

Healthy Habits

Healthy Habits

Facilitator Guide

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Healthy Habits Facilitator Guide

A habit is a routine that is repeated so often it becomes a daily routine. A healthy habit creates the feeling of wellness in the body, mind, and spirit. Healthy habits help children grow up happy and healthy. Children watch and learn healthy habits from the adults in their lives, such as parents, caregivers, program staff, and healthcare professionals. To help children develop healthy habits, it is important for the adults in children’s lives to practice healthy habits.

This facilitator’s guide provides strategies and activities to help frontline staff use the Healthy Habits resources with parents and caregivers. Activities are also provided that help teach healthy habits to children. These activities can be introduced both within programs and within the home environment.

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Lesson: What healthy habits do you want your child to have?

Objectives

Participants will:

- Learn the definition of habit
- Brainstorm habits (positive and negative)
- Identify healthy habits
- Learn the importance of repetition and consistency to help children build healthy habits

Materials

- Flip chart paper and markers
- Tape to post flip chart paper up around the room (or tables to put flip chart paper on)
- Sticky dots (or markers can be used)
- Postcard: *What healthy habits do you want your child to have?*, p. 5 (1 for each participant)
- Colouring Sheet: *Healthy Habits*, p. 6 (1 for each participant)

Process and Discussion

- Tell the group that today you are going to talk about habits. Ask the group what they think the definition of “habit” is. Share that a habit is a behaviour that happens so often it becomes a routine. If children have repeated exposure to behaviours and are encouraged to repeat certain behaviours, habits will be formed. It takes time to build a habit. It is important to be consistent and routinely demonstrate the behaviours that you want to become a habit. Since young children are only beginning to develop habits, they can learn and live with healthy habits from a young age, rather than trying to change an unhealthy habit later in life.
- Write the word “habit” on top of a flip chart page.
- Ask the group to provide examples of different habits they may have or know other people have (e.g., brushing teeth in the morning, smoking, running, yoga, sleeping in, sitting for long periods of time, drinking sugar drinks, drinking water). Be sure to list all habits mentioned and to include all habits that are listed on the postcard. Write the habits on the left-hand side of the page. Use as many pages as needed to list all the habits that the group shares.
- When the group has no additional habits to include, post the pages around the room.
- Give each participant several sticky dots (or a marker). If you want people’s responses to be anonymous, you may want to use the same colour marker and/or sticky dots. If being anonymous does not matter, then various coloured markers or sticky dots can be used.

- Ask participants to go around the room and put a sticky dot (or marker dot) beside each habit they consider to be healthy.
- Write the word “Healthy” at the top of a new flip chart page. Review the lists and find the habits with the dots. Ask, “Why is this habit considered healthy?” Write down responses on the flip chart paper. If participants disagree on what is a healthy habit, ask them to explain their perspective. Review a couple of the habits that have no dots and are not considered healthy by asking, “Why is this habit not considered healthy?”
- Discuss how difficult it is to change a habit or add a healthy habit. State that children are watching adults in their lives and learning ways to behave and react to the world around them. It is important to model healthy habits for the children in our lives. Questions you can ask the group are:
 - Why is it difficult to start or change a habit?
 - Why is it important that something becomes a habit?
 - Why is early childhood a great time to introduce and reinforce healthy habits?
- In the group, ask:
 - How was this activity?
 - What did you notice/learn about healthy habits?
 - What are you becoming aware of for yourself?
 - What does practicing healthy habits mean to you?
 - How can you use this information with your children?

Taking Home the Conversation

- Hand out the *What healthy habits do you want your child to have?* postcard.
- Ask the participants to identify one healthy habit they would like to try this week to model for their child(ren).

Family Activity Idea to Share with Participants

Share the Healthy Habits Colouring Sheet with your child(ren). While colouring together, ask the child(ren) to identify what healthy habits they have that are in the colouring sheet.

What healthy habits do you want your child to have?

Being **healthy** means feeling well in your body, mind, and spirit.

A **habit** is a behaviour that is repeated so often that it becomes a daily routine, like brushing your teeth in the morning or having a bath before bedtime.

Some examples of healthy habits are:

- Eating healthy foods
- Being thankful
- Learning something new
- Building healthy relationships
- Staying focused in the present moment
- Sleeping well
- Exercising regularly
- Feeling calm and relaxed
- Drinking water throughout the day



What healthy habits is your child learning from you?

You are your child's role model. Children watch and learn from the adults in their lives. What is one healthy habit you want to work on today to model for your child?

