



**BC Healthy Living Alliance**  
working together to promote wellness and prevent chronic disease

MARCH 2009

# Healthy Eating Strategy

Every move is a good move.



ActNowBC

An initiative of these BC Healthy Living Alliance members



Canadian Cancer Society  
BRITISH COLUMBIA AND YUKON



Dietitians of Canada  
Les diététistes du Canada



HEART & STROKE  
FOUNDATION  
OF BC & YUKON  
Finding answers. For life.



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BRITISH  
COLUMBIA  
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## Improving the Health of British Columbians

The Healthy Eating Strategy is moving into its second year of implementation. Innovative initiatives are reaching BC families “where they live, work, play and learn.”

### Our Shared Experiences and Benefits

The Healthy Eating Initiatives meet to share information and resources, and to build upon each other’s successes while reducing duplication of efforts.

Initiatives strategize to maximize opportunities for synergy, to strengthen results, and to enhance healthy eating for active living for all British Columbians.

### Our Desired Outcomes

- To build skills and knowledge that lead to greater consumption of vegetables and fruit
- To improve access to vegetables and fruits for all British Columbians
- To decrease access to, and consumption of, unhealthy foods and beverages.

### Our Tools and Resources

Many tools and resources have been developed by each of the Healthy Eating Initiatives to support the achievement of desired outcomes and these are outlined in this update.

### Our Success Stories

We are also pleased to share with you some of our stories that reflect the benefits of the work being done by the Healthy Eating Initiatives for individuals, families and communities across BC.

# 2010

The Healthy Eating Strategy is one of four strategies supported by the BC Healthy Living Alliance (BCHLA) and funded by ActNow BC. BC Healthy Living Alliance is a group of organizations working collaboratively to support British Columbians to eat healthier, get active and live tobacco free.

### Together we are striving to achieve these targets:

- **7 out of 10 British Columbians will eat at least 5 servings of vegetables and fruit a day**
- **7 out of 10 British Columbians will be physically active**
- **7 out of 10 British Columbians will be at a healthy weight**
- **9 out of 10 British Columbians will not smoke**

## Supporting Implementation of the *Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in BC Schools*

**WWW** [www.healthyeatingatschool.ca](http://www.healthyeatingatschool.ca) / [www.brandnamefoodlist.ca](http://www.brandnamefoodlist.ca)

ORGANIZATION LEAD: **Dietitians of Canada, BC Region**

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**Dietitians of Canada**  
**Les diététistes du Canada**

### RESOURCES

- **Expanded *Dial-a-Dietitian* services** support school communities and their vendors with an average of 80 calls per month. Private food and beverage vendors are the largest user of these services at 25%. Other major users are parents (14%), food service staff (11%), health professionals (14%) and education staff (12%).
- **Brand Name Food List** has over 3000 foods and beverages helping schools identify healthy choices for vending machines, school stores, cafeterias and fundraising events. There are 5155 registered users – a 59% increase from June to December 2008. The largest users are parents and Parent Advisory Councils (26%), school and school district staff (19%) and health professionals (14%).
- **Tips and Recipes for School Food Services: Meeting the Guidelines for Food and Beverages Sold in BC Schools** (draft) was released in October, 2008 with a call for feedback and recipes from chef instructors, food service staff and home economics teachers. The final version will be released in spring 2009. Access the draft at [www.healthyeatingatschool.ca](http://www.healthyeatingatschool.ca).
- **Bake Better Bites** is a popular resource for parents, community volunteers, school staff and students to use when preparing baked goods for sale to students. Available at [www.healthyeatingatschool.ca](http://www.healthyeatingatschool.ca).

### DID YOU KNOW?

- 59 out of the 60 school districts have accessed our services (98%).
- 43 out of 60 school districts have assigned a staff representative to liaise with our initiative (72%).
- “One-stop shopping” for easy access to healthy eating resources has been facilitated by:
  - Collaborating with the Directorate of Agencies for School Health (DASH BC) on professional development
  - Placing all resources, success stories, and school nutrition newsletter articles from Health Authority community nutritionists on the Healthy Eating at School website ([www.healthyeatingatschool.ca](http://www.healthyeatingatschool.ca)).



