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*A healthier future for all.*

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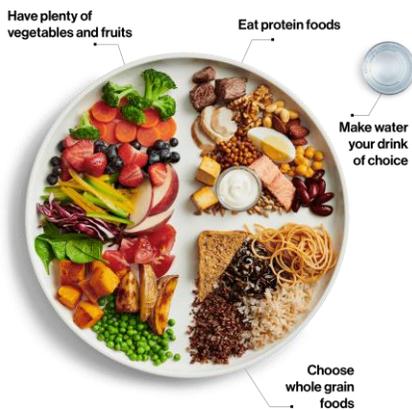
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## Canada's New Food Guide

### Hey Parents!

**Healthy eating is more than the food you eat, it is about when, where, why and how you eat!**

Here are the three main changes to the food guide:



- “Protein Foods” have been established as a new food group to combine foods from the meat and alternatives and the milk and alternatives food group. Protein Foods include nuts, seeds, tofu, legumes, meat, milk products, eggs, and fish
- Water is the drink of choice, though plain milk and unsweetened plant-based beverages, such as fortified, unflavoured soy milk, are also considered healthy choices
- Prescriptive food guide servings have been removed; instead the guide uses the plate method to show how much of each food group should be included in our diets

The main goals of the new guide are to help Canadian families:

1. Decrease their intake of highly processed foods and sugar-sweetened beverages
2. Increase their intake of vegetables, fruit, whole grains and plant-based protein foods
3. Cook more often, eat with others, and enjoy their food!

Don't delay - start exploring [Canada's Food Guide](#) today. And remember to take the time preparing and eating meals with your children. Everyone will be healthier for it!

For more information and resources visit the Grey Bruce Health Unit's [Resources for Parents](#) section. This material is provided by Grey Bruce Health Unit.

## More fruits and veggies please

Most Grey Bruce children aren't getting the vegetables and fruits they need for growing and learning their best. Whole vegetables and fruits provide a variety of nutrients like vitamins, minerals, and fibre. Choose whole vegetables and fruits instead of sugary options like juices and fruit leathers.

### How to help your child eat more fruit and vegetables:

- Include fruit at breakfast; try adding a half cup of banana slices or berries to cereal
- Include fruit and vegetables in lunch bags daily
- Keep washed fruit and vegetable sticks ready where children can easily reach them
- Serve a [healthy snack](#) after school that includes a fruit or vegetable; try serving fresh fruit slices with cheese or yogurt
- Set a good example by eating a variety of vegetables and fruit yourself



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## Be food safe when packing lunches

Keep children safe by using these four simple food safety steps when preparing and packing lunches and snacks:

- **Clean:** Wash your hands before preparing food. Wash all fruits and vegetables (even those that are pre-washed and those with skins or rinds) under cool running water. Wash lunch bags and storage containers every day.
- **Chill:** Use an insulated lunch bag with ice packs to ensure that food is kept cold at 4°C (40°F) or below. Refrigerate foods prepared ahead of time until you are ready to pack lunch.
- **Cook:** Use an insulated thermal container to keep lunches hot at 60°C (140°F) or above. Bring soups to a rolling boil and stir prior to packing them in a thermal container.
- **Separate:** Store lunches in the fridge above and away from raw meat, poultry and/or seafood. Throw out any hazardous foods (such as cheese, sandwiches and yogurt) that come home in your child's lunch bag.



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## Reward kids without using food

Rewarding kids with foods has become part of the culture in raising children. Food rewards are often used to recognize children for success in the classroom and at home. Using food to recognize a child's hard work, success or good behaviour sends a negative message to kids and can create an unhealthy relationship with food. Often these 'treats' promote a preference for 'junk' food over healthy food, they may promote emotional eating, or teach kids to eat when they're not hungry.

Try the following suggestions to reward children:

- Verbal praise; more than saying 'great job,' offer specific praise and compliment children for their efforts.
- Offer non-food items such as stickers, pencils, bookmarks, balls and hacky sacks
- Offer extra privileges such as an extra story at bedtime or extra playtime



For information about healthy eating behaviours visit the [Nutrition section](#) of [PLAY Bruce Grey](#).

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## Battle of the beverages

Did you know that one can of pop contains nine teaspoons of sugar and a 'fruit drink' bottle can contain 18 teaspoons of sugar? Even a small container of chocolate milk has six teaspoons of sugar.

### **Canada's Food Guide recommends water as the drink of choice.**

To help kids quench their thirst and keep them hydrated all day long, send water to school in a reusable bottle. Adding ice cubes to a reusable bottle can help keep water cold throughout the day.

Beverages like pop, fruit drinks, sports drinks and even 100 percent fruit juice and chocolate or flavoured milks often replace healthier drinks, such as water and unsweetened milk. This can result in the development of unhealthy habits at school and at home.

For more information on healthy hydration visit PLAY Bruce Grey's [Nutrition – Hydration Resources](#)

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## Halloween candy – a sticky topic

Ever wonder how to help children manage Halloween treats? Provide structure using the following guidelines:

- Offer a healthy meal before heading out for trick or treating adventures
  - After trick-or-treating, let your children empty their candy bag, sort it and eat as much candy as they want. Let them do the same the next day
    - On the third day, have them put the candy away and only allow a couple of pieces to be eaten during meals and/or snacks
    - Schedule meals and snacks at regular times. Keep the routine of letting your child have Halloween candy only at these times; this prevents candy from spoiling your child's appetite
    - Offer a variety of protein foods, whole grains, fruit and vegetables at each meal and snack
- Remember Halloween is more than candy, focus on fun family activities like pumpkin carving and creative costume making instead.



*Adapted from Your Child's Weight: Helping without Harming Birth through Adolescence. Ellyn Satter, 2005*

For more information and resources visit the Grey Bruce Health Unit's [Resources for Parents](#).