Each step you take towards a new habit is a success. You can choose an action from the list below or add one of your own.

- Eat more fruits and vegetables
- Exercise for 30 minutes
- Be mindful and present in the moment
- Connect with a family member or a friend
- Learn something new
- Take care of your health
- Turn off your screen(s) (TV, laptop, and cell phone) one hour before bedtime
- Go to bed early enough so that you can get at least 7 hours of sleep
- Make a list of the things you are thankful for
- Stop what you are doing and take 4 or more deep breaths
- Drink 8 glasses of water
- Other _____

“Celebrate the small successes and enjoy the journey!”

Connie Herman, Nobody's Perfect Provincial Coordinator

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COLOURING PAGE



Lesson: What is your child’s favourite healthy food?

Objectives

Participants will:

- Learn what eating healthy means
- Learn how to build a meal plan

Materials

- Flip chart paper and markers
- Handout: *Canada Food Guide Snapshot*, p. 10 (1 for each participant)
- Handout: *Meal Planning Plate Template*, p. 11 (2 for each participant)
- Handout: *Preparing Healthy Food With Children page*, p. 12 (1 for each participant)
- Postcard: *What is your child’s favourite healthy food?*, p. 13 (1 for each participant)
- Handout: *Tips to Eat Healthy on a Tight Budget*, p. 14 (1 for each participant)

Process and Discussion

- Share copies of Canada Food Guide Snapshot or show on a screen for all participants to see.
- Ask, “What do the words healthy eating mean to you?” After the discussion, provide a summary by sharing that “healthy eating means that you are getting the water and nutrients you need to be healthy. Nutrients include protein, carbohydrates, fat, vitamins, and minerals. Healthy eating gives you energy and helps to keep you physically and mentally healthy. The Canada Food Guide recommends a balanced diet, made up of a variety of foods from three categories.”
- Ask, “What categories does the Canada Food Guide list as part of a healthy diet?” (Vegetables/fruits, Whole grains, Proteins)
- On a flip chart, create a table with three titles, Vegetables/Fruits, Whole Grains, Proteins. Examples are provided in the chart below.

Vegetables/Fruits	Whole Grains	Proteins
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potatoes • Carrots • Celery • Cucumbers • Berries • Apples • Oranges • Bananas • Pears 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole grain bread • Whole grain pasta • Whole oats or oatmeal • Whole grain brown or wild rice • Quinoa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eggs • Lean cuts of beef, pork, and wild game • Turkey and chicken • Nuts and seeds • Fish and shellfish • Lower fat dairy products • Beans, peas, and lentils • Tofu, soybeans, and other soy products

- Brainstorm with the group examples of food and write the answers under the correct category. Ask, “What is your favourite healthy food? What category does your favourite healthy food fit in?” Write the responses on the flip chart.
- Ask the group, “What wouldn’t fit in the categories and why?” (E.g., white bread, French fries, potato chips, or wieners.) White bread is not considered a whole grain because it has little fiber and is high in starch which can cause stomach problems; processed meats such as wieners contain elevated levels of fat and salt; potato chips are high in fat and salt and contain no nutrients).
- Hand out the *What is your child’s favourite healthy food?* postcard. Ask the participants to write on their postcard the healthy foods that they like or would like to try from the list created with the group.
- Share the *Meal Planning Plate Template*. Ask the participants to write or draw on their plate, in the appropriate categories, their favourite healthy foods and/or foods they would like to try for a meal.
- Share with the group, “Children like to have choices about what they eat. Children watch and learn from adults in their lives. If the adults in a child’s life choose healthy foods, the child will often copy this behaviour. It is the job of a parent to be a good role model, eat healthy foods, and offer healthy foods to their child. Most children like helping make meals. Pick a day in the next week that you will plan a meal with your child(ren). Using the Canada Food Guide Snapshot and the blank Meal Planning Plate Template, build a meal plan with your child(ren).”
- Give a copy of the *Preparing Healthy Food With Children* page to participants for ideas on how they can involve their children in making a meal.
- In the large group, ask:
 - How was this activity?
 - What did you notice/learn about healthy eating?
 - What are you becoming aware of for yourself?
 - What does eating healthy mean to you?
 - How can you use this information with your children?

Taking Home the Conversation

- Ask participants to show their child(ren) the *Canada Food Guide Snapshot* and their postcard with the list of the healthy foods they like or want to try. Have them ask their child(ren) if there are other foods they would like to add to the postcard.
- Give participants the handout, *Tips to Eat Healthy on a Tight Budget*, for examples on how to eat healthy on a tight budget.

