



SPRING 2011



HEALTHY SCHOOLS

Healthier Food & Beverage Choices Coming to Your Child's School

Starting September 2011, all food and beverages sold in schools will have to meet nutrition standards set out in the new Ministry of Education's School Food & Beverage Policy.

The policy applies only to foods SOLD in schools. This includes:

- Cafeterias, vending machines, and tuck shops
- Catered lunch programs, such as pizza days
- Fundraising events held at the school, and
- School related events on school property such as sports events and dances.

The policy does not apply to food and beverages brought from home or offered in schools at no cost.

The policy's nutrition standards divide all food and beverages into three categories: Sell Most, Sell Less and Not Permitted for Sale based on nutrition content such as amounts of fat and sodium. Not Permitted for Sale items generally contain little nutrition and/or have high amounts of fat, sugar and sodium. Examples include deep fried

foods, energy drinks and candy.

If desired, the school principal with the school council can choose a maximum of ten "special event" days where the nutrition standards do not have to be followed.

For more information on where food and beverages fit and tools to help you better understand the policy check out these links:

- Resource and Reference Guides: www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/policy.html
- On-line Training Modules: healthyapandrose.com/
- Nutrition Standards Tool: healthyapandrose.com/nst
- Creating Healthy Menus Tool: healthyapandrose.com/menutool

Healthy choices offered at school help children practise what they learn about healthy eating in the classroom and help children learn better! The Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit supports the Ministry of Education's efforts to improve the health of our students and is assisting local school boards and its schools with the implementation of this policy.



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Tobacco-Free Sport and Recreation



Most parents understand the value and the importance of sports in a child's life. Parents want their children to be healthy and to have fun and do not expect their children to be exposed to harmful tobacco use at sporting events. There is no place for tobacco use in sports!

Tobacco-free sport and recreation means everyone taking part in a sporting or recreational activity does not use tobacco industry products. It means participants, spectators including parents and guardians, coaches and leaders do not smoke, snuff, dip, or chew tobacco while engaged in these activities. The benefits of a tobacco-free sport and recreation include:

- Preventing youth from starting to

use tobacco industry products: children and youth model their behaviour after the people they look up to – coaches, family, leaders, and peers.

- Giving everyone a chance to perform at their best: tobacco use counters the health benefits gained by participating in sport and recreational activities.
- Protecting the environment: cigarette butts are the main source of litter in cities and on beaches. It takes 15 years for a cigarette butt to biodegrade.
- Protecting children from second-

hand smoke: there is no safe level of exposure to second-hand smoke, even outdoors.

- Creating a tobacco-free culture: it is important for youth to receive the same tobacco-free messages at their local sport or recreation activities as they experience at school and in the wider community.
- Helping people trying to quit: the temptation to use tobacco industry products is reduced when it is restricted in public spaces.

Some sport and recreation organizations across Ontario already have put in place a Tobacco-Free Sport Policy to send a clear message that their organizations value a tobacco-free lifestyle. In Haldimand and Norfolk Counties, Simcoe and District Youth Soccer Club is the first organization to put a Tobacco-Free Policy in place. We encourage all parents to advocate for such a policy in any sport and recreation organization that their child might be

involved with. But this policy does not make municipal playing fields, parks, and playgrounds, or beaches tobacco-free all of the time. To strengthen and support tobacco-free sport and recreation policy, think about supporting tobacco-free outdoor spaces in your community by contacting your local municipal

government as well as by working with community members and local organizations who share your concerns. Advocating for tobacco-free policies reinforces being a positive role-model to help our children grow up tobacco-free as tobacco still remains the number one cause of preventable death and disease in Canada. Please visit www.playlivebetobaccofree.ca for more information or call the Health Unit at 519-426-6170 Ext. 3248.





NEW Guidelines to get Canadians moving!

In January 2011, the new Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines for children [5-11], youth [12-17], adults [18-64] and older adults [65+] were released. The guidelines say that both children and youth should get at least 60 minutes of moderate [sweating and breathing harder] to vigorous [sweating and be out of breath] physical activity daily, noting that MORE daily physical activity is even better for your health. To learn more, visit: www.csep.ca/guidelines.

Statistics Canada has a new survey that shows only 9% of boys and 4% of girls get the minimum 60 minutes of physical activity needed every day. This same study shows that boys and girls are sedentary [not moving] about 8.5 hours a day.

Think about your child's average day. How much time do they spend at school? How much time do they spend in a car or on the bus? How much time do they spend watching TV, playing video games or using the computer? It adds up fairly quickly, doesn't it?

The time to get your family moving is now!

