



Health  
Canada

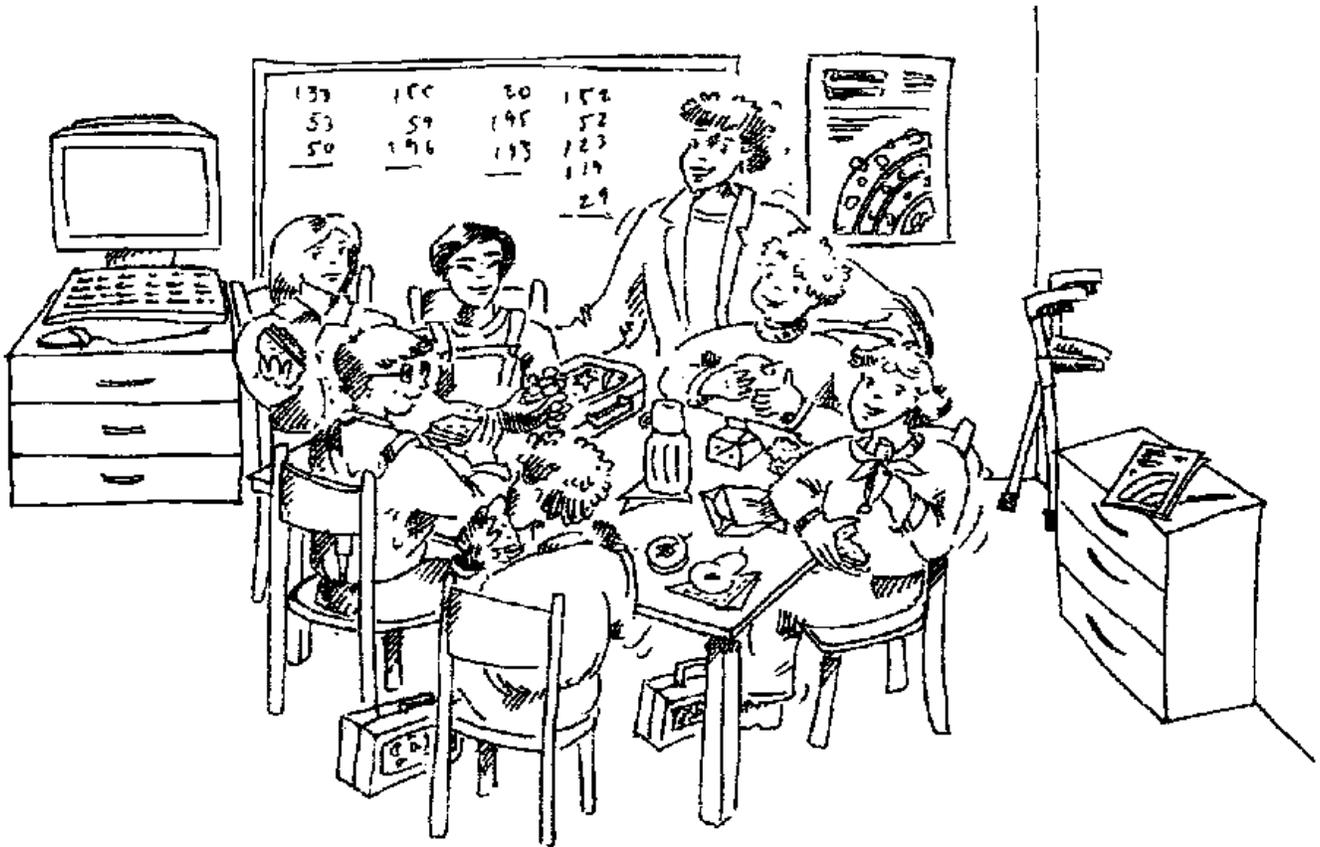
Santé  
Canada

---

Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating

# FOCUS ON CHILDREN SIX TO TWELVE YEARS

Background for Educators and Communicators



Ideas and information on Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating  
for people who work with children six to twelve years of age

---

OUR MISSION IS TO HELP THE PEOPLE OF CANADA  
MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THEIR HEALTH.

*Health Canada*

---

IN BRIEF

---

WHY READ THIS?

3

WHAT INFLUENCES CHILDREN'S EATING?

4

SETTING HEALTHY PATTERNS FOR LIFE

7

WHAT IS HEALTHY EATING FOR CHILDREN?