## Our Common Messages

- ✓ Eat vegetables and fruits more often
- ✓ Stay active and eat healthy
- ✓ Buy local food and in season
- ✓ Limit fat, trans fat, sugar and salt
- ✓ Water is always a great choice

# Success Stories

The Healthy Eating Initiatives are all undertaking evaluations to identify key outcomes. Preliminary results are best demonstrated through success stories. We are pleased to present a number of stories from each of the Healthy Eating Initiatives.

## Supporting Implementation of the *Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in BC Schools*

### VERNON SECONDARY SCHOOL

#### Simple Recipe Modifications and Online Brand Name Food List Key to Successful Changes

Using the KISS principle to “Keep It Short and Simple” is how the Chef instructor at Vernon Secondary School made changes to the cafeteria menu. “I left the many healthy choices on the menu untouched and focused on improving the most obvious offenders, by finding healthier choices or modifying recipes. For example:

- cheese buns are made with whole wheat flour and a lower fat cheese blend
- chicken Caesar wraps are made with meat from skinless baked chicken thighs, brown rice, and lettuce, seasoned with herbs and light Caesar dressing
- the bacon burger is now a mushroom burger.”



### MAPLE RIDGE SECONDARY

#### “Healthier eating is coming to you”

The School District Nutrition Committee took the time to learn about the Guidelines and then began to get the message out through various means (newsletter, website, providing vegetables and fruit platters at School Parent Advisory Committee meetings) that “healthier eating is coming to you.” They brought together a variety of people – administrators, teachers, parents, community nutritionists, students etc. and the district supported a number of key actions:

- Purchase of a “Recipe Manager” – a nutrient analysis program to support the analysis of in-house recipes.
- Purchase of an oven which allows baking versus deep frying.

Maple Ridge Secondary also introduced preferential pricing in the cafeteria and vending machines and cafeteria profits increased. While removing chocolate from the school store met with resistance, teachers report that they see students bringing healthier foods and beverages to class. And the overall rewards are great...Healthier students learn better!

### TUC IL NUIT ELEMENTARY (Okanagan Similkameen School District)

#### Limiting the Sale of Foods Traditionally Used in Fundraising

We formed a Healthy School Committee. One of the first decisions the Committee made was that we wanted to limit the sales of items like cupcakes, chocolates, etc. We did classroom presentations and talked to staff and parents. We basically made the decision that there would be no sale of junk food items in the school. We brainstormed with students and parents and came up with new ideas as alternatives to our traditional fundraising. For example:

- We replaced a “cake walk” with a “stuffy (stuffed animals) walk” loved by the younger kids.
- The chocolates at Christmas time were replaced with special pencils.
- We had a walkathon rather than selling chocolates.
- Parents talked to local businesses, from which they often solicit goods to sell, and suggested businesses give a donation instead.
- We offered veggie packs at lunch.

Our key to success was communication – parents talking to parents, staff talking to parents, students talking to each other, staff talking to students and communicating with the community.



# Success

Stories

## Food Skills for Families

“Wow I learned something new tonight – who knew that vanilla milkshakes had that much sugar and fat in them? Yikes, I always thought of them as a healthy alternative to pop or juice for the kids.”

Session 4 of the Food Skills for Families Program (Planning Healthy Meals, Snacks and Beverages) was an epiphany for one participant who is parenting several children. As a diabetic she was already conscious about her own sugar intake as well as her children's, but did not realize, until the demonstration at the course, the amount of sugar contained in most drinks. She said she was “blown away” as she normally allowed vanilla shakes when eating out thinking that her kids were getting something healthy from the milk. When she saw that a small milkshake made with “modified milk products” contains 17 teaspoons of sugar and 540 calories, she quickly made a change for both herself and her kids! She now makes homemade milkshakes as a special treat using low fat milk, yogurt and ice as an alternative.

“Since taking the Food Skills for Families program, we are eating more from ‘scratch’ than ever before – like salad dressing, something I always wanted to try making but never did. That’s all we use now and we love the dressings from the Food Skills for Families sessions!”

This was a comment from a mother who now knows what she is putting on her salad and who is especially happy to learn how to make her own salad dressing during the summer when everything tastes best and is at its freshest!



“Since the Food Skills for Families program, cobbler with whole wheat is now one of our favourite family treats.”

This family loved cobbler as a dessert and were very glad to be able to change their recipe to make a healthier choice – and loved it! The mother said that the Food Skills for Families program has helped her and her family – “we are making more healthy food choices and we feel better.”

