

INFORMATION BULLETIN
2011EDUC0068-001068
Aug. 30, 2011

Ministry of Education

Back to school tips for healthy, active students

VICTORIA - Students are more likely to succeed if they are healthy and active. With families preparing for the start of school, here are some tips to encourage healthy eating and an active lifestyle:

Parents of Primary Students:

- * Include a variety of fruits and vegetables in your children's snacks and lunches every day.
- * Have your children help you pack their lunches, so they can learn to make healthy choices early on. For some tips, check out this video:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PGkOADVkcpg>
- * Help your children learn about and understand Canada's Food Guide at:
<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php>
- * To encourage fitness take family walks with your children and, if possible, walk them to school.
- * Join or co-ordinate a Walking School Bus or Bicycle Train to help your children get to school safely with adult supervision. For tips on how to do this, check out the DASH BC website at:
http://www.dashbc.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=57&Itemid=80
- * Introduce your children to active games they can play on their own, like hopscotch or jumping rope. When more children are around, introduce tag, soccer or baseball.

Parents of Intermediate/Middle School Students:

- * Whenever possible, encourage your children to walk, ride, rollerblade or skateboard to school instead of you driving them.
- * Suggest that your children take the dog for a walk before and after school.
- * Limit your children's screen time. Explain to your children that it's important to sit less and move more in order to stay at a healthy weight.
- * As children grow, their nutritional needs change. Continue to encourage healthy eating habits using Canada's Food Guide to plan healthy meals and snacks.
- * Teach your children to limit foods high in sugar, fat and sodium, and help them learn to replace these foods with more nutritious snacks instead.

Parents of Secondary Students:

- * Encourage your teens to get plenty of rest to ensure they are alert and ready to learn at school.
- * Encourage your teenagers to get involved in after-school sports.
- * Suggest your teenagers take a class at the local community centre or encourage them to participate in a walking or hiking group.
- * Teach your children how to buy, prepare and enjoy healthy meals using Canada's Food Guide.

All Parents:

- * Encourage your children to eat breakfast every day, as it provides fuel for the brain to learn and helps them maintain a healthy weight.
- * Keep nutritious foods, like cut-up vegetables and fruit, cheese sticks, yogurt and butter-free popcorn on hand to make healthy snacking easy.
- * If your child has food allergies, co-ordinate with the school principal on an updated emergency plan that best meets your child's needs.
- * Schedule regular dental and any necessary medical checkups.
- * Encourage your children to choose milk or water at meals instead of sugary drinks or energy drinks.
- * Get children active through sports, or go for nightly family walks or bike rides.
- * Develop good hand-washing habits, as frequent hand-washing reduces the spread of cold and flu viruses.

This factsheet is available in French at:

http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/news/docs/2011/tips-health_fr.pdf

In Chinese at:

http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/news/docs/2011/tips-health_ch.pdf

In Punjabi at:

http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/news/docs/2011/tips-health_pu.pdf

Contact:

Government Communications and Public Engagement
Ministry of Education
250 356-5963

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: www.gov.bc.ca/connect