuts, seeds, tofu, fortified soy beverage, fish, shellfish, eggs, poultry, lean meat, lower fat milk, lower fat yogurt and cheeses lower in fat and sodium. Choose foods with healthy fats instead of saturated fat.
- **Limit highly processed foods. If you choose these foods, eat them less often and in small amounts.** Prepare meals and snacks using ingredients that have little to no added sodium, sugars or saturated fat. Choose healthier menu options when eating out
- **Make water your drink of choice.** Replace sugary drinks with water. Replacing sugary drinks with water will help reduce the amount of sugars you drink.
- **Use food labels.** Food labels provide information you can use to make informed choices about foods and drinks at the grocery store and at home.
- **Be aware that food marketing can influence your choices.** Food marketing is advertising that promotes the sale of certain food or food products. Many foods and drinks that are marketed can contribute too much sodium, sugars or saturated fat to our eating patterns.

Healthy Eating Habits

Healthy eating is more than the foods you eat. It is also about where, when, why and how you eat.

- **Be mindful of your eating habits,** taking time to eat and noticing when you are hungry and when you are full.
- **Cook more often.** Cooking more often can help you develop healthy eating habits. You can cook more often by planning what you eat and involving others in planning and preparing meals.
- **Enjoy your food.** Enjoying your food is part of healthy eating. Enjoy the taste of your food and the many food-related activities that go along with eating. This includes enjoying culture and food traditions.
- **Eat meals with others.** Enjoying healthy foods with family, friends, or neighbours is a great way to enjoy quality time together, share food traditions, across generations and cultures, and explore new healthy foods that you might not normally try.

Several tips, resources and recipes to implement Canada's Food Guide recommendations into daily habits are available at food-guide.canada.ca/en

References:

1. Government of Canada. Canada's Dietary Guidelines for Health Professionals and Policy Makers. 2019 Jan [cited 2019 Jul 25]. Available from: food-guide.canada.ca/en/guidelines

Healthy Eating Habits for Children

Eating nutritious meals and snacks helps children meet their daily nutrient needs for healthy growth and development. To help sustain energy, children need to eat small amounts of food on a regular schedule.

Eating Breakfast

It is important to start every day by eating breakfast. Breakfast replenishes energy lost during a night's sleep. Skipping breakfast may result in missed nutrients, and fatigue.

A healthy breakfast includes vegetables or fruit, whole grain and protein foods. Examples of breakfasts include:

- Whole grain cereal, milk, banana
- Whole wheat toast, scrambled egg, orange
- Plain oatmeal, yogurt, berries
- Whole grain bagel, nut butter, apple
- Whole grain tortilla with beans and cheese

Healthy Snacks

Snacks that include vegetables and fruit, whole grains and protein foods help children meet their daily nutrient needs. Healthy snacks include food from Canada's Food Guide. Examples of healthy snacks include:

- fruit with yogurt dip
- sliced vegetables with hummus (chickpea dip)
- whole grain crackers with cheese
- half of a sandwich and milk
- fruit and yogurt smoothie

Sometimes there is confusion regarding snacks. Some foods advertised as “snack foods” are high in fat sugar and salt such as chips, candies, soft drinks, chocolate covered granola bars, cookies, fruit flavoured snacks, and cakes. These are not healthy snacks and should not be served or sold in schools.

References:

1. Government of Canada. Canada's Dietary Guidelines for Health Professionals and Policy Makers. 2019 Jan. [cited 2019 Jul 25]. Available from: <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/guidelines/>

Teaching About Food in the Younger Grades

Eating habits and attitudes about food developed in childhood and the teenage years, often follow through into adulthood. Nutrition education in the young grades should provide for positive language, food experiences and healthy attitudes regarding eating to help children maintain a healthy relationship with food, and eating.

Try to avoid using phrases such as “good foods” and “bad foods” when referring to foods being more or less nutritious. This type of language can create negative associations with food. For example, when a child eats what a “bad food”, he/she may perceive himself/herself as “being bad”. This association puts a moral value on food, which can lead to unhealthy eating habits.

Instead of the “good/bad” moral wording, choose neutral language to discuss healthy eating such as choose most often and choose sometimes which *Healthy Foods for my School* <https://publications.saskatchewan.ca/#/products/89504> .

For ideas regarding food experiences and healthy attitudes regarding eating refer to [Food Experiences](#) (page 14).

