

Web Content and Newsletter Articles for WRDSB

Developed Fall 2014 in response to feedback from WRDSB on the Healthy Schools Newsletter
Proposal ([DOCS#1577916](#))

Keep Treats as Treats

The coming of the fall signals the beginning of a line of holidays and traditions that focus on celebrating with food. Often treats carry straight through the fall into the winter season from one holiday to the next! Offering kids a healthy meal or snack before heading out to holiday celebrations can help curb appetites and make treats easier to resist too!

Kids in the Kitchen

Teaching children food skills helps develop healthy eating habits, improve math, language and motor skills and provides a fun way for families to spend time together. Even children as young as two can start learning in the kitchen! Packing school lunches is something in which all school-aged kids can take part. Check out EatRight Ontario's *Cooking with Kids of Different Ages* for ideas about which tasks might be best for your kids to start with:
<http://www.eatrightontario.ca/en/Articles/Child-Toddler-Nutrition/Cooking-with-Kids.aspx>.

Planning Healthy School Snacks and Lunches

Snacks and lunches at school provide an important opportunity to pack nutritious choices from *Canada's Food Guide*. These foods have vitamins, minerals, fibre and other nutrients needed for healthy growth and development. Always start with a vegetable or fruit serving and add at least one serving from another food group for snacks and two servings from other food groups for lunch. Good choices to keep on hand include breads, tortillas or crackers from the Grain Products group (whole grains are the best choice); low-fat milk, yogurt or cheese from the Milk and Alternatives group; and sunflower seeds, hummus or lean meats from the Meat and Alternatives group. Certain foods such as dairy and meat need to be kept cold in an insulated bag with an ice pack.

Seasonal Fruit or Veggie Challenge

Planning a trip to a local farmer's market is a great way to teach kids about seasonal produce. Turn it into a game - at the market have them pick a vegetable or fruit that they want to cook with, and get creative by choosing two or three different ways you can prepare it. Don't forget to find a way to pack it into school lunches too! Visit <http://www.foodlink.ca> to find out where you can buy local produce and learn about what is in season during each month of the year.

Eat a Healthy Breakfast!

Breakfast is a very important part of your day. In 2010, it was reported that 40 per cent of Canadian children do not eat breakfast on a daily basis. Research has shown that a balanced breakfast helps children concentrate better in school as it gives them the energy and nutrients they need for learning. A complete balanced breakfast includes at least one choice from each of the food groups. An example would be whole grain toast with peanut butter, a piece of fruit and a cup of lower fat milk.



Tips to get your child eating in the morning:

- *Serve realistic portions:* Children's stomachs are smaller than adults'. Loading food onto a plate may put off your child and stop them from trying the food you've prepared. Start with small portions and work from there.
- *Prepare as much as you can the night before:* Set out what you will need to prepare for the next morning. This allows more time to sit down and have breakfast without the rush.
- *Be a role model:* If kids don't see parents eat breakfast, then why should they have to? Start your day off right and have breakfast with your children.

Quick Breakfast Burrito

A great alternative to your typical breakfast that includes all four food groups!



Makes - 2 servings

Prep Time - 15 minutes

Total Time - 15 minutes

Ingredients

Salsa (1 tomato, 1 green onion, ¼ green pepper - chopped)
2 small whole grain tortilla wraps
2 tablespoons shredded reduced-fat cheddar cheese
2 eggs

Directions

Scramble eggs on a small non-stick skillet over medium heat, stirring until eggs are cooked through. Divide the scrambled eggs between the two wraps. Add in cheese immediately. Top with salsa mixture and wrap. Add fruit to the meal for extra colour and flavour!

Recipe adapted from Cooking Light, August 2009

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Choosing Healthy Beverages

As an adult and a parent, it can be difficult to identify the most nutritious choices for your family. This challenge is not limited to food choices; what you drink is important too!

We know that drinking water is important, but what about other drinks? Many drinks are full of added sugar and provide little or no nutrition. They can also lead to cavities and increase the risk for many chronic diseases.

Water: Because our bodies are made up of mostly water, (around 60 per cent), we need it to keep our body working properly. Water is the best way to quench our thirst, and it's practically free!



Milk or Milk Alternatives: Milk and fortified soy beverages are also healthy choices as they are good sources of protein, calcium and vitamin D. Other fortified plant-based beverages may not have enough protein. While young children (one to two years of age) can drink higher-fat milk, school-age children and adults should choose lower-fat options such as 1% or skim milk.



Fruit Juice and Fruit Beverages: Fruit punch, drinks or cocktails should be avoided as they often contain little to no fruit juice and are higher in added sugar. Even 100 per cent fruit juices can contain a lot of sugar so the portion should be limited to 60-125 ml ($\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup). Eating a piece of fruit is a better choice since it has the added benefits of fibre and nutrients that juice doesn't have.

Soft Drinks: Soft drinks are low in nutrients and can have very high amounts of sugar. Generally, soft drinks should be avoided.

Sports Drinks: Sports drinks are meant to keep the body hydrated and provide extra energy (sugar) during long periods of intense physical activity. Most children and adults do not need sports drinks to stay hydrated. Drinking water before, during or after physical activity is often enough.

Energy Drinks: Energy drinks can be confused for sports drinks. Energy drinks claim to give you more energy, keep you awake or make you a better athlete. They can have high levels of sugar and caffeine and are not safe for children. High levels of caffeine can lead to many health problems including an upset stomach and nervousness. These side effects are more likely to decrease athletic ability.

Try this – Place fresh or frozen cut fruit, berries or mint in a pitcher of water to make flavoured water!

