

Yukon From The Ground Up

www.yukonfromthegroundup.ca



Nutrition bites for school newsletters

These nutrition bites below can be easily inserted into your school newsletter. This is a great opportunity to promote healthy eating in your school, and provide these healthy eating messages to parents and caregivers.

Simple Snacks

To give children the energy and nutrients they need throughout the day, encourage them to eat a meal or snack every 3-4 hours. Snacks can be very simple to make, and healthy too!

When making a snack, choose foods from a least two food groups from Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide: Vegetables and Fruit, Grain Products, Milk and Alternatives, and Meat and Alternatives.

Quick and easy snack ideas include:

- Berries and yogurt
- Fruit smoothie made with milk or yogurt
- Whole grain crackers and cheese
- Red/green/yellow peppers with hummus
- Trail mix made with whole grain cereal, seeds and raisins
- Fruit salad and whole grain muffin

To make a healthy snack a quick and easy choice, keep cut up veggies and fruit in the fridge!

Adapted from: Alberta Health Services: Nutrition Bites for School Newsletters. www.albertahealthservices.ca/6457.asp

Start your Morning Right

Its true- breakfast really is the most important meal of the day. According to Dietitians of Canada, children who eat breakfast perform better at school, have healthier weights and eat nutrients that are more essential. All children should start the day with a good breakfast to feel and perform their best.

Why bother with breakfast?

1. Breakfast is a great way to give the body the refueling it needs. Kids who eat breakfast tend to eat healthier overall and are more likely to participate in physical activities - two great ways to help maintain a healthy weight.
2. Skipping breakfast can make kids tired, restless, or irritable. Their mood and energy can drop by midmorning if they don't eat at least a small morning meal.
3. People who don't eat breakfast often consume more calories throughout the day and are more likely to be overweight. Someone who skips breakfast is likely to feel hungry before lunchtime and snack on high-calorie foods or overeat during lunch.

Try these suggestions to ensure that—even in a rush—you get a good breakfast before you're out the door:

- stock your kitchen with healthy breakfast options
- prepare as much as you can the night before (gets dishes and utensils ready, cut up fruit, etc.)
- get everyone up 10 minutes earlier
- let kids help plan and prepare breakfast
- have grab-and-go alternatives (fresh fruit, individual boxes of cereal, yogurt or smoothies, trail-mix) on days when there is little or no time to eat

If kids aren't hungry first thing in the morning, be sure to pack a breakfast that they can eat on-the-go. Try fresh fruit, cereal, nuts, or half a sandwich.

Source: kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition_center/healthy_eating/breakfast.html

Kids in the Kitchen

Children who eat home-prepared meals are more likely to include more milk products, fruits, vegetables, and other fibre-rich foods; and fewer fried foods and soft drinks than children who eat out. Try these tips for quick and easy family dinners:

- Plan ahead - Spend some time planning your dinner meals for the week. Make your grocery list based on your menus.
- Make the most of your time - Cook casseroles or rice in bulk and freeze extra portions to enjoy on days when you are in a hurry.
- Break a few rules - Try foods you usually eat for breakfast or lunch such as pancakes, waffles, French toast, eggs, soup or sandwiches for dinner.
- Create family time - Turn off the TV and enjoy time with your family.

Source: www.dietitians.ca/Nutrition-Resources-A-Z/Factsheets/Toddlers-and-School-Age/Eat-Well-Play-Well-At-Home.aspx

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Eating Out

If you are grabbing breakfast in a rush, forget your lunch at home, or are going out for supper, here are some things you can do to ensure you and your family have a healthier meal if you decide to eat out:

- Share with someone or take half of your meal home.
- Ask for changes to your meal such as:
 - “hold the cheese, mayo and bacon”
 - whole wheat /whole grain option
 - “can I have a side salad instead”
 - sauces on the side
 - extra vegetables
- choose water
- try and avoid foods that are described as deep-fried, crispy or battered
- choose foods that have been steamed, poached, grilled, roasted, baked, or broiled

Adapted from: Alberta Health Services: Nutrition Bites for School Newsletters. www.albertahealthservices.ca/6457.asp

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Eat the Rainbow

To make sure you get all the vitamins and nutrients your body needs, eat a wide variety of different coloured fruits and vegetables.

You've probably heard that it's important to eat your fruits and veggies. But did you know that it's just as important to eat fruits and vegetables of different colours? Different-coloured produce contains different vitamins and minerals, so "eating the rainbow" ensures that you get a balanced variety of nutrients every day.

Fruits and vegetables can be divided into five colour groups. Each colour group represents different nutrients, so the more colours you can put on your plate, the better. Aim to include at least one serving from each colour group every day.

The five colour groups are: RED | GREEN | YELLOW/ORANGE | BLUE/VIOLET | WHITE/BEIGE/BROWN

Adapted from: www.bgccan.com/en/Resources/ToolsforCaregives/Documents/Nutrition%20A-Z_A%20Guide%20to%20Healthy%20Eating.pdf

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Liven Up Water!

If you love water, and even if you don't, why not spice it up by adding some fruits and/or veggies? To infuse water, simply drop a couple of slices of fruit into your favorite water bottle or drink pitcher. The longer you let it infuse, the stronger the flavor!