For more information regarding healthy foods in schools, refer to the Ministry of Education guidance document, Nourishing Minds Eat Well – Learn Well – Live Well (2019) at:

www.saskatchewan.ca/government/education-and-child-care-facility-administration/services-for-school-administrators/student-wellness-and-wellbeing/nutrition

Food Experiences

Food experiences at school and in the classroom provide children with opportunities to try nutritious foods in a positive environment. Children are more likely to try healthy foods when they see adults and other children enjoying these foods. The more often children are offered a new food, the more likely they are to try it. When offering foods in the classroom, proper hand washing is very important.

Tips for Success

- The goal of a food experiences is to introduce students to new foods. Offer small tastes, not large portions.
- Children are often happy to be involved in food preparation. Touching, feeling and smelling food before tasting is part of the learning process for many children.
- Allow and instruct students to refuse trying a food by saying “no thank-you” and discourage negative comments.
- Offer foods with a napkin and instruct to spit food into the napkin politely if they do not want to swallow it. Have drink water available. Even having it in the mouth is a food experience. Do not force a child to eat something they do not want to eat.
- Discussions the food experience with the students. Food acceptability changes over time. Avoid asking whether they liked the food but instead, ask them to describe the food by its taste, texture and appearance.
- Have students keep track of new foods they have tried. When students share this with their families, it encourages them to try these foods at home.

About Children’s Food Acceptance

It is normal for some children to be more cautious with foods. Children may need to experience a new food eight or more times before they will taste it (1). Children who have very keen sense of taste or smell may find strong tastes or smells not initially appealing. Mouth feel, colour, shape and presentation of a food can influence whether a child will try it. Also past experience with a food can affect if it will be accepted in the future.

Reference:

1. Dietitians of Canada. What is the evidence to show that preschoolers will eat, without being strongly encouraged or forced to eat? In: Practice-based Evidence in Nutrition [PEN]. 2007 October 30 [cited 2012 24 January. Available from: <http://www.pennutrition.com>. Access only by subscription.

Factors Influencing Food Choices

Children’s eating habits are continually developing and changing under the influence of family, peers, adult role models and social environments such as media and marketing.

Social Environments: Eating is often a social event. If children see their friends enjoying healthy foods, they will be more likely to like those foods. Adult role modeling is also extremely important in shaping children’s eating habits.

Advertising of Food and Beverages: Food advertising has increased over the last few decades. Most foods advertised are high in fat, sugar, salt and calories. Children are susceptible to advertising and health organizations have identified food advertising as a major contributor to childhood obesity (1).

Culture: Culture and food traditions affect eating habits. They influence the type of foods offered as well as how they are prepared and served.

Hunger and fullness: Although the feelings of hunger and fullness are innate, many things can interfere with children’s ability to sense them. For example, rewarding children with food or punishing them by restricting foods can interfere with their ability to eat in response to hunger and fullness cues. This can teach children to eat as a way to reward themselves instead of eating due to hunger.

Emotions: Emotions can affect our eating habits. They can lead us to overeat, avoid eating or make us choose different foods. For example, in times of celebration or sadness some people may eat more or less or eat different foods than they usually eat. The association between emotion and food is normal, but it can be problematic if it becomes the usual way to deal with emotions.

Availability: The food available to children is dependent on what is available locally and how parents and caregivers can access the food. Food is often available at nontraditional locations such as bookstores, hardware stores, and gas stations. Many foods purchased in these locations are high in fat, salt, sugar and low in vitamins and minerals. Even if food is available, it may not be accessible due to cost.

Time: Time commitments and competing priorities influence the types and locations of foods eaten. Some families may turn to fast-food restaurants, ready-to-serve dinners and packaged foods. These foods tend to be less nutritious than foods prepared at home with basic ingredients.

Family Income: There are many reasons why families may not have enough money to obtain enough food or the healthy foods. The rising costs of basic expenses such as transportation, childcare and housing sometimes leave families with less money for food.

Taste Preferences: People experience the taste, texture, and smell of food differently. Some people have keener senses than others do.

For more information, see [Food Experience](#) (page 14).

References

1. Government of Canada. Guide to the Application of the Child Health Protection Act (Bill S-228). 2018 Dec 12.

Go, Grow and Glow

The concept of “Go, Grow and Glow” foods helps students understand that:

- The foods we eat play a role in a variety of body functions that keep us healthy.
- We need to eat a variety of foods to be healthy.