Family Activity Idea to Share with Participants

Share the Meal Planning Plate template with your child(ren) and plan a healthy meal together. Child(ren)'s choices can be written on the blank plate or pictures can be drawn of different types of foods that will be used to make the meal.

- Bonus: Video clip: *Proper Meal Portions for Kids* from The Hospital for Sick Children
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ttodRaZTE04>.

Canada Food Guide Snapshot

To access the resource to request or print copies, visit: <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/food-guide-snapshot/>.

Canada's food guide

Eat well. Live well.

Eat a variety of healthy foods each day

Have plenty of vegetables and fruits

Eat protein foods

Make water your drink of choice

Choose whole grain foods

Discover your food guide at
Canada.ca/FoodGuide

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Health Canada Santé Canada

Canada

Meal Planning Plate

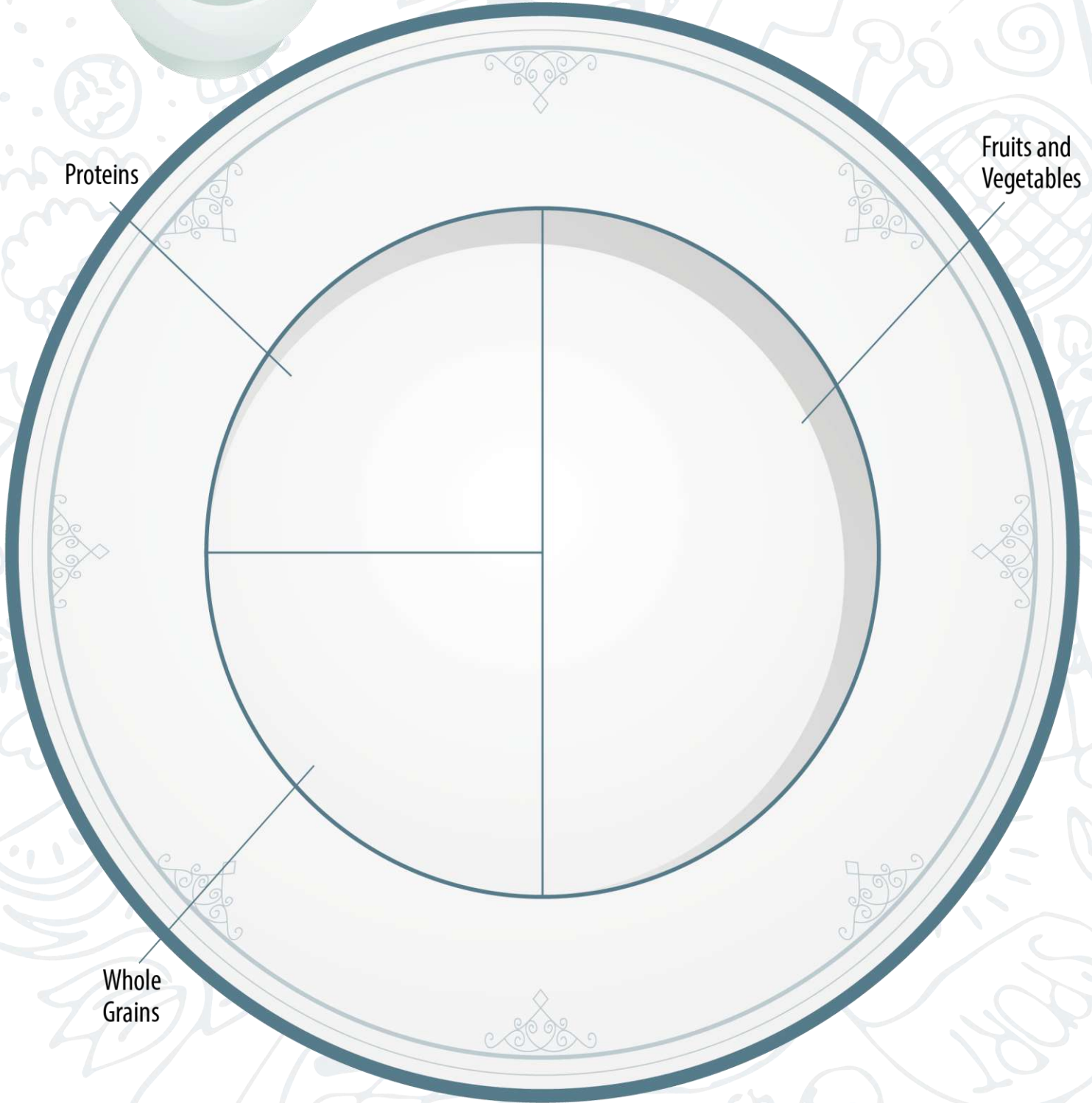


Drink

Proteins

Fruits and Vegetables

Whole Grains



Preparing Healthy Food With Children

The Canada Food Guide encourages families to work together and share tasks when preparing healthy food. Cooking food together with children allows families to share traditions, food preparation, and cooking skill. Many young children enjoy helping with preparing and cooking food. The Dieticians of Canada website provides guidance on tasks that can be performed by children of various ages.

Ages 2-3

- Wash and gently scrub fruits and vegetables under running water
- Add food items to dishes (e.g., cut vegetables to a salad)
- Smell food, herbs, and spices being added to food
- Help find items in the fridge or cupboard

Ages 3-4 (all the tasks from above plus the following)

- Remove eggshells from hard-boiled eggs