10

MAKING HEALTHY EATING EASIER

16

MORE MATERIALS ON CHILDREN  
AND HEALTHY EATING

17

Published by the authority of the Minister of Health

We'd like to thank the children and parents who participated in the *Food for Thought* survey (see page 17) and whose quotes are scattered throughout this booklet.

This publication is available on computer diskette or in large print, upon request.

Également disponible en français sous le titre *Le Guide alimentaire canadien pour manger sainement : Renseignements sur les enfants de six à douze ans*

© Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 1997

Cat: H39-308/1-1997E

ISBN: 0-662-25732-4

No changes permitted. Reprint permission not required.



---

## WHY READ THIS?

---

Personal health practices, such as healthy eating, play a large part in determining how healthy people will be.

Between the ages of six and twelve, children are learning to make decisions and beginning to make more choices on their own. They are developing attitudes and habits that they will carry with them for the rest of their lives. The adults who were previously making decisions for them need to continue to provide guidance and support while allowing children to think for themselves.

**Read this booklet to:**

- understand the things that influence children’s attitudes and behaviours around eating;
- help children learn about healthy living and develop the decision-making skills they need to make healthy food choices; and
- create situations that make healthy food choices easier.

*Canada’s Food Guide to Healthy Eating* is a central resource to this booklet. Becoming familiar with the Food Guide and having copies for the children you work with can help them learn to make healthy choices. See the section **More Materials on Children and Healthy Eating** (page 17) to find out how to get copies of the Food Guide and other useful resources.

You are in a position to influence the choices children make today and in the future. When promoting healthy eating, you can use this information to strengthen your influence!



# WHAT INFLUENCES CHILDREN'S EATING?

Many factors influence what children eat. As children grow and become more independent, they make more of their own food choices. But they still look up to their parents and other adults around them for direction. When they don't get this direction, they are more open to the influence of the media and their peers.

"It's good for your health" is not a statement that will have much impact on children's food choices. Other factors are much more powerful because children make choices to address their immediate needs and wants. These factors include:

- **Taste:** The main reason children give for choosing a favourite food is almost always taste. Children choose foods because they taste good and because eating those foods makes them feel good.



- **Family influences:** Children say that parents are their most important source of information and influence for healthy eating. Family eating habits, activity patterns and attitudes toward food and eating have an enormous influence on

children. For example, if the family eats breakfast, it's likely the children will, too. Family income is another factor that influences what children eat and the food choices that are available to them.

- **School policies and practices:** Both children and their parents say that school has an important influence on what children eat. School

nutrition education programs are a key source of information about healthy eating. As well, school food policies can reinforce in-class education. For example, children taught in class about nutritious snacks need to see them featured during school events or in the cafeteria. Similarly, school lunch time needs to be sufficiently long to support eating in the presence of many distractions.



- **Volunteers and professionals who work with children:** Children spend more time outside their family than ever before. Their interests and activities bring them into contact with people who can play a role in supporting healthy choices. The example of someone children look up to – coach, teacher, camp leader, group leader – can have a powerful effect on children through the example they set. Your unspoken example, such as munching on fruit for a snack, can strongly support what you tell children about healthy eating and healthy living.
- **Media messages:** Children absorb an enormous amount of information from the media. Advertisements, TV shows, movies, celebrities and sports stars can

have a big influence on children and on their food choices.

Children are often not aware of how much influence TV and other media have on their food choices. Parents, however, report that they base their decisions about purchasing many foods on their children's preferences, and parents cite TV as an influence on these preferences.

- **Other children:** Peer pressure influences children of all ages and is particularly strong in the early teen years. Although pre-teen children identify strongly with their family, they also want to be like the peers whom they admire. Acceptance in a peer group can depend on eating, liking and doing the same things as the other children in the group.

“I like raspberries because they're juicy and they have lots of good taste.”  
(Winnipeg child)

**Activity**

**To help children understand what influences their food choices:**

- ★ Start a discussion using one of the following questions:  
What is your favourite snack? Why?  
Which of the foods your parents buy regularly are your favourite? Why?
- ★ On a flipchart or a board, list the reasons why these foods are their favourite.
- ★ Discuss with the children what influences their eating habits:  
e.g. taste of foods, family, ads, friends.



## CHILDREN HAVE INFLUENCE, TOO

Children have a strong influence on the foods that are purchased and eaten in their home. Children tell their parents what they like – and don't like – and few parents make decisions about the foods they buy and serve without considering their children's preferences.