“Go, Grow and Glow” simplifies the concept that nutrients in food play important functions in our bodies. Keep in mind this is an oversimplification and in fact, foods provide a variety of nutrients. Centre the discussion around types of foods.

	Concept discussed	What to say to children	Food example
Go Foods	“Go Foods” refers to foods that have a good source of carbohydrate. Carbohydrate is the primary source of energy for the body. It is best to choose foods recommended by Canada’s Food Guide rather than highly processed foods with added sugar, fat, and salt.	These foods give us the energy we need to run, jump and play	Fruit, whole grain products, milk, yogurt and legumes such as beans, peas and lentils
Grow Foods	“Grow Foods” refers to foods that have a good source of protein. Protein is used in the building of muscle and growth.	These foods help us grow and build strong bones and muscles.	Protein foods including, beans, lentils, lean meats, eggs, milk, yogurt and cheese
Glow Foods	“Glow Foods” refers to foods that are sources of various vitamins and minerals	These foods help our hair to be shiny, help our eyes to see and help keep us from getting sick.	Vegetables and fruit

Water and Other Beverages

Importance of water to health

Water is the largest part of the human body and is vital for life (1). Water is a structural component to all cells and is essential to all bodily fluids. Water transports nutrients and removes wastes from the body.

Our bodies naturally lose water throughout the day through breathing, urine, bowel movements and sweat. Water losses increase in hot environments, during physical activity and during illness. Fluids need to be replaced for the body to function well and prevent dehydration. Some symptoms of dehydration include thirst, fatigue, weakness, headache, irritability, and dizziness.

Canada’s Food Guide recommends water as the beverage of choice to support health and hydration without adding calories or sugar found in other beverages.

Other beverages

Sugary drinks, including 100% juice, are associated with dental cavities in children. Sugar sweetened beverages and foods have been associated with weight gain and type 2 diabetes. To help reduce the intake of sugar, it is important to limit or avoid sugary drinks (1).

References:

1. Government of Canada. Canada's Dietary Guidelines for Health Professionals and Policy Makers. 2019. [cited 2019 Jul 25]. Available from: <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/guidelines/>

Weight Bias

Weight bias refers to negative attitudes towards individuals due to their weight. These negative attitudes result in stereotypes, prejudice and unfair treatment towards these people. This can be expressed through teasing, physical aggression, cyber-bullying, rejection, and rumors. Not only can this be embarrassing for a child, youth or adult, it can also have serious consequences on their physical, social and psychological health.

Why does weight bias occur?

Weight bias occurs because we live in a culture where there is a perception that being thin is desirable. We are exposed to misleading messages about weight from various means such as television, movies, books, magazines and the internet. These false messages tell us people are “bad if they are fat” or “good if they are thin”. A consequence of these messages is that it is socially acceptable to judge people's characters, personalities and behaviours based on weight. For example, overweight people are often perceived as being lazy, lacking will power, and being unreliable. When family members, friends, and education professionals reinforce these false messages, individuals can be stigmatized and hurt.

How does weight bias affect students?

Children and youth who experience weight bias are vulnerable to many consequences that can affect their emotional and physical well-being. Students who experience teasing or discrimination because of their weight can have low self-esteem, poor body image, and are more likely to experience symptoms of depression and anxiety. A student's physical health may also be affected in various ways. Children who experience weight biases are more likely to try unhealthy weight control or binge eating behaviours and avoid physical activities at school where teasing often occurs.

Taking action

All people deserve safety, respect, and acceptance in their community and classroom. Just as we should not tolerate racial or gender bias toward others, we should not tolerate weight bias. If you witness weight bias occurring in your school, intervene right away. To learn how to address weight bias within your classroom and school, refer to the resources “Teachers: How to Address Weight Bias in Your Classroom” and “Tips for Reducing Weight Bias” that can be found at www.YaleRuddCenter.org

Weighing and measuring students in schools

Measuring children and youth within the school setting can be more harmful than beneficial. Children and youth are often teased about their size and shape. Measuring weight or body composition at school can increase the amount of teasing children may already be receiving. Regardless of their size or shape, children and youth may be pressured to try harmful diets. Body composition can influence health but research has shown that shaming people for their size does not improve their health (1).

All students need to be physically active, eat well, and have positive mental health regardless of their size and shape. It is important to be supportive of all children and youth by keeping the focus *on* health and wellness and *off* size and shape.