- Pour liquid from a small pitcher or measuring cup
- Make a simple sandwich or pizza with pre-assembled ingredients
- Describe the colour, taste, and shape of food
- Mash potatoes, turnips, carrots, or bananas

Ages 4-6 (all the tasks from above plus the following)

- Assemble foods: make trail mix or smoothies with prepared toppings
- Slice soft-cooked vegetables, soft fruit, cheese, or tofu with a plastic knife
- Crack and beat an egg
- Cook with supervision with a friend for a fun play date
- Help to measure ingredients

For more ideas on having young children help prepare and cook food, visit:

<https://www.unlockfood.ca/en/Articles/Childrens-Nutrition/Cooking-and-Meal-Planning/Cooking-with-Kids.aspx>.

What is your child's favourite healthy food?

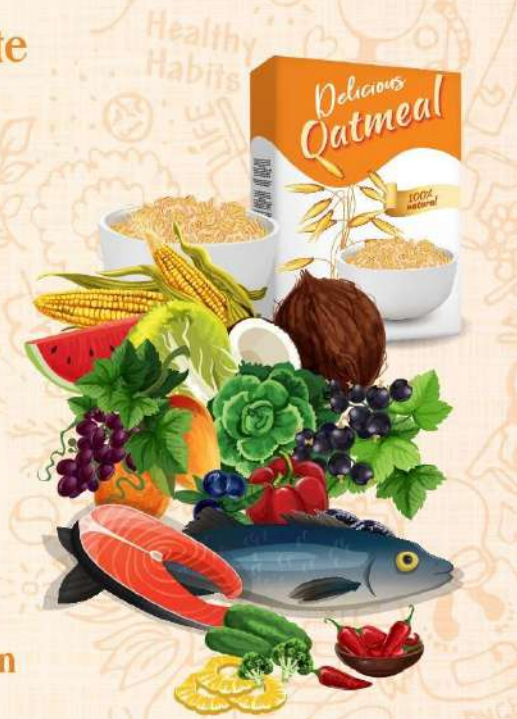
Eating healthy means eating vegetables and fruits, whole grains, and proteins.

Eating healthy gives children energy, helps them grow and develop, and helps keep children physically and mentally healthy.

Healthy foods come in a lot of forms and can be fresh, dried, canned, or frozen.

For more healthy food ideas for children, visit:
<https://food-guide.canada.ca/> and
<http://bit.ly/childhealthyeating>.

What are some healthy foods you can share with your child?



It is important to offer your child lots of healthy options. From these, let your child choose what they want to eat. What are some healthy food options you can offer your child?



List examples in the space below:

Fruits and Vegetables	Whole Grains	Proteins

"Eat well, live well."
Canada Food Guide



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Tips to Eat Healthy on a Tight Budget

Eating healthy foods improves physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Here are some tips for healthy eating on a tight budget.