In your work with children, you can help them to understand the factors that influence their preferences and to use their own influence positively.

“As parents we have the greatest influence — we purchase and prepare the food, and we have control over what they eat.”  
(Toronto parent)



### Activity

#### To help children realize that they have influence:

- ★ Start a discussion with the children using the following questions:
  - Which foods do your parents buy because they know you like them?
  - What do your parents make for supper that they know you enjoy?
- ★ Make five columns on a flipchart or a board, one for each food group in Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating (see page 10) and one for "Other Foods".
- ★ List the foods mentioned in the appropriate column.
- ★ Encourage children to name foods they enjoy eating from each of the four food groups.
- ★ Through discussion, help children understand that their attitudes influence the people around them and that they can be leaders when it comes to eating well.



---

# SETTING HEALTHY PATTERNS FOR LIFE

---

There's more to healthy eating than food! Eating well, being active and feeling good about yourself are three aspects of healthy living that are interdependent.

For example, when children are active, they are more likely to feel good about themselves and to recognize when they are hungry and when they are full. This allows them to eat enough to meet their nutritional needs and have the energy they need to be active. Children who are hungry or who don't eat well are less likely to have enough energy to be active and to get involved in activities that will help them to feel good about themselves.

Promote eating well in the context of being active and feeling good about yourself. This will guide children on the path to healthy living.

## BEING ACTIVE

Most children enjoy physical activity, especially activities that they can do with their friends and which give them a feeling of accomplishment – building a snowman, skating or swimming. Many children are also involved in organized sports and other activities, like hockey, soccer, gymnastics, bas-

ketball and dance. In fact, balancing their activities with their food needs is very important. This is discussed in the section **Different Children Have Different Energy Needs** (page 14).

However, there's a tendency for school-age children to spend more and more of their time in less active pursuits, like watching TV or playing computer/video games. Children may need both encouragement and the opportunity to get up and moving.



“They’re both healthy for you — if you eat right you’ll stay healthy, and if you exercise you’ll stay healthy.”  
(Winnipeg child)

“If you eat healthy,  
you’ll stay slim, but  
if you get heavy even  
if you eat healthy  
foods, that’s just  
the way your body is.”  
(Winnipeg child)



## Practical Suggestions

### To help children enjoy physical activity

- ★ Add active time to your sessions with children. Get them to stand up, have a good stretch, bring shoulders to ear lobes, jump on the spot, shake all over... Build in time to play outside.
- ★ Make physical activity fun. Being active doesn't always have to involve winners and losers. It can be fun for all children, not just the ones who are "good" at sports or physical activity.
- ★ Plan group outings, like hikes and rallies. Even community chores such as raking leaves or picking up litter can be fun when done in a group.
- ★ Make it easier for children in your community to be physically active. Work with parents, community leaders and schools to build in active time. For example :
  - Lobby for daily physical education to be part of every child's school program.
  - Encourage schools to offer lunch-time and after-school physical activities, sports teams, and clubs.
  - Work to improve local playgrounds. Ask for enough space and solid, safe equipment for children of various ages.

### FEELING GOOD ABOUT YOURSELF

Children come in many different shapes and sizes. Our different shapes are among the things that make each of us unique, and they are determined largely by genetics. Being comfortable with your body is an important step in developing a good sense of self and getting on with living.

During their school years, children begin to move out into a wider world.

They begin to compare themselves to others – their friends, other children from school, characters in movies and TV shows, sports heroes or people they admire. Children also do not gain height and weight at the same time. For many children, it is normal to gain weight before a growth spurt. When this happens, children can feel chubby. It takes a strong, healthy sense of self-esteem for children to feel good about themselves in these circumstances.

# Practical Suggestions

## To help children feel good about themselves:

- ★ Accept children as they are, no matter their weight, size or shape. Focus on children's abilities, not their appearance.
- ★ Listen when children talk to you. Listen to their concerns about their changing bodies and their feelings. Take them seriously and help them keep things in perspective. Learn about the physical changes that come with puberty so you can explain them in easy-to-understand terms.
- ★ Promote healthy eating but resist coaxing heavy children to diet or convincing small children to eat more. Encourage children to decide for themselves how much to eat and help them make healthy choices.
- ★ Feel good about yourself. Children are more likely to feel good about themselves when the adults they look up to have a positive view of themselves.

