Take Action: TEACHERS

Eating well is a behaviour that can be learned and acquired through education, social supports and services in schools. As a teacher, you have the ability to positively impact your students’ choices.

Did you know?

• Students who are well nourished have increased test scores, improved attendance, reduced tardiness, and better academic, behavioural and emotional functioning.¹

• Sweetened drink consumption is linked to increased rates of obesity in youth.²

• More BC youth are overweight and obese than a decade ago—29 percent and 9 percent respectively.³

• Seven out of 10 children aged 4 to 8 do not meet the five-serving minimum for Vegetable and Fruit. At ages 9 to 13, the figures are 62% for girls and 68% for boys.⁴

• Only 17 percent of children eat a lunch that includes choices from all four food groups in Canada's Food Guide.⁵

• More than 25 percent of students’ calories come from foods of low nutrient value—pop, sweets and salty snacks.⁶

• Almost half of Grade 10 girls in BC indicate they are on a diet or think they need to lose weight, according to a McCrery Centre Society report.⁷

What can YOU do to support healthy eating at school?

Teach your students how to eat well and be physically active.

• Get a group of teachers together to attend a nutrition workshop as part of your professional development.

• Choose nutrition education programs that give your students the opportunity to practice what they learn. Make the lessons hands-on and fun by providing tasting opportunities.

HealthyEatingAtSchool.ca
• Link nutrition with physical activity by including exercise breaks throughout the day from *Action Schools! BC* ([www.actionschoolsbc.ca](http://www.actionschoolsbc.ca)) or starting a lunchtime walking club.

• Use the *Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Learning Resources* to support students in all grades (K-10) gain the knowledge and skills to make healthier choices and develop a life-long healthy lifestyle.

• Discuss with your Home Economics students about the value and benefits of the 2007 *Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in BC Schools* and why they were developed.

**Make the healthy choice the easy choice.**

• Share a list of healthy food and beverage choices with students, parents and staff. Start with basic ideas and adapt them according to the various cultures represented in the school.

• Use this list to select foods offered at parties, celebrations, sports events, social events, special lunch days and on field trips.

• Encourage parents to refer to the list when preparing their children's lunches and snacks.

**Model healthy eating behaviours.**

• Be a good role model—eat healthy foods. Your students are watching!

• Instead of food, use non-food items such as stickers or privileges as a classroom reward.

For more resources and facts on school nutrition, visit: [www.HealthyEatingAtSchool.ca](http://www.HealthyEatingAtSchool.ca)