



HEALTHY SCHOOLS

Feature RECIPE



Sizzling Sweet Potato Wedges

Sweet potatoes are a tasty alternative to traditional potatoes and are a favourite among kids. What's more is that they are very high in important nutrients like vitamin A.

Ingredients:

- 2 large sweet potatoes
(with skin for a fibre boost!)
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- pinch of pepper

Directions:

1. Wash and scrub sweet potatoes well. Slice lengthwise into strips, leaving skin on (about ½ inch wide).
2. Toss with olive oil, cumin and pepper.
3. Bake in oven at 450°F in a non-stick pan for about 20 minutes or until crisp. Flip wedges over half way.
4. Enjoy as a side dish.



Food Marketing to Children

A new report on fighting childhood obesity in Ontario calls for a ban on TV, internet, and in store advertising of unhealthy drinks and snacks to kids. Children want the products they see advertised! Since about 80% of the food marketed to your child is unhealthy, it's no surprise that studies have found links between this and childhood obesity. Aggressive marketing makes it difficult for parents to encourage healthy eating. While we're waiting for government and industry action, here are some things you can do.

What Can You Do About It?

- Set a good example for your children by eating healthy yourself and keeping healthy foods like fruits and vegetables in the home.
- Limit and monitor your child's screen time to less than 2 hours a day.
- Tape favourite shows for later viewing so you can skip past the commercials.
- Teach your children about marketing tactics. Help them choose nutritional options rather than purchasing products for the items sold with the food. i.e. free toys.

For more information, read the Healthy Kids Panel report "No Time to Wait: The Healthy Kids Strategy" at www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/ministry/publications/reports/healthy_kids/healthy_kids.pdf

*Submitted by Kathy Page, Child and Youth Nutrition,
Public Health Dietitian*

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Concussions

What Every Parent Should Know

Here's a sobering thought for parents - your child could have a concussion without you ever realizing it. In fact, with most concussions, a child never loses consciousness.

It's important that parents recognize concussions and act quickly because overlooking an injury means delaying your child's recovery. With each additional concussion, your child can experience more serious long term consequences.

So how is a parent to know when to seek medical help? The following are some facts about concussions.

What is a concussion?

A concussion is an injury that impairs the brain's ability to store and use information. It often results from a direct hit to the head. Sometimes, it's the result of an indirect hit to the face or body that jars the head and bounces the brain against the skull (for example, a body check while playing hockey).

What should parents watch for?

Parents should ask their child about specific symptoms. These include headache, dizziness, nausea, blurred vision, ringing in the ears, and feeling dazed, stunned or sleepy. Sometimes a child will present as angry, sad or tired. In some children, symptoms don't show up for 24 to 48 hours. So your child should rest for a day or two after a hard hit to the head, even if they say they're okay.



What can parents ask?

Most children with a concussion will display signs of memory loss leading up to the injury. Rather than asking what time of day it is, parents should ask their children to recall specific events right before the injury (e.g., what they had for breakfast or what they were doing just before the impact).

A questionnaire called a S.C.A.T. (Sidelines Concussion Assessment Tool) can also help. Athletes can score their symptoms on a scale from zero to six. Parents can download a copy from www.thinkfirst.ca.

What should I do if my child has symptoms?

Get your child to ER right away if he can't be awakened, has convulsions, slurred speech or if he seems to be getting more confused, restless or agitated. If symptoms are more subtle, call Telehealth Ontario (1-866-797-0000) and a registered nurse will guide you

through an assessment and tell you how quickly your child should see a doctor.

What's the best treatment for concussion?

Rest, rest and more rest, both physical and mental. While your child is experiencing symptoms or if the symptoms come back, they should not:

- attend school or have a normal workload
- take any difficult tests
- participate in any physical activity such as gym class, recess and sports
- participate in any wheeled activities (e.g., biking, rollerblading, skateboarding)
- return to sports

For more information about concussions visit www.parachutecanada.org or call the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit at 519-426-6170 (Simcoe) or 905-318-5367 (Caledonia).

Submitted by Joanne Alessi, Injury Prevention Coordinator, Public Health Nurse.



Updated Immunization Records: What's in it for you?

It is the responsibility of the parent to update the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit once your child receives any immunizations from their family doctor and nurse practitioner. There is no system that automatically forwards the information to the Health Unit. So, what's in it for you? By keeping the Health Unit up-to-date, should your doctor retire, you relocate to a new area, or need a copy of your record; we would be able to supply it to you. This information may be faxed to the Health Unit at 519-426-4767, or individuals may update their immunization record online by visiting www.hnhu.org.