"I'm scared about making them too self-conscious, so we don't talk about how their body looks."  
(Halifax parent)

## CHILDREN WHO ARE OVERWEIGHT

We live in a culture that can be cruel to children who are heavier than what is considered to be "normal." Some children try to lose weight by dieting because they fear becoming fat. This can be the start of a lifetime of restrictive eating in a fruitless effort to reach unrealistic goals of thinness and body shape.

However, some children are overweight to the point where it may be a health concern. There is evidence that overweight is increasing among children

and is linked to a lack of physical activity. Qualified health professionals, such as a physician or dietitian, are in the best position to assess if a child is overweight.

Children who are overweight need support to enable them to make healthy food choices, participate in physical activities and accept themselves as worthwhile people because of their abilities no matter what they weigh. Because body size is determined by genetics, many heavy children will never be "thin." However, they can be healthy, active people who feel good about themselves and their lives.





# WHAT IS HEALTHY EATING FOR CHILDREN?

During their school years, children are becoming more responsible for making choices about what they eat and more assertive about making their own decisions. Many children begin preparing their own breakfasts, lunches and snacks.

During this time, parents and adults who work with children struggle to strike a balance between helping children make good choices and respecting their ability to make their own decisions. Children have built-in cues – like hunger, feeling full, thirst and taste – to help them decide what and when to eat. Other tools – like *Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating* and food labels – are available to help guide them in setting healthy eating patterns. You can use all of these tools to help children develop decision-making skills for healthy eating.

## ENJOYING A VARIETY OF FOODS

*Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating* encourages eating and enjoying a "variety of foods from each group every day." This helps children meet their nutrient needs. As well, ensuring a variety of choices helps avoid the boredom that can come from eating the same foods day in and day out. Variety also means trying foods from other cultures which can help children learn about their friends and the world around them. And, in the rush to do all of the things that six- to twelve-

year-olds do, variety means that eating on the run can be as interesting and nutritious as a sit-down meal!

### BUILDING A PATTERN OF HEALTHY EATING

*Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating* uses a rainbow to show that just as different colours make a rainbow, different food groups are the basis of a healthy eating pattern. The Food Guide gives direction on which foods to emphasize and how to expand the range of foods we eat.

In the Food Guide, it is the overall pattern of foods eaten over time that is important to health. The key to

healthy eating lies in finding a balance among the many different kinds of food people eat. Although we may need more of some foods and less of others, each kind of food can be part of healthy eating.

Children eat mainly from the four food groups to meet their nutrient needs. However, Other Foods – foods that are not part of any of the four food groups – can also add energy and some nourishment.



#### Grain Products

Choose whole grain and enriched products more often.

#### Vegetables & Fruit

Choose dark green and orange vegetables and orange fruit more often.

#### Milk Products

Choose lower-fat milk products more often.

#### Meat & Alternatives

Choose leaner meats, poultry and fish, as well as dried peas, beans and lentils more often.

# Activity

## To help children enjoy a wider range of foods:

★ Ask children if they would like to eat the same thing all the time. Then, lead a discussion on how choosing a variety of foods can make eating fun.

Have **younger children** draw pictures of two or more different breakfasts, lunches or dinners that they like to eat. Help them complete their meals using suggestions from the *Food Guide* (page 19).

Get **older children** to talk about different ways they can combine foods to make salads, pizzas and sandwiches.

★ Ask children to think about foods coming from other countries, which bring variety to our menus. Here are a few examples: pita bread, French "baguette", souvlaki, chili, tofu.

★ Organize a tasting party with foods and dishes enjoyed by various ethnic and cultural groups. Each child can bring a food or a dish from home.

"The Food Guide tells you which food is more important so you can eat a lot of it."  
(Toronto child)

## OTHER FOODS

What are Other Foods? Other Foods include a wide range of items, such as butter, margarine, oil, jam, snack foods like potato chips and pretzels, water, soft drinks, fruit-flavoured drinks, seasonings and condiments like ketchup. They can be part of a healthy eating pattern, but they shouldn't displace foods from the four food groups. Help children learn to:

- experiment with the natural flavours of foods. For example, taste food before adding salt, salty seasonings, condiments, salad dressings, butter or margarine, and then use only what you need.
- choose lower-fat and lower-salt snack foods more often.
- use caffeine in moderation. It is found in colas, chocolate and foods that contain cocoa.

## DON'T FORGET WATER

Encourage children to drink water to quench their thirst. Children need more water during hot weather and when they're playing hard. Active children usually drink a lot. However, listening to thirst is not always enough. Ensure that children have easy access to water when they are physically active and the weather is hot. Having their own water bottle can help increase how much water children drink.