<p>PLAN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set a weekly and monthly food budget • Make a list of inexpensive meals for the week before grocery shopping • Make and stick to a grocery list • Look for sales and use coupons • Buy bulk and stock up when items are on sale (within your budget) • Buy home-brand rather than name-brand products • Buy produce when in season, use canned and frozen (no added sugar/salt) 	<p>STORE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freeze foods that are purchased when on sale (e.g., bread, meat) • Store items to extend shelf life (e.g., potatoes and onions in a dark, cool space) • Build up your pantry. Start small. Things like beans, lentils, brown rice, and spices, go a long way and last a long time. • Cut your fruits and vegetables when you buy them and store these in your fridge for easy access
<p>COOK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cook meals at home • Add other ingredients to meat dishes to increase the quantity (e.g., rice, beans, and/or vegetables to ground beef to make chili or meatloaf) • Use a slow cooker to soften cheaper cuts of meat • Create one-pot meals and combine ingredients (e.g., adding left-over vegetables into a soup or stew) • Cook once, eat twice (create a double recipe and freeze half to eat another day) • Use herbs and spices to make your meals more flavourful and exciting 	<p>EAT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frozen/canned vegetables and fruits (no added sugar/salt) if fresh is not available • Oats or eggs for breakfast instead of processed cereal • Beans, both canned and dried • Bulk grains (e.g., brown rice, bulgur wheat, quinoa, popcorn) • Cheaper cuts of meat • Whole foods • Eggs and canned fish (quick to use for healthy inexpensive meals) • Inexpensive sources of protein, like plant-based proteins from lentils and beans

For more information on planning healthy meals on a tight budget, visit:

<https://www.unlockfood.ca/en/Articles/Budget/10-Tips-for-Planning-Meals-on-a-Budget.aspx>.

Lesson: What are whole foods and processed foods?

Objectives

Participants will:

- Learn the difference between whole food and processed food
- Brainstorm a list of whole foods to substitute for processed foods

Materials

- Flip chart and markers
- Images of whole and processed foods and/or physical examples of several types of foods, p. 17 (e.g., potato, potato chips, oatmeal, granola bars, ham, lunch meat, berries, jam)
- Handout: *Whole Food Substitutions for Processed Food*, p. 21
- Postcard: *What are whole foods and processed foods?*, p. 22 (1 for each participant)
- Handout: *Processed Food: What is OK and What You Should Avoid*, p. 23 (1 for each participant)

Process and Discussion

- Show the images/food and ask the group to identify if the food is whole food or processed food. Make two piles, Processed and Whole Foods.
- Ask, “How do you know the difference between processed or whole foods?” After the discussion, share with the group. “Whole food is food with nothing added, like apples, corn, and chicken. Whole food gives the body nutrients such as fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Processed foods have additional ingredients added to them, like salt, sugar, fat, and dyes. Processed foods may also be changed in some way while they are being prepared, like canning. Processed foods provide calories (energy) but may not have as many nutrients as whole foods.”
- Ask, “What type of processed foods does your family eat?” (E.g., wieners, French fries, potato chips, granola bars.) Record answers on a flip chart.
- Ask, “When do you and your children tend to eat processed food?” (E.g., When we are running out of time before an activity, when processed foods are on sale.)
- Ask the group, “What can you try if you eat a lot of processed food?”
 - Eat processed foods less often
 - Eat processed foods in small amounts
 - Replace processed foods with healthier options
- Hand out the page, *Processed Food Substitutions*. Ask, “How can your family begin to eat more whole foods?”

- Working in pairs, ask participants to fill in the following on handout, *Whole Food Substitutions for Processed Food*. Examples are provided in the following chart.

What are some processed foods you eat?	What whole foods could you substitute?
Potato chips	Carrot sticks
Chicken nuggets	Cooked chicken breast or thigh
Fruit roll up	Apple
Rice cake	Rice

- In the large group, ask:
 - How was this activity?
 - What did you notice/learn about processed foods/whole foods?
 - What are you becoming aware of for yourself?
 - What does being able to identify whole foods and processed foods mean to you?
 - How can you use this information with your children?

Taking Home the Conversation

- Hand out, *Processed Food: What is OK and What You Should Avoid* for participants to read.
- Ask the participants to have a conversation with their child(ren) about the difference between whole foods and processed foods. Children can be asked if they have ideas on what kinds of whole foods they would like to substitute for different processed foods.

