



Take Action: SCHOOL TRUSTEES

Schools are in a unique position to influence and improve nutrition among children. You are a key player on your school board and can create a culture that values healthy eating and active living.

What can YOU do to create a healthy school nutrition environment?

Get everyone on the school board informed about school nutrition.

- Put school nutrition on the school board agenda; arrange for your community nutritionist to present key facts and share success stories from other districts.
- Find out how other school districts have addressed school nutrition challenges.
- Learn about successes through stories at www.healthyeatingatschool.ca.

Develop a shared vision around school nutrition.

- Form a committee to develop a comprehensive school nutrition policy that creates and supports healthy eating environments.
- Work with your school board, school district and community nutritionist to support the use of nutritious foods or non-food items for school fundraising activities.

Support nutrition and food policy implementation.

- When preparing the annual budget, allocate sufficient funds for implementing and evaluating the school nutrition policy.
- Cost-share with your local health authority the services of a community nutritionist to work with your school district to promote awareness and provide expert guidance, including training for cafeteria staff and support in working with food and beverage vendors.
- Encourage and support professional development in nutrition and nutrition education for teachers, food service staff and school coaches.



Why are healthy eating and nutrition education important in school?

- Students who are well nourished have increased test scores, improved attendance, reduced tardiness, and better academic, behavioural and emotional functioning.¹
- Students spend more than half their day at school, so there are many opportunities to positively influence their breakfast, lunch and snack choices.
- Healthy nutrition habits reduce the need for extra staff time to deal with poor academic performance, behaviour problems or absenteeism.
- The rate of overweight students aged 12 to 17 rose to 29 percent from 14 percent over the past 25 years; this includes an increase in obesity from 3 percent to 9 percent.²
- Having a school committee in place to promote healthy eating has a positive impact on food and beverage choices.³

For more ideas and resources on school nutrition, visit:

<http://www.healthyeatingatschool.ca>

¹"Diet, breakfast and academic performance in children". Annals of Nutrition and Metabolism, Kleinman RE, Hall S, Green H, Korzec-Ramirez D, Patton K, Pagano ME and Murphy JM, 46 Supp 1: 24-30, 2002.

²"Canadian Community Health Survey: Obesity among children and adults", 2004.

³"School Food Sales and Policies Provincial Report II". BC Ministry of Education and BC Ministry of Health, 2007.