Most beverages (for example, milk, juices, soft drinks) and many foods (for example, fruit) are good sources of water. However, offering plain water quenches thirst, is inexpensive, helps prevent tooth decay and doesn't ruin children's appetite for food. Unless they are involved in intense training for sports competition, children don't need special drinks to replenish fluids.



## DO CHILDREN HAVE SPECIAL VITAMIN OR MINERAL NEEDS?

Not usually. If children are healthy, growing well and eating a variety of foods, they are not likely to need a vitamin-mineral supplement.

For example, there is an increase in calcium needs prior to puberty. This is why the Food Guide recommends that children increase the number of servings of Milk Products to 3–4 per day. A supplement is unnecessary.

In special cases, some children may need supplements if:

- their eating patterns do not include enough milk or milk products;
- they do not eat animal products (meat, milk or milk products, or eggs);

- food choices are limited by food intolerance, allergies, personal dislikes, cultural preferences or religious beliefs; and
- the drinking water is not fluoridated.

If children's preferences are the issue, you can start by looking for alternative foods that can help meet the child's nutrient needs. For example, look for other foods within the same food group. Or to better suit children's preferences, you can help them find different ways to eat foods. For example, children who don't like cooked vegetables might not mind raw carrots, vegetable soup or stews.

If you are concerned that a child is not getting the nutrients needed to grow and be healthy, suggest to the parents that they consult a professional – a registered dietitian or physician – who can assess the child's food intake and find the best way to help the child meet his or her needs.



“I think my eating is healthy, but some of my friends eat too much junk food and candy, gum and chips — and then they don't eat their lunch.”  
(Toronto child)

## Activity

**To help children make healthy food choices by using the information on food labels:**

- ★ Ask children to bring empty cereal boxes from home.
- ★ Explain that the *Food Guide* recommends that we choose whole and enriched grain products more often.
- ★ Ask the children how they can tell which cereals are whole grain and which are enriched. By looking at the name? The list of ingredients? The nutrition information panel? The claims on the box? The picture?

Hints to identify whole grains and enriched cereals:

- Look at the ingredient list. Whole grains, like whole wheat, should be near the top of the list.
- You will know that the cereal is enriched if the ingredient list includes these nutrients: iron (often listed as ferrous sulfate), niacin, riboflavin and thiamin.

★ *Using Food Labels to Choose Foods for Healthy Eating* is also a valuable teaching resource. (See page 17 to find out how to get copies.)



## ENERGY FOR GROWTH, DEVELOPMENT AND ACTIVITY

Meeting children’s energy needs for growth, development and activity is a priority for healthy eating. Both carbohydrate and fat are important sources of energy (Calories) in foods.

### EATING MORE STARCHY FOODS

The Food Guide recommends that we try to get more of our food energy from complex carbohydrates – that’s starchy food! That’s why more servings of Grain Products and Vegetables and Fruit are recommended and why legumes are promoted as a meat alternative. Foods high in complex carbohydrates include grain-based foods, vegetables and legumes. Lots of the foods that children like fall into these categories. Oatmeal, rice, breakfast cereals, bread and noodles are all favourite grain choices. Potatoes, peas, corn and sweet potato head up the list in the vegetables category. And most children like a legume whether

they or their parents know it yet or not! Baked beans, chili and pea soup are good places to start talking about legume choices.

### FAT FOR CHILDREN

The Food Guide recommends that we choose lower-fat foods more often. This applies to children as well as to adults. Learning to enjoy lower-fat milk products, leaner meats, fish and poultry, and foods prepared with less fat helps set a pattern of healthy, life-long eating. For more examples of lower- and higher-fat foods, see *Food Guide Facts: Background for Educators and Communicators* in the section **More Materials on Children and Healthy Eating** (page 17). Be sure, however, that children understand that some fat is necessary for good health. “Lower-fat foods more often” does not mean NO fat. Higher-fat nutritious foods are a concentrated energy source and can help children meet their energy needs, especially during those times when their needs are higher. When children’s energy needs are higher, you can expect them to eat more of everything, including higher-fat foods.

### RETHINKING “GOOD” FOOD, “BAD” FOOD

When asked about healthy eating, children tend to classify foods as “good” or “bad.” This good/bad split will not help children develop a positive approach toward eating.

The Food Guide avoids labelling individual foods as good or bad. It is the overall pattern of eating that is important to health. As well, many educators use the terms “everyday” foods and “sometimes” foods as a more positive alternative.