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## Positive role modelling

A healthy body image can contribute to higher self-esteem and often leads to making healthier and more positive life choices. Help your child develop a positive body image by creating an environment that supports behaviours focused on health, not weight.

**Be a positive role model.** Enjoy being active and eating balanced meals together as a family. Take care of your body and practice self- acceptance. Identify unrealistic and unhealthy media images.

**Discourage teasing or bullying.** Be aware of the messages you send about your own body and the comments you make about the appearance of others. Teach children to treat themselves and others with respect at all times.

**Encourage kids to focus on their abilities rather than their appearance.** Help them discover the things they are good at. Explore new activities together and be open to learning new skills. Celebrate that bodies come in all shapes and sizes. Have fun!

*Adapted from A Tool for Every Parent and A Tool for Everyone Working with Children and Youth. Southwest Public Health, 2016*

For information about healthy eating behaviours visit [PLAY Bruce Grey](#) Resources [Nutrition](#) section.

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## What's in your child's lunch?

All parents want their child to eat well, but packing healthy lunches can be a challenge. Here are some ideas to make lunches a little less stressful:

- Keep a list of healthy lunch and snack ideas
- Involve your children in planning their lunches; let them pick their fruits and vegetables
- Pack fruits or vegetables for at least one snack
- Soup, leftovers, rice or pasta dishes can be heated in the morning and stored in pre-heated thermal containers
- Send a reusable water bottle



Children will not always eat their entire lunch. Be sure to offer other healthy meals and snacks throughout the day. Check out [School Lunch Your Kids Will Much](#) for more ideas.

For more information and resources visit the Grey Bruce Health Unit's [Resources for Parents](#).

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## Make the healthy choice the easy choice

Since 2011, Ontario schools have been required to follow the Ontario School Food and Beverage Policy (PPM 150). Some schools are taking extra steps to ensure that students are able to make healthier choices. For example, they are:

- Offering healthier food and beverages for classroom celebrations and school events
- Using non-food rewards and fundraisers
- Ensure teachers and volunteers role model healthy eating
- Planning school-wide events with the help of students to promote healthy lunches, snacks and breakfasts throughout the year
- Providing healthier breakfast, snack or lunch choices based on provincial guidelines through [Student Nutrition Ontario](#) programs



For information about supporting a healthy school food environment, visit Grey Bruce Health Unit's [Resources for Educators](#)

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## Get your family on the road to healthy eating



The food children eat influences their growth and development, health and learning ability. In today's society, diets full of processed foods that are high in fat, sugar, and salt are much too common and can lead to chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes and heart disease. Help get your family on the road to healthy eating:

- Pack a healthy lunch that includes all three food groups from [Canada's Food Guide](#)
- Be sure that snacks include two of the three food groups
- Limit processed and individually packaged snack items
- Keep healthy, ready-to-eat foods (such as cut up fruit, vegetables, yogurt, nuts, cheese) on hand for after school or bedtime snacks
- Include your children in planning meals and packing their lunches
- Teach your children to cook, giving them skills to make healthier choices later in life
- Eat together as a family as often as you can

For more information and resources visit the Grey Bruce Health Unit's [Resources for Parents](#).

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## How can I get my child to eat breakfast?

Do you rush out the door for work with only a coffee in hand? Children learn by watching their parents! Set a good example by giving yourself a few extra minutes in the morning to enjoy a healthy breakfast with your family. Here are some tips to make breakfasts quick and easy:



- Make pancakes or waffles ahead of time and freeze them. This way you can quickly take them out of the freezer, pop them in the toaster and serve them with some fruit and milk
- Boil and peel several eggs or make a few omelets one evening. Store them in the fridge. Serve them with toast and fruit
- Make a wrap by spreading peanut butter on a whole wheat pita or tortilla and wrapping the pita or tortilla around a banana
- Make a quick breakfast smoothie with milk, yogurt, whole oats, frozen berries and a banana
- Enjoy a high-fibre cereal with milk and sliced fruit
- Overnight oats with nuts, seeds, fruits, and spices can save time in the morning and let you be creative with a variety of flavour combinations

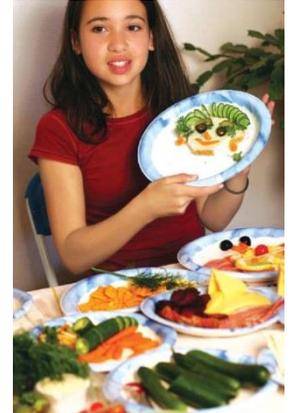
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## Healthy classroom celebrations

Celebrating special events such as birthdays, holidays or special occasions in the classroom can be a lot of fun for kids. Often the food served at these celebrations does not align with the nutrition messages that children learn about in class. If you are sending food for classroom celebrations, try some of these healthier ideas, remembering to keep allergy restrictions in mind:

- Fresh fruit kabobs
- Whole grain crackers and cheese cubes
- Fresh orange wedges or watermelon slices
- Yogurt and nut-free granola for 'make your own parfaits'
- Fresh vegetable stick skeleton with "brain" dip (great for Halloween parties)
- [Healthy fundraiser ideas](#) - Grey Bruce Health Unit's Eating Well resources
- Consider non-food treats as well, such as pencils and erasers, playdough, bouncy balls, yo-yos or skipping ropes



[Priority Food Allergens](#) – Health Canada lists certain foods as “priority food allergens”, these foods are associated with 90% of allergic reactions in Canada. Make sure that a list of ingredients is sent for any food sent to school for sharing. Wash all surfaces and cooking tools well before preparing school snacks to prevent cross-contamination with priority allergens.

For more information and resources visit the Grey Bruce Health Unit's [Resources for Parents](#).

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