References:

1. Dietitians of Canada. (2010). Current Issues Reducing Consumption of Sugar-Sweetened Beverages: does taxation have a role? In: Practice-based Evidence in Nutrition (PEN). Retrieved November 21 from: www.pennutrition.com. (Access by subscription only).
2. Yale Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity. (2008). Weight Bias: The Need for Public Policy. Retrieved November 20, 2013 from www.naafaonline.com/dev2/about/Brochures/WeightBiasPolicyRuddReport.pdf
3. Yale Rudd Centre for Food Policy and Obesity. (2013). Emotional & Physical Health Consequences. Retrieved November 20, 2013 from www.yaleruddcenter.org/what_we_do.aspx?id=202

Food Tracking

Students can track or record their food intake to become more aware of their eating habits. Comparing students eating patterns with those noted in Canada’s Food Guide can help to affirm healthy eating behaviours and identify areas that could improve. When doing food-tracking activities with students, it is important to note that complete accuracy and showing perfect eating habits are not the ultimate goals.

Remind students that the food choices made on a regular basis form our eating habits. What a student eats will vary from day to day and that one day of record keeping does not define a healthy or unhealthy eating habits. Food tracking just allows student to reflect on current eating habits and potential opportunities for improvement.

Creating a non-judgmental climate will encourage students to be honest. Remind students that there are no right or wrong answers. By completing the activity with the students, you model how to do the activity accurately.

Be sensitive about the possibility that a child’s family may not be able to provide enough nutritious foods at home. You may want to do tracking activities on days that students can participate in a snack or meal program at school or in the community.

Vitamins, Minerals and Immunity

Almost all vitamins and minerals play a role in a healthy immune system. The media often promote certain nutrients such as vitamin C and zinc as providing protection against illness like colds and flues. Current research does not justify supplements of these nutrients to prevent illness

Vitamins and Minerals

Vitamins and minerals help the body utilize other nutrients such as carbohydrate, protein and fat for energy. They are also involved in body repair, immunity, maintenance and growth.

There are two types of vitamins: fat-soluble and water-soluble.

- Fat-soluble vitamins include vitamin A, D, E, and K. They dissolve in fat and can be stored in the body tissues and organs.
- Water-soluble vitamins include biotin, vitamin B complex (vitamin B6, B12, thiamin, niacin, riboflavin, and folate) and vitamin C. Water is required to absorb these vitamins. They cannot be stored in the body. Extra is lost from the body through urine.

Vitamin and Mineral Supplements

Most healthy people are able to get the nutrients needed by following the recommendations of Canada's Food Guide. Some people, such as women of childbearing age and those with medical conditions may require a vitamin and mineral supplement. Individuals who are unable to or choose not to eat certain foods may be at risk for not getting enough vitamins and minerals and a supplement might be recommended. Vitamin and mineral supplements do not contain carbohydrates, protein or fat so do not provide energy.

Vitamin and mineral supplements can be dangerous when taken in large amounts. For example, vitamin A, vitamin D, niacin, calcium, and iron are toxic when taken in high doses. It is best to get all vitamins and minerals needed through the food instead of a supplement.

References:

1. Government of Canada. Folic acid and neural tube defects. 2018 Jan 29. [cited 2019 Jul 26]. Available from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/pregnancy/folic-acid.html>
2. TeensHealth.org. Vitamins and Minerals. 2014 Jul. [cited 2019 Jul 26]. Available from: <https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/vitamins-minerals.html>
3. Unlockfood. Vitamins and Minerals: What you Need to Know about Zinc. 2019 Feb 14. [cited 2019 Jul 26]. Available from: <https://www.unlockfood.ca/en/Articles/Vitamins-and-Minerals/-What-You-Need-to-Know-about-Zinc.aspx>

Family Meals

Children and parents can benefit from eating meals together. Family meals have been associated with enhancing family relationships and supporting healthy choices (1, 2, 3, 4).

Eating together can promote conversation and laughter that allow families to reconnect each day. This becomes even more important as children get older. Research has shown that families who eat together have stronger relationships and communication. By enjoying meals together and sharing conversations, children can learn important family values and traditions. As families come together to eat, it provides the child with a sense of belonging and security.

Research has shown that children who partake in family meals are less likely to engage in risky behaviors such as the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (1). This may be due to the relationship between participating in family meals and children's ability to resist negative peer pressure. Participating in family meals has also been linked to positive mental health (2).

Children who eat meals with their families are more likely to develop healthy eating habits that can continue into adulthood. Family meals have been associated with children eating more foods with fiber, calcium, iron, and essential vitamins and drinking less soft drinks (4).