“If you don’t try different foods you won’t know if they’re good.”  
(Hull child)



## DIFFERENT CHILDREN HAVE DIFFERENT ENERGY NEEDS

Children's active lives and their growing bodies have a huge impact on their energy needs. However, meeting increasing and varying energy needs of children is not as challenging as it may seem. Here are the basics:

**1. All children are different, lead different lives and have different energy needs.** The amount of food and the number of servings children need will depend on their gender, their body size, how physically active they are and how fast they are growing.

Although children's energy needs tend to increase through to puberty, this increase is not steady. Children grow according to their own patterns. They often have growth spurts during which they get skinnier even though their appetite is increasing. Or, they will put on weight just before an increase in height. As a general rule, if children eat according to their appetites and choose foods from the four food groups, over time they will get the nourishment they need.

Girls tend to mature and stop growing earlier than boys. For this reason, girls' energy needs will tend to level off and even decrease at an age when boys' appetites will continue to increase sharply.

**2. When children are healthy and active, their appetite is the best guide to how much they should eat.** During growth spurts and periods of increased activity, children need more energy, feel hungrier and eat more. For example, at camp where they are involved in a lot of outdoor activities, children's appetite may increase drastically and then go back to normal a couple of days after the camp.

This means making food available to children when they need it! If they are famished after school, a hearty snack or an early dinner are in order. This can help children make it through after-school activities with energy and enthusiasm.

On the other hand, when children are bored or not feeling well, some will have difficulty judging whether they are hungry or full. The best approach here is not to try to control their food intake, but to address the boredom or illness.

**3. The Food Guide promotes a flexible eating pattern that meets children's needs.** That's why the Food Guide suggests a range of servings from each food group. This allows children to increase or decrease how much they eat based on their needs at any given time.

For example, girls between seven and nine years of age have about the same energy needs as adult women. They will tend to choose the lower to middle number of servings. Girls 10 to 12 and boys 7 to 12 need more energy and are more likely to eat more servings

It may seem as if the number of servings of Grain Products or Vegetables and Fruit is very high. Keep in mind, however, that the Food Guide refers to serving **sizes** that are not large. Children often have more than one serving at a time. For example, a cup of spaghetti, a bagel or a hamburger bun each count as **two** servings of Grain Products. A 250-ml juice box counts as **two** servings of Vegetables and Fruit.



## SNACKING AND DENTAL HEALTH

Snacking is an important part of healthy eating for growing children. However, children can be at risk for tooth decay if they tend to snack often and don't spend much time brushing their teeth. Here are some suggestions to promote dental health:

- Encourage nutritious snacks chosen from the food groups.
- Vary the snack menu to decrease children's exposure to snacks which are more apt to cause cavities.
- Discourage day-long nibbling and prolonged sipping of beverages containing sugars. Even nutritious snacks can cause tooth decay if children eat too often throughout the day. Up to three snacks a day is a healthy snacking pattern.

- It is always best to brush teeth after eating. When brushing is not possible, chewing sugarless gum or, at least, carefully rinsing the mouth with water can help decrease the risk of tooth decay.



### SNACK IDEAS

Children enjoy tasty, nutritious snacks they can reach for easily:

- cut-up, raw vegetables with crackers and tasty yogourt dip.
- sliced or whole fruit with cheese, yogourt or milk.
- variety of breads with cheese or peanut butter.
- ready-to-eat or hot cereals with pieces of fruit.
- plain popcorn with grated cheese and juice.
- homemade breads or muffins and milk.

## Activity

### To interest children in meal planning and preparation:

- ★ Write the names of each food group on a flipchart or a board in separate columns. Ask children to name foods they like to eat for breakfast and list them in the appropriate food group.
- ★ Using these food choices, ask them to make breakfast menus, including foods from at least 3 of the 4 food groups. If necessary, help children find other foods they like to eat for breakfast.

### Other suggestions

- ★ Ask the children if they sometimes leave home without having breakfast because they "don't have time" to eat. Ask them to list foods that could be eaten on the way to school.
- ★ Discuss with children the importance of breakfast for them: for example, to stay healthy, to be in a good mood, to feel good, to be alert.
- ★ As a group, plan a meal for a party, an outing or a sporting event:
  - Base the menu on the *Food Guide*.
  - Write the grocery list and go to the supermarket.
  - Prepare the meal together and enjoy the outcome.