Food Skills for New Immigrants Pilot



“My family and I are now eating more fruits and vegetables from Canada which I didn't know about before I took the program. My kids really enjoy them and I know more ways to prepare foods that are healthy now.”

This new immigrant mother enjoyed her experience at the Food Skills for Families program learning about fruits, vegetables, cooking methods and modifying recipes to be healthier. She saw her children enjoy new foods each week she tried the Food Skills for Families recipes at home.

# Success

## Stories

### Farm to School Salad Bar

#### Many Hands Sowing Seeds to Bring Local Produce to BC Schools

Pouring rain on the morning of November 4th, failed to dampen spirits during the official launch of the Farm to School Salad Bar Initiative! Shoes muddied and hair dripping, a small group gathered in a sunflower field on an organic farm in the Okanagan beneath umbrellas shared with television reporters from CHBC TV News. They listened intently as Thomas Tumbach shared his passion for farming and his vision for the Farm to School Salad Bar Initiative.

Appreciation for the people in the South Okanagan and their identity with their food and their land grew as the group of children, elders and guests headed to SenPokChin School to participate in a celebration of drumming, song, story telling, and the sampling of traditional foods. Each speaker underscored the importance of food and its central role in community, culture, learning, and child health.



Photo: Sen Pok Chin Elementary School, Oliver, BC

#### SOWING THE SEEDS

At each event the Public Health Association of BC presented a basket of gardening tools and seeds to students. There were 12 lbs of heritage pea seeds distributed in all. Prince George organic farmer Yvonna Breed is delighted to know that her Early Frosty Peas will bloom from Fernie to Fort St. John with the help of so many hands – from teachers to teens.



Photo: Oliver Elementary School, Oliver, BC

#### ONE SCHOOL'S VISION: "A CARROT WITHIN ARMS REACH"

**Farm to School Salad Bar is taking root. In urban, rural, and remote communities both on reserve and off – hundreds of BC school children are lining up to get their greens.**

**Is it possible?** We believe so! In 1923, Robert Woodruff, president of Coca-cola company, had a dream. He envisioned that Coca-cola could be placed "within arms reach of desire." If the pop industry can make a concoction of caffeinated brown syrup and carbonated water, desirable to millions world-wide, just imagine the craving that can be created for a sweet crispy carrot straight from the farm.

**Why the carrot?** Although the grand vision is to ensure that any child, in any school, in any community has access to a whole garden of fresh local foods – we recognize this is a tall order. We need to start somewhere, and the carrot is a simple first step! The carrot is accessible – this orange-fleshed root vegetable can be found on farms in almost every community in British Columbia. Straight, crooked, long, or short, each carrot packs a nutritious punch. They are high in fiber, vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin K, potassium, thiamin, niacin, vitamin B6, folate and manganese. At pennies per pound a carrot as part of salad bar lunch makes solid health sense.

# Success

## Stories

### Healthy Food and Beverage Sales in Recreational Facilities and Local Government Buildings

#### SIMPCW FIRST NATION: TRADITIONAL WISDOM WITH HEALTHY FOOD AND BEVERAGE PLANNING

More than 300 members of the Simpcw First Nation make their home in the small reserve community of ChuChua.

The Simpcw partnered with BCRPA to make healthier food and beverage choices available at the Band Office Complex. We hired a project coordinator; ensured tools were culturally relevant; and engaged in a summer-long awareness campaign. We sponsored a free lunch with a dietitian. "Every interaction allowed us to promote access to nutritional foods and to gather community input as we began to draft a Healthy Food and Beverage Policy."

Our awareness campaign culminated with a successful day-long celebration of culture and activities where we showcased the draft policy, "A Recommended Healthy Food and Beverage Policy", which has been supported by the Chief and Council of the Simpcw First Nation.

For more details on the Simpcw experience and their policy, see *Recreation and Parks BC Magazine*, Winter 2009.



#### KELOWNA CITY CONCESSIONS GET A NUTRITION FACE LIFT

In a joint initiative between the City of Kelowna and the BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA), City Council has approved a five-year strategy and a Healthy Food and Beverage Sales Implementation Plan for Recreation and Parks covering concession stands and vending machines. Kelowna plans to invest \$250,000 over the five years. It has conducted community consultation with facility users and concession operators.