Eating together as a family can be a great opportunity for parents to demonstrate healthy behaviours to their children. Including children in meal preparation and clean up allows the child to feel included and learn valuable lifelong skills.

For more information check out the following links:

- Better Together BC <https://www.bettertogetherbc.ca/>: This website provides great ideas and recipes to try with your family.
- The Family Dinner Project <https://thefamilydinnerproject.org/>: This is a great location for tips on communication, meal time conversations and even recipes.

References:

1. Eisenberg, Marla et.al. Correlations Between Family Meals and Psychosocial Well-being Among Adolescents. 2004 Aug. Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med. 2004;158(8):792-796. Abstract available from: [https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=Arch+Pediatr+Adolesc+Med.+2004%3B158\(8\)%3A792-796](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=Arch+Pediatr+Adolesc+Med.+2004%3B158(8)%3A792-796).
2. Harbec, Marie-Josée, Associations Between Early Family Meal Environment Quality and Later Well-Being in School-Age Children. J Dev Behav Pediatr. 2018 Mar;39(2):136–143. Abstract available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29227338/>
3. Lee, SY et. al. Eating habits and eating behaviors by family dinner frequency in the lower-grade elementary school students. Nutr Res Pract. 2014 Dec;8(6):679-87. Article available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4252528/>
4. Neumark-Sztainer, D. et. al. Family meal patterns: Associations with sociodemographic characteristics and improved dietary intake among adolescents. JAMA 2003 Mar;103(3);317-322.

Taking Action on Healthy Eating

As part of the Saskatchewan Health Education curricula students are to make decisions to enhance their personal health. Try to gear the focus on positive healthy eating actions such as choosing to drink water or trying a new vegetable rather than restrictive actions like avoiding candy or soft drinks. Focusing on the positive aspect of eating to help maintain or develop a good association with healthy foods.

Have students brainstorm specific ideas to improve their eating habits. Below are a few examples:

- eat vegetables or fruit at meals or choose to try at least one new vegetable a week
- try a few whole grains like brown rice or whole grain bread
- choose to eat breakfast at least 3 times a week
- drink water at each meal

Often children’s access to food is dependent on their parents or caregivers. Some students will struggle to make changes to their eating habits based on what type of foods are available to them. Having access to healthy food at school can assist students in taking action on healthy eating. Here are a few ideas to help keep the school and classroom inclusive to all students:

- Have free drinking water available in the school
- Consider keeping a fruit basket in the school office or library for students who do not have access to these foods
- Offer white milk at no or low cost at school
- Approach organizations and businesses for financial donations to offset the cost of emergency foods in the school.
- Highlight a vegetable or fruit in the classroom each month – provide small taste tests and encourage children to try something new.

Accessing Health Information On-Line

We often get health information from the internet through social media and websites. It is hard to know which source is the best. It is important to inform students of ways to ensure the information from the website can be trusted. Below are a few tips when looking for health information online:

1. Who hosts the website?

- Look for information from government authorities such as Health Canada, health authorities, or from national charities such as the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Canadian Cancer Society, or Diabetes Canada. These sources report reliable health information.
- Be wary of websites advertising or selling things that are supposed to improve your health. Many of these companies include false or misleading scientific claims to encourage you to buy their product.

2. Is the information reliable?

- Check the author's credentials. Not all information is written by qualified health professional. There are many phony health professionals making false claims on the Internet.
- Some qualified health professionals may also reference poor scientific studies with misleading information. It can be important to take a closer look at the articles backing up their claims (see backgrounder *Reading Health Studies* p. 20)
- Health information should be unbiased and based on solid evidence. The author should refer to and provide the specific links to this evidence.
- Be cautious about personal stories and opinions. They are not always objective or based on evidence. Some websites may even have a cautionary note or full disclaimers that the information provided is purely based on opinion and not on scientific evidence.

3. When was the information written?

- Look for websites with current health information. The date of the information is often at the bottom of the page. Look for information from the last 5 to 10 years.

4. Does the website offer quick and easy solutions to your health problems?

- Be careful of health information that claims that one pill or food will cure many different illnesses.
- Be cautious of articles that try to make people fearful or recommends therapies, which produce amazing or 'miracle' cures. Look for other reliable websites to see if they provide the same information.
- Talk with a trusted health care professional about what you learn online before making any changes in your health care or eating plan