For more information visit EatRight Ontario's website at: www.eatrightontario.ca or visit the School Nutrition page on the Region of Waterloo Public Health website at: <http://chd.region.waterloo.on.ca/en/healthylivinghealthprotection/schoolresources.asp>.

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Ideas for Picky Eater

If you have a picky eater at home meals can be frustrating. Many parents worry their picky eaters may not get all of the nutrients they need to grow and be healthy. Here are some tips to make meals healthier and more fun for the whole family!

Get kids involved. Children are more likely to try foods they have helped to prepare. Kids love “build-it-yourself” meals like tacos, pizzas, sandwiches, yogurt parfaits and salad bars. Put the ingredients on the table and have them make their own healthy meal! Take your child to the grocery store and have them pick out a vegetable or fruit that they want to try. For tips on cooking with kids of different ages visit: <http://www.eatrightontario.ca/en/Articles/Child-Toddler-Nutrition/Cooking-with-Kids.aspx>



Be creative! Make fun shapes with a knife or cookie cutter. Children love things with fun names; offer them ‘broccoli trees’, ‘carrot fingers’, ‘cucumber moons’ or ‘toast soldiers’ (toast strips). To keep things interesting, offer vegetables and fruit in a variety of different ways (i.e., raw, cooked, in mixed dishes, with low-fat dipping sauces, in a soup, salad or stir-fry, etc.).

Most importantly, don’t be discouraged if your child won’t try a new food. Sometimes a new food needs to be offered 15-20 times before they will try it. Sit with them when they are eating and offer a variety of foods, but don’t bargain or pressure kids. If they see you enjoying the meal then they are more likely to eat the food too.

Try this nutritious kid-approved recipe!



English muffin tuna melts (*Adapted from: Kids Recipe Challenge by EatRight Ontario*)

Preparation Time: 10 minutes **Cooking Time:** 4 minutes **Makes:** 2 servings

Ingredients:

- 1 can (170 g) tuna in water, unsalted, drained
 - 5 mL (1 tsp) low-fat mayonnaise
 - 1 cup of leafy greens (e.g., romaine, spinach, kale), washed and chopped
 - 2 whole grain English muffins
 - 5 mL (1 tsp) mustard
 - ½ cup shredded low-fat cheddar cheese
 - 1 medium carrot
 - ½ head of broccoli (1 cup, chopped)
1. In a medium-sized bowl stir tuna, chopped greens, low-fat mayonnaise and mustard together
 2. Divide the tuna mixture among the 4 muffin halves and sprinkle each with shredded cheese
 3. Broil for about 4 minutes or until cheese is melted
 4. Wash broccoli and wash and scrub (or peel) carrots. Cut carrot into sticks (‘carrot fingers’) and broccoli into bite-sized pieces (‘broccoli trees’) to serve on the side with tuna melts

For more tips on picky eaters visit EatRight Ontario at:

<http://www.eatrightontario.ca/en/Articles/Childrens-Nutrition/Picky-Eating.aspx>.

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Winter Weather Physical Activity

Although it can be tempting to cozy up on the couch and avoid the winter weather, physical activity is important every day of the year. There are many sports and activities that are unique to the winter season, if you can find one you like you might even look forward to the snowfall this year!

Physical activity can help improve your family's health and fitness while making you feel stronger, more self-confident and happier. It has even been shown to help students do better in school. As an added bonus, becoming more active will provide opportunities to spend more time together as a family.

The updated Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines recommend that children and youth between five and seventeen years of age should participate in at least 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity each day. This should include vigorous-intensity activities at least three times a week (things that make you feel out of breath like running or swimming) and activities that strengthen muscle and bone at least three times a week (for example, gymnastics or martial arts).

Fun Winter Activities

There are many fun physical activities you can do outdoors during the winter. Here are a few to try:

- Hockey or snow football (can be played in leagues or as pick-up games with friends and family)
- Downhill or cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and skating
- Sledding in the park
- Building snow forts and snow people
- Playing freeze tag
- Hide and seek
- Going for a winter nature walk

Winter Safety

Before you head out, be sure to plan for temperature and weather:

- Check the weather forecast before going out to play, when it is very cold (-25°C) exposed skin can freeze in minutes! Dress appropriately for the weather and the activity, dressing in multiple layers lets you adjust to changing conditions
- Stay hydrated and take breaks. It is just as easy to become dehydrated in the cold as the heat
- Use well-maintained, well-fitting equipment, including an appropriate safety helmet
- Keep activities suited to children's ages and abilities
- Stay alert for hazards such as rocks, trees and ice thickness

For more information please see:

- Physical Activity on the Region of Waterloo Public Health website:
<http://chd.region.waterloo.on.ca/en/healthyLivingHealthProtection/physicalactivity.asp>
- Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines: www.csep.ca/guidelines
- Winter Safety Tips from The Hospital for Sick Children:
www.aboutkidshealth.ca/En/HealthAZ/SafetyandtheEnvironment/OutdoorSafety/Pages/Outdoor-Winter-Safety.aspx

Tweets for WRDSB

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- Kids tired of the same old packed lunch routine? Shake things up by cutting veggies and fruit into fun shapes or getting a new lunchbox.
- Some kids need to be offered a food 15-20 times before they accept it, so keep trying!
Tips for picky eaters here:
http://chd.region.waterloo.on.ca/en/childFamilyHealth/resources/HC_PickyEaters.pdf
- Shift the focus from food to fun in your celebrations. Plan games, physical activities, and healthy food with a fun theme!
- Worried about wasting fresh produce? Save your money and the environment, find ideas for Reducing Food Waste here:
<http://chd.region.waterloo.on.ca/en/healthylivinghealthprotection/foodskills.asp>