There are a number of key components to the plan:

- Improvement to selected concessions in sport and recreational facilities.
- Changes to packaged and prepared food products to reflect healthier choices, e.g., removing deep fryers from facilities; tasty, trendy 'fries' that are baked.
- Expansion of vending machines providing healthy packaged food products.
- A comprehensive awareness campaign so that people are aware of new options and choices available in the concessions.
- Ongoing consulting with the public.

Public feedback has been very favourable. Parents have expressed relief at having nutritious food items available for their family. They point out the value of being able to rely on the City Concession to provide an alternative to rushing home to prepare a healthy meal.

### Sip Smart! BC

#### FROM SPORT DRINKS TO POP TO FRUIT "PUNCH", SUGAR SWEETENED DRINKS ARE EVERYWHERE!

Children, parents and teachers are becoming more aware of the sugar content of their drinks



#### Teachers are reporting:

- "Children are comparing drinks in their lunches...especially trying to figure out if their juice box is real juice or blends."
- "Students are engaging in the Sip Smart! BC activities."
- "Students like to test their parents' knowledge e.g., counting the number of sugar cubes in drinks."

#### Parents are reporting:

- "My child was very excited to tell me how much sugar was in her juice box!"
- "I learned about sugar in drinks."

#### Students are reporting:

- "I watched my dad drink a bottle of pop and then told him that there were 17 sugar cubes in it. He stopped drinking it."
- "Juice isn't always healthy."
- "It takes 20 minutes to get rid of sugar on your teeth."
- "Ingredients in drinks aren't always what they seem to be."
- "It is not [a good idea] to drink pop or energy drinks."



Poster Artists: Coco and Kaitlin  
John Knox Christian School, Burnaby, BC

## Healthy Food and Beverage Sales in Recreational Facilities and Local Government Buildings

WWW [www.stayactiveeathealthy.ca](http://www.stayactiveeathealthy.ca)

ORGANIZATION CO-LEADS: **BC Recreation and Parks Association** and **Union of BC Municipalities**

Provincial Coordinator: Anna Kirbyson

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### RESOURCES

A number of tools and resources have been developed to support communities as they transition to healthier choices in their buildings and facilities:

- **Resource kit** for industry.
- **Promising Practices Resource** – available in video, podcasts and newsletter format. These highlight promising practices identified by communities that participated in Phase 1 to inspire and inform others.
- **Training centre** – made up of eight short videos which take you through the steps of planning, implementing and evaluating your healthy choices project, including how to audit vending machines.
- **Point of Purchase marketing materials** – ensure consumer awareness of the health benefits from making a healthy choice when selecting a food or beverage product for sale.
- **Site Facility managers' information and resources** – provide tools and support to become a healthy choice facility and to encourage a business and planning partnership with suppliers.

The full range of information, tools and resources for industry, site facility managers and consumers is available on the Stay Active Eat Healthy website: [www.stayactiveeathealthy.ca](http://www.stayactiveeathealthy.ca).

### DID YOU KNOW?

- Phase 1 has been successfully completed with 9 demonstration projects, including one First Nation, receiving support and funding to plan and implement healthy food and beverage sales in their facilities and buildings in their communities. Learnings have been documented and are being shared through resources and mentoring.
- 5 First Nations communities and 17 municipalities and regional districts received planning grants at part of Phase 2 of the program.
- Healthy Choices Pavilion at Grocery Showcase West will be promoting the Healthy Food and Beverage Sales Guidelines to industry and will be identifying BC produced products that meet the Guidelines.

## Farm to School Salad Bar

WWW [www.phabc.org/farmtoschool](http://www.phabc.org/farmtoschool)

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### RESOURCES

- **Farm to School Salad Bar website** – [www.phabc.org/farmtoschool](http://www.phabc.org/farmtoschool).
- **Promotional package** – includes a brochure, a rack card, a set of book marks, and a package of organic heritage peas.
- **BC Farm to School Salad Bar Guide** – in development and expected to be completed by this summer.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- 16 schools, supported by 24 farms in communities from Chetwynd to Crawford Bay have launched a Farm to School Salad Bar Program.
- In this program schools pair up with farms to bring fresh, locally-grown, nutritious, safe and culturally appropriate food directly to BC kids.