## TEACH CHILDREN FOOD SAFETY

- Wash hands before handling food.
- Wash and sanitize utensils and working surfaces after handling raw foods and before handling cooked or ready-to-serve foods.
- Avoid germ growth. Don't let protein-rich foods (for instance, meat, poultry, milk products, and fish or egg dishes) stand at room temperature. One way to keep sandwiches cool until lunch time is to pack them next to a frozen drink or an ice pack.



# MAKING HEALTHY EATING EASIER

Children need healthy choices to be easy, particularly when they are learning to set patterns for healthy living. Parents, schools and communities need to work with children to create the supportive environments that will make it easier for children to make healthy choices.

## A NOTE ABOUT ALLERGIES

Children and adults alike need to be more aware and sensitive to food allergies. This means always asking about food allergies before sharing food.

The number of life-threatening reactions to food allergies is increasing. These can happen anywhere – at home, in school or recreational facilities, at camp and on field trips. Make sure your organization has a policy for handling these allergies and that you are familiar with the measures it includes.

A good resource is *Anaphylaxis: A Handbook for School Boards*. For information on obtaining a copy, see *More Materials on Children and Healthy Eating* (page 18).

Regardless of which context you find yourself in with children, a supportive environment for healthy eating needs to include:

- **consistency between messages and actions.** Healthy eating messages can be strongly reinforced through the way foods are used in the children's environments, (i.e., school lunches, classroom snacks and parties, sporting events and fundraising activities).
- **guidance and support which allows children to think for themselves.** Children between six and twelve years of age still need reasonable guidelines for what, when and where they eat. They also need to develop skills to make decisions about food, plan meals and prepare foods in an appealing manner. The balance between "licence" and "guidance" should shift as children gain experience and abilities.
- **positive role models.** Being comfortable with the way you and other people look, having a positive attitude toward healthy eating and healthy living are important influences on children you spend time with.

- **pleasant meal and snack times.** Eating is a social activity and most children enjoy eating with others more than eating alone. Be sure to allow enough time and provide a comfortable setting where children can eat without distractions or disruptions. Where distractions are inevitable, like school lunch or an outdoor lunch situation, allow children more time to finish eating.
- **access to a variety of nutritious foods.** Advocate for the availability of affordable and appealing foods from each of the four food groups of the Food Guide in vending machines, canteens and cafeterias.





---

# MORE MATERIALS ON CHILDREN AND HEALTHY EATING

---

**This publication and the materials listed below are available, free,  
from local or provincial health departments or from:**

Publications, Health Canada, Ottawa ON K1A 0K9, Tel: (613) 954-5995, Fax: (613) 941-5366

---

## CANADA'S FOOD GUIDE TO HEALTHY EATING

A colourful, illustrated 8" 1/2 x 11-inch sheet suitable for hanging on refrigerators. Illustrates the four food groups and shows the number of servings recommended from each. Helps to set healthy eating patterns by assisting with daily food selections.

---

## USING THE FOOD GUIDE

An illustrated 11-page booklet that explains the Food Guide concepts more fully, provides additional information and offers ways to use the Food Guide to support healthy eating.

---

## USING FOOD LABELS TO CHOOSE FOODS FOR HEALTHY EATING

An illustrated 8-page booklet that explains what nutrition labels mean and how to read them. It suggests ways to use the information that labels contain to shop for healthy foods.

\* Only available from Health Canada

---

## FOOD GUIDE FACTS: BACKGROUND FOR EDUCATORS AND COMMUNICATORS

A series of 11 fact sheets that provide background information for nutrition professionals, health educators, home economists and others who promote healthy eating. Explains the Food Guide in detail and covers ways to use the Food Guide to meet individual needs.

---

## CANADA'S FOOD GUIDE TO HEALTHY EATING: FOCUS ON PRESCHOOLERS

A 16-page booklet for educators and communicators that discusses healthy eating for preschool children two to five years of age.

---

## VITALITY LEADER'S KIT \*

Background information as well as tips and tools which can help adults modify their own approach to healthy living and healthy weight.

---

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON CHILDREN AND HEALTHY EATING\*

An overview report of the findings of a study that looked at Canadian children's understanding of healthy eating concepts and their views on their own eating behaviour and the factors that influence their food choices.

---

## PROMOTING HEALTHY EATING TO SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN AND YOUTH: EXAMPLES OF INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES ACROSS CANADA, 1998 \*

Offers brief, one-page summaries of innovative programs in a variety of settings and with many different goals and approaches. Includes addresses and contacts for obtaining more information about each program.