Submitted by: Eric Robertson, Vaccine Preventable Diseases, Public Health Nurse

What can I do to protect my daughter from HPV and cervical cancer?

As parents, we look out for our children and strive to keep them as healthy as possible. Diptheria, polio, pertussis, and tetanus are examples of infections that can be prevented through vaccination. Vaccinations are a way to keep all of us healthy.

There is a virus that some parents might not know about; it is called Human Papillomavirus (HPV). This is a virus that cannot be cured with antibiotics.

HPV can cause genital warts or even cervical cancer but can be prevented through knowledge, screening, and vaccination. The four most dangerous types of HPV can be prevented. Types 16 and 18 are responsible for 70% of cervical cancer and types 6 and 11 cause 90% of genital warts. The option to have your daughter vaccinated at school in grade 8 is available.

*Information adapted from: Healthy Schools (Fall 2012) & www.hpvinfos.ca.
Submitted by: Eric Robertson, Vaccine Preventable Diseases,
Public Health Nurse.*



Talking to Your Children about Puberty and Body Changes

If these words make you a little uneasy, keep reading. As parents, we are given many duties and tests. Sometimes we may feel that we do not have the tools to parent. Just like our children, they took baby steps before they started to run. Having open and honest talks with your child while he is young will lead to more open talking when they are teens. Having a positive self-image and knowing about puberty, healthy growth and body changes will allow your child to grow and change in a positive way. Undue stress, worry and anxiety often concern our teens and pre-teens because they wonder if they are normal. There is so much power from the media and peers, often our family values are lost. Young people see things on TV, hear things, and wonder if they are true and if that is what is expected of them. As parents, we can provide our children with information as needed.

Tips to Becoming an 'Askable' Parent

- Relax and take a deep breath. Try to talk about puberty and body changes as you would other subjects.
- Encourage questions when your child is young.
- If you do not know the answer, say so, but try to find out the information for your child. If it was important for your child to ask, it is important to find the answer.
- Take advantage of educational resources available to you - books, pamphlets, magazines and movies.
- Use teachable moments - a TV program or an article in a magazine. Let them know that you are willing to talk about the body and changes any time.
- Try to answer questions when asked. Learning is best when the child shows interest.
- Share your values about sexuality.
- Share with your child choices and

actions, which you feel are positive as well as those that you feel are negative.

- Start talking with your child about puberty and sexuality when you feel the time is right.
- Listen to your child to understand their point of view.
- Give age-appropriate information.
- Be open to talking and respond honestly and accurately when young people ask.

If you give your child correct and honest information, it can help to build a healthy teen and adult. Fear, anxiety and worry can all have an impact on mental health and stress. Talking with your child can help relieve some of the worries in a child's life. Children need to know that they can turn to their parents for information and we need to have correct information.

Submitted by Margot Fournier, Sexual Health Program, Public Health Nurse

Traveling the Road of Life with Resilience

The 'Road of Life' has many bumps, twists and turns. Resilience keeps us going on that road when we feel like giving up. A definition of resiliency is "an internal strength that helps us overcome challenges in life and bounce back stronger from experiences."

When kids are resilient they cope better, form meaningful relationships and stay hopeful. To be resilient, kids need outside supports and inner strengths. Parents and adults play an important role in building resilience.

Outside supports

Caring relationships:

- Comfort kids when they are upset. Try to understand their point of view
- Give them attention and affection. Listen to them and play with them

Kids copy what adults do. Set a good example:

- Ask others for help – everyone needs help sometimes
- Talk through problems out loud

Inner strengths

Self-control helps us deal with strong emotions, wait for what we want, and achieve our goals.

- Teach kids deep breathing to calm down and focus their attention
- Encourage them to keep trying. Show them that things they want and solutions to problems take time

Thinking skills help us look at things differently and solve problems.

- Ask for their ideas on how to solve problems



- Help them see most problems are temporary and have solutions

everyday life and find things to laugh about

Confidence helps us believe in ourselves.

- Point out their strengths and encourage small steps
- Tell them mistakes are okay and part of learning
- Offer choices. Choices help them feel in control and learn how to make decisions

Helping others and doing things that are meaningful keep us strong.

- Let kids do chores you know they can do
- Encourage kids to join school and community activities. Volunteer as a family

Best Start Resource Centre, 2012

Submitted by Leia Bulosan, Family Health Team, Public Health Nurse

Being positive helps us stay hopeful and deal with challenges.

- Help kids see the positives in a situation
- Try to help kids find good things in



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