- More than 3000 children have an opportunity to feast at least twice per week from a salad bar of farm fresh food. From parsnips to peas kids find foods that please!
- While children are expected to pay an average of \$3.00/meal, all schools have found ways to ensure that the program is available to all children, regardless of means.
- There is strong community engagement – parents, teachers, students, farmers, health professionals, community food security leads, media, politicians and others are all stepping up to the table.

*"The local produce was so tasty that students were drawn to the Farm to School Salad bar program. The taste won over the student."* Rick Miller, Principal  
Mountview Elementary School, Williams Lake, BC

## Food Skills for Families

**WWW** DASH BC – [www.dashbc.org](http://www.dashbc.org), click Programs  
Fresh Choice Kitchens – [www.communitykitchens.ca/main/?en&FSFF](http://www.communitykitchens.ca/main/?en&FSFF)

ORGANIZATION LEAD: **Canadian Diabetes Association**

Project Manager: Mary Clifford

Phone: 604.732.1331 ext. 243



### RESOURCES

All resources will be printed twice in 2009. The first editions will be printed in February 2009 and then after a feedback cycle from programs, the resources will be revised and reprinted in the summer of 2009.

- **Facilitator's Manuals** – one for each of the following target groups: Aboriginal, New Immigrant, Punjabi families and families on a Smart Budget. These Manuals have a full curriculum complete with recipes, learning themes and objectives, teaching tools, resources and information for delivery to the specific target group.
- **Participant Handbooks** – one for each of the following target groups: Aboriginal, New immigrant, Punjabi families and families on a Smart Budget. These Handbooks include all the recipes and material discussed in the sessions and useful tools for adapting recipes, healthier eating, healthy eating strategies for children, food safety, and nutritional information laid out in a very user friendly, accessible manner.
- **Punjabi Participant Handbook** – will be available in both English and Punjabi for participants to choose.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- Food Skills for Families is helping BC's most vulnerable families – low income, Aboriginal, New Immigrant and Punjabi learn to select and prepare healthy foods.
- Successful completion of Phase One Food Skills for Families programs ended in December 2008 with 26 programs across BC delivered through host agencies – community organizations and schools with kitchen facilities.
- Trained Community Facilitators are available in all regions of the province. A total of 68 are trained to date with training for another 24 set for 2009.
- 55 programs are beginning in Phase Two from January – March 2009.
- More programs are being identified for subsequent phases: April – June 2009; October – December 2009, January – March 2010.
- Partnerships outside of the BCHLA funding have been secured including Alexis Creek and Lillooet First Nations, the First Nations Health Council (various communities trained) and Vancouver Island Health Authority's Integrated Health Network (with the T'Sou-ke Nation and three communities).
- A specific rural and remote strategy will be implemented.

## Sip Smart! BC

**WWW** [www.bcpeds.ca](http://www.bcpeds.ca)

ORGANIZATION CO-LEADS: **BC Pediatric Society**  
and **Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC and Yukon**

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### RESOURCES

Resources will be finalized after delivery of the program has been completed. They will be available summer 2009 from Heart and Stroke Foundation and/or Action Schools! BC, and on the internet.

- **Sip Smart! BC Teacher Resource Guide** – a binder of materials closely linked to Learning Outcomes for Career and Health Education, Grades 4, 5, and 6. Binder includes 10 colour beverage cut-outs with nutrition information, and posters: *How Much Sugar is in Your Drink?* and *What Size is Your Drink?*
- **Sip Smart! BC information sheet** – healthy drink information for parents and caregivers to be available (in 10 languages) on the internet.
- **Sip Smart! BC information booklet** – 24 pages of information and tips for families to help their child(ren) make healthy drink choices. To be available in print in English and on the internet in Punjabi and Chinese.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- The Sugar-Sweetened Beverage (SSB) project provides Grades 4-6 teachers in BC with a learning module that will educate the students, their parents and teachers on the health risks associated with sugary drinks, and assist in steering students towards healthier drink options.
- Following a spring 2008 pilot and subsequent revisions, a team of 23 facilitators delivered 114 classes in the Fall 2008, and another 95 classes are scheduled for Spring 2009. Twenty of the fall classes participated in an outcomes study.
- In April, ten teachers in the field will pilot a Sip Smart! BC Teacher Resource Guide that will be available to teachers by September 2009.
- By May 2009, the facilitated program will have been delivered in more than 25 communities to more than 230 classrooms, involving well over 6000 students.