**Visit our Web site:**  
<http://hc-sc.gc.ca/nutrition>

## MORE MATERIALS ON CHILDREN AND HEALTHY EATING (CONT.)

---

### CANADA'S FOOD GUIDE TO HEALTHY EATING POSTER

A large (24" high by 36" wide), colour poster version of the Food Guide.

Cost: \$4.95 plus shipping and handling. Discount available for bulk orders.

#### **Order the Food Guide poster described above from:**

Canada Communication  
Group Publishing  
Ottawa ON K1A 0S9  
Phone: (819) 956-4802  
Fax: (819) 994-1498

---

### ANAPHYLAXIS: A HANDBOOK FOR SCHOOL BOARDS

A 58-page handbook that provides the background information required to begin developing policies for life-threatening food allergies.

#### **Order the above resource from:**

Canadian School Boards  
Association 130 Slater Street,  
Suite 350, Ottawa, ON K1P 6E2  
Phone: (613) 235-3724  
Fax: (613) 238-8434  
Internet: [www.cdnsba.org](http://www.cdnsba.org)

---

### MEDIA AWARENESS NETWORK

A World Wide Web site dedicated to media education and media issues affecting children and youth. It presents health-related teaching units and resources in the "Health Issues" section of the site.

#### **Check the Network site at:**

<http://www.schoolnet.ca/medianet>

---

### TO FIND OUT MORE

To find out more about healthy eating and available resources, contact nutritionists and dietitians through local or community health centres, public health units or provincial departments of health.

<p><b>Grain Products</b></p> <p><b>5-12</b> SERVINGS PER DAY</p>	<p><b>1 serving</b></p> <p>1 Slice Cold Cereal 30 g Hot Cereal 175 mL 3/4 cup</p> <p><b>2 servings</b></p> <p>1 Bagel, Pita or Bun Pasta or Rice 250 mL 1 cup</p>	
<p><b>Vegetables and Fruit</b></p> <p><b>5-10</b> SERVINGS PER DAY</p>	<p><b>1 serving</b></p> <p>1 Medium Size Vegetable or Fruit Fresh, Frozen or Canned Vegetables or Fruit 125 mL 1/2 cup Salad 250 mL 1 cup Juice 125 mL 1/2 cup</p>	
<p><b>Milk Products</b></p> <p><b>Servings per Day</b> Children 4-9 years: 2-3 Youth 10-16 years: 3-4 Adults: 2-4 Pregnant and Breast-feeding Women: 3-4</p>	<p><b>1 serving</b></p> <p>250 mL 1 cup 3"x1"x1" 50 g 2 Slices 50 g 175 g 3/4 cup</p>	<p><b>Other Foods</b></p> <p>Taste and enjoyment can also come from other foods and beverages that are not part of the 4 food groups. Some of these foods are higher in fat or Calories, so use these foods in moderation.</p>
<p><b>Meat and Alternatives</b></p> <p><b>2-3</b> SERVINGS PER DAY</p>	<p><b>1 serving</b></p> <p>Meat, Poultry or Fish 50-100 g Beans 125-250 mL 1/3-2/3 Can 50-100 g 1-2 Eggs 100 g 1/3 cup Peanut Butter 30 mL 2 tbsp</p>	

### Different People Need Different Amounts of Food

The amount of food you need every day from the 4 food groups and other foods depends on your age, body size, activity level, whether you are male or female and if you are pregnant or breast-feeding. That's why the Food Guide gives a lower and higher number of servings for each food group. For example, young children can choose the lower number of servings, while male teenagers can go to the higher number. Most other people can choose servings somewhere in between.



*Enjoy eating well, being active and feeling good about yourself. That's VITALITY*



Health  
Canada

Santé  
Canada

CANADA'S

# Food Guide

TO HEALTHY EATING  
FOR PEOPLE FOUR YEARS  
AND OVER

Enjoy a variety  
of foods from each  
group every day.

Choose lower-  
fat foods  
more often.



## Grain Products

Choose whole grain  
and enriched  
products more often.

## Vegetables and Fruit

Choose dark green and  
orange vegetables and  
orange fruit more often.

## Milk Products

Choose lower-fat milk  
products more often.

## Meat and Alternatives

Choose leaner meats,  
poultry and fish, as well  
as dried peas, beans  
and lentils more often.

Canada