Be a role model for your kids and teach them to be active for life. Physical activity is good for everybody's health. It also helps kids do better in school, improves self-confidence, and is a great way to have fun with friends and learn social skills.

The great outdoors is a perfect place for everyone to be active. Spending time outside allows for fresh air, learning about nature and your neighbourhood. We have trails all across Haldimand and Norfolk counties that are ideal for families on the move, whether you're walking, cycling, wheeling or rolling!

To discover trails in your area, visit: www.norfolkpathways.ca or www.haldimand-county.on.ca [search under Parks and Recreation].

References:

Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines, CSEP, January 2011.

Physical activity levels of Canadian children and youth- research article, Statistics Canada, Health Reports, Vol.22, no. 1, March 2011.

Bicycle Safety

Bicycle riding is fun, healthy and a great way to spend a sunny afternoon. But it is important to remember that a bicycle is not a toy; it's a vehicle. Research at The Hospital for Sick Children and University of Toronto has shown that provinces which have adopted mandatory bicycle helmet legislation have had a significant reduction in the number of bicycle-related head injuries in children. In 5 provinces in Canada, including Ontario, it is mandatory for children under the age of 18 to wear a helmet. The fine under the Highway Traffic Act: 104 (2.1) for failure to wear a proper helmet on a bicycle is \$60.00 plus court costs and administration fees for a total of \$75.00

Head injuries have devastating results and sometimes even minor head injuries have long-term consequences. Head injuries are the number one cause of serious injury and death to kids on wheels. In fact, Safe Kids Canada data states that 20 children age 14 and under, die each year from bicycle related injuries and about 1,800 are hospitalized. The good news is that a properly fitted, correctly worn bicycle helmet cuts the risk of serious head or brain injury by as much as 85%. It is estimated that 75% of bicycle related fatalities among children could have been prevented if they were wearing a bicycle helmet.

Bike injuries can happen anywhere, anytime. Stay Alert! Be Prepared!



Go With Your Own Glow

Protecting your children, and yourself, from too much exposure to UV rays while doing outdoor activities remains important. Applying and re-applying sunscreen, wearing protective hats, clothes, sunglasses and seeking shade when possible are still the safest steps to keep your skin safe from the sun's damage.

However, with tanned celebrities gracing the covers of magazines and appearing in TV shows and movies, many children and teens, especially adolescent girls, are deliberately exposing themselves to harmful levels of UVA and UVB radiation in an attempt to look just like their favourite star.

Tanning beds can produce UVA radiation at intensities more than 5 times higher than that of the midday sun, and young people are using them at an alarming rate. In fact, the use of tanning beds increases with age, from 7% among 14-year-old girls to 16% among 15-year-old girls to 35% among 17-year-old girls. These numbers do not reflect the other countless adolescents choosing to suntan outside



instead, where permission, cost and transportation are not an issue.

But whether visiting a tanning salon, soaking up sun at a beach, or lying out on the

deck in the backyard, this intentional UV exposure, added to the incidental sun exposure gained from regular outdoor activities, poses a serious threat.

Ultraviolet (UV) radiation and tanning beds have joined the list of Class 1 carcinogens identified by the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer. This highest cancer risk category includes a variety of substances proven to cause cancer in humans, such as plutonium and asbestos.

Sunlight exposure during childhood and adolescence results in an increased risk of melanoma compared to similar exposure at older ages. While most people diagnosed with melanoma are in their 40s and 50s, doctors are seeing more and more teenagers with such skin cancer, a disturbing trend which worries the medical community, and should concern parents as well.

We all need to work together to promote sun safety to children... and adults too. Any tan is a sign of permanent skin damage. It's not worth the risk. After all, a person's natural skin tone is the beauty nature intended.

Reminder to Parents of Grade Eight Female Students

In September, you will receive a consent form for your daughter to receive a vaccine called Gardasil®. This vaccine protects against four strains of Human Papillomavirus (HPV). Types 16 and 18 are responsible for 70% of cervical cancer and types 6 and 11 cause 90% of genital warts.

The vaccine is publicly funded and is given in a series of three needles at 0, 2 and 6 months. The antibody response is higher when given prior to exposure to HPV infection. This is the reason for giving the vaccine to girls in grade eight.

It is important to be protected against HPV because many people who have the disease may not show any signs or symptoms. This means they can pass on the virus to others and not know it.

Please read the information provided and return the signed consent for your daughter to the school as directed. If you have any questions regarding HPV and Gardasil® vaccine, please call the Health Unit and speak with a member of the Vaccine Preventable Disease Program.