Try these combinations:

1. Strawberry, lemon, and basil
2. Orange and blueberry
3. Watermelon and mint
4. Lemon, orange, and cucumber
5. Cucumber and mint
6. Rosemary and grapefruit
7. Kiwi and cucumber
8. Raspberry, strawberry and blueberry
9. Mango and lime
10. Watermelon and lime

Adapted from: www.5to10aday.com/

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Grow Your Own Food

Getting kids involved in growing their own nutritious food is a great way to promote whole-body health.

Starting a garden has positive effects on health:

1. It produces nutritious food to eat
2. It develops a sense of connection to food
3. It provides exercise

When children grow and care for a fruit or vegetable, they are much more likely to try it. Studies have shown that hands-on gardening experiences improve the dietary habits of children. Taking part in the process of cultivating, picking, and cooking food also makes people more physically and emotionally connected to the food going in their bodies.

Gardens come in all shapes and sizes – from community gardens to patches of backyard to planters on balconies. Do what you can, start small, and work your way up to bigger gardening projects as you and your child become more comfortable and able.

A trip to a local farm or farmer's market is also a great way to teach kids where food comes from and what is involved with growing the crops that we buy at the grocery store.

Adapted from: www.bgccan.com/en/Resources/ToolsforCaregives/Documents/Nutrition%20A-Z_A%20Guide%20to%20Healthy%20Eating.pdf

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Cooking With Kids

Cooking with kids at any age can be fun and easy. If your kids get cooking now, chances are they will keep up this good habit as they grow older. Try these top 10 ways to get kids involved in cooking & shopping:

1. Monster Mash! Pull out the potato masher and let them do the mashing.
2. A Sprinkle A Day. Let them sprinkle herbs or other seasonings onto meat or vegetables.
3. Stir & Spice. Make applesauce from fresh apples. Let them help stir and add the cinnamon.
4. Peel & Slice. Older children can peel and slice carrots, cucumbers, and potatoes.
5. Measure Up! Let them measure frozen vegetables before cooking them.
6. Tear It Up. Let them tear lettuce for salads or sandwiches.
7. I Spy. Play "I Spy" in the produce section when grocery shopping.
8. Make It Snappy. Let them snap the green beans, snap peas, or break the flowerettes from broccoli or cauliflower.
9. Pick A Peck. When shopping, let them pick a new fruit or vegetable to try.
10. Mean Green Cleaning Machine. Let them wash fruits and vegetables when preparing for cooking or eating.

Adapted from: <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/top-10-to-get-kids-involved>

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Get More Veggies Into Your Family

1. **Add veggies to dishes you already love**

Layer zucchini slices, chopped spinach, or cooked carrots into lasagna. Stir broccoli florets into macaroni and cheese. Toss vegetables like tomatoes, spinach, mushrooms or broccoli into an omelet or quesadilla.

2. **Try them in soup**

Enhance your favorite soups with added veggies. Try adding carrots to chicken noodle soup, and edamame or green beans to minestrone. Just add the raw or frozen vegetables while you are cooking or heating the soup.

3. **Salads**

Load your salads with all the veggies you enjoy. Try cucumber, grated carrots, zucchini, green beans, onions, radishes, tomato, broccoli or cauliflower florets. You can even use spinach leaves instead of lettuce.

4. **Dip Em!**

Try light ranch, blue cheese, or Italian dressing. Better yet- make your own salad dressing or hummus.

5. **Pop them into spaghetti or on top of pizza**

Chop any vegetables your family likes (zucchini, onions, eggplant, broccoli, celery, carrots) and add them to spaghetti sauce. Vegetables can also be a tempting topping for your pizza, adding fiber and nutrients. Try fresh tomato, onion, bell pepper, mushroom, zucchini, artichoke hearts, fresh basil leaves, and chopped spinach.

6. **Make a smoothie**

You can add vegetables such as spinach, avocado, and celery to smoothies by blending with yogurt, milk, soy milk, or fruit juice. Create your own veggie blend.

7. **Fun factor.**

Corn on the cob continues to be fun into adulthood. Try making veggie kabobs, or celery sticks filled with no-nut butter or light cream cheese with raisins or dried fruit.

8. **Grill Em!**

Before grilling, brush veggies lightly with canola or olive oil, light Italian dressing, or the same marinade you're using for your meat (make sure to use marinade that hasn't touched the raw meat). Large pieces can go straight onto the grill (portobello mushrooms, zucchini halves, large pieces of eggplant, asparagus spears). String smaller pieces onto a skewer for a veggie kabob.

9. **Be creative.**

You might be surprised at how well vegetables can complement the featured ingredients in many of your favorite foods. Roasted red pepper, roasted or sun-dried tomato, and/or grilled eggplant all work well in hot or cold sandwiches. Raw tomato, spinach leaves, fresh basil, grated carrots, sprouts, sliced or grated zucchini, shredded cabbage (green or purple) go well in sandwiches, wraps, and pitas. Add grated or finely chopped vegetables to meat loaf, pasta fillings (such as manicotti), and fillings for Mexican entree fillings like tacos, enchiladas, and quesadillas.