



## LEARNING COMPONENT:

### Healthy Eating & Nutrition for Children and Youth

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#### A) Comprehensive School Health: 4 pillars

- 1) Social Physical Environment: Vending machines without pop or chips in schools is important.
- 2) Teaching/ Learning: Schools are teaching the Health Curriculum so schools are reinforcing healthy eating.
- 3) Partnerships and Services: School/ physical environment, teachers/parents etc. are supporting good general health.
- 4) Healthy School Policy: Canadian Rockies is promoting healthy eating in general
  - “Healthy Eating Environment Initiative” This initiative promotes and supports healthy eating for students through words and actions and ensures the school’s practices around food are consistent with nutrition messages students learn in the classroom.
  - Why is healthy food important in schools? It promotes health and well being, improves school outcomes, reinforces lessons taught in the classroom, may increase revenue (decrease initially but when comfort levels increase with healthy options, revenue will increase again), portrays a healthy image.

#### B) AB Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth

[www.healthyalberta.com/AboutHealthyU/280.htm](http://www.healthyalberta.com/AboutHealthyU/280.htm)

- 3 categories for foods:
- 1) Choose most often: “Go signs” i.e. plain yogurts
  - 2) Choose sometimes (still beneficial but higher in sugar and fat/salt): “Yield signs”
  - 3) Choose least often (Low nutrient foods) “Stop signs” i.e. pop
- 30% of our children do not meet the recommended minimum of 2 servings of milk per day. Most children did not meet the recommended servings of vegetables and fruit (5 – 10 servings)...This is not that hard considering the “serving sizes”. Generally, our servings are bigger than they should be. A serving size is about the size of a hockey puck. [See serving size postcards on the council noticeboard]
  - Serving Sizes: 1 medium piece of fruit or vegetable (about the size of a tennis ball), ½ cup of raw or cooked vegetables or fruit (about the size of a hockey puck), 1 cup of leafy vegetables (about the size of a baseball), ¼ cup of dried fruit, (about the size of two golf balls) \*1 deck of cards is recommended for meat. If we are eating these serving sizes, then we should also be receiving the recommended amount of calories and nutrients. Remember this is just a guide and we should also keep in mind the activity levels of the kids as well.

### **C) Eating Well to Fuel the Body**

How can we get our daily servings? Have 2 or more servings at each meal and snack. Pack vegetables and fruit for lunch. Keep a colorful fruit bowl on the table. Slice your favorite fruit for dessert. Add fruit to cereal, oatmeal, muffins, and pancakes. General rule for sports drink is length of time and activity / intensity of sport...If not continual/ high intensity then drink something else. [Bananas are good source of energy and essential nutrients for sporting kids.]

### **D) Tips for Lunches and Snacks**

Witching hour: Come home from school and the kids are starving. The key is to plan! Plan ahead of time for this: Create a simple lunch and snack, think in food groups-aim for all 4 food groups. Try something new...be creative! Provide healthy foods and be a role model for healthy eating behaviours. Get your kids involved in packing lunches and snacks. Candice uses her slow cooker so that her dinner is actually early and then snack time is reversed. Keep a well-stocked pantry: zip lock bags, whole grains breads, cereals, crackers, dried/canned fruit, canned vegetables, canned tuna/salmon, canned beans/ chickpeas...In fridge: yogurt, cheese, mild, fresh vegetables and fruit, 100% juices...In freezer: whole grain pitas wraps, low fat homemade muffins

### **E) Being Healthy Together: Healthy lunches**

Cubed cheeses, cherry tomatoes, whole wheat crackers, lean deli meat, drinkable yogurt with a piece of fruit, high fibre granola bar, boiled egg, pasta or potato salad with vegetables, burrito to go, leftover pasta, cut up veggies, fruit bowl on counter, take a healthy snack when you leave the house, clear your pantry of unhealthy snacks, plain popcorn with a sprinkle of herbs, bake an apple with cinnamon, freeze yogurt in a popsicle tray.

- Stay healthy by: staying hydrated with water: drink before, during and after activity.
- Be a role model: children mirror healthy habits of those around them. Eat with your kids at the table: Children who eat with family/ friends kids are less likely to smoke, use drugs or alcohol, do better in school, and eat healthier themselves.
- Active parents = Active children
- Say "Yes you can have that...as long as you've eaten the other healthy foods."

### **F) Cooking/ Lunch club-Things to Consider**

Things to consider: Why would we start a cooking club? Building a team, this will involve a team. Consider funding and creating a budget, finding a facility: when is this club offered? It also involves recruiting facilitators and equipment.

OTHER SCHOOL INITIATIVES: Annual Iron Chef Competition. If you have more ideas or want to start a cooking club, please contact School Parent Council: [LGMSnews@hotmail.com](mailto:LGMSnews@hotmail.com)