Family Activity Idea to Share with Participants

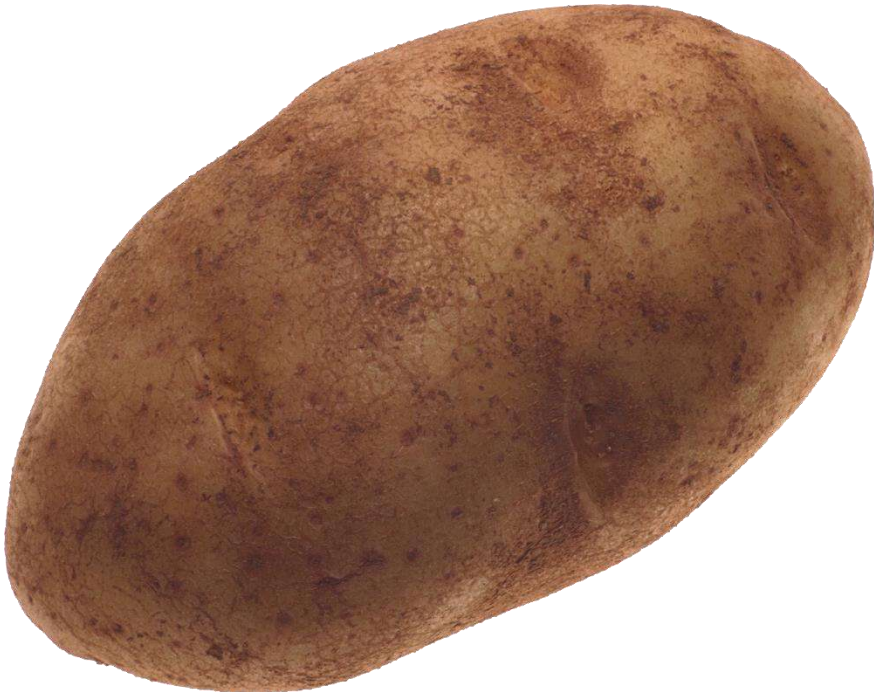
To increase children’s recognition and awareness of whole foods, play the following game.

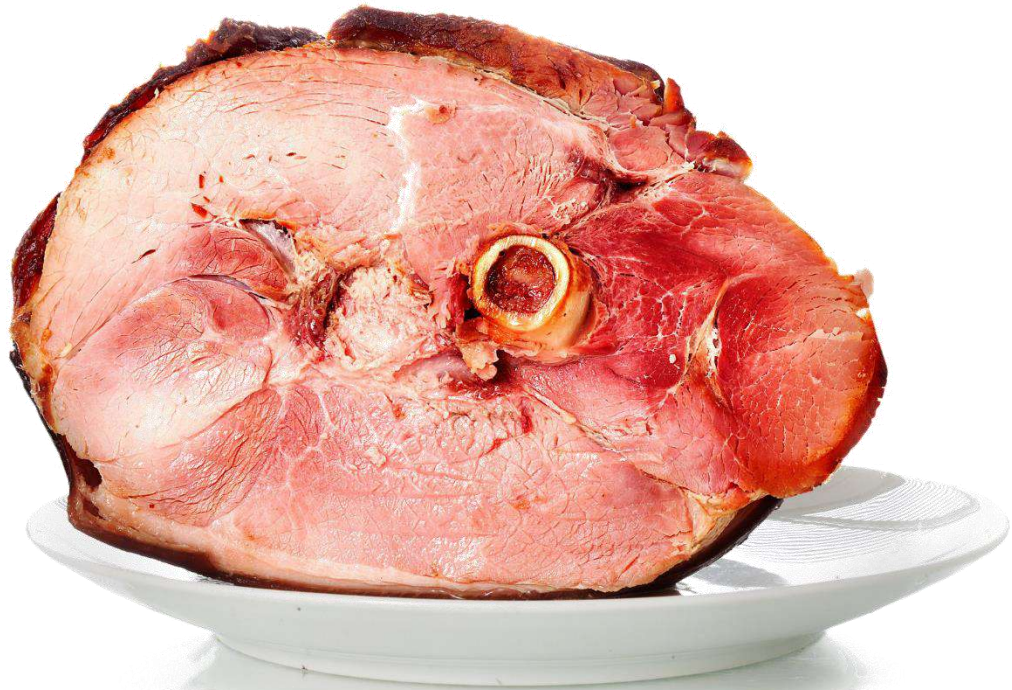
The Whole Food Guessing Bag

Place some vegetables or fruits (real or plastic) in a bag. Ask children to feel inside the bag and guess what vegetables or fruits are in the bag. As a variation, blindfold children and place a vegetable in their hands. Ask them to guess what the vegetable is by feeling, smelling, and even tasting it. Have a conversation about how these items are whole foods.

- Bonus: Watch the YouTube video, Lesson 1: Whole Foods vs Processed Foods, by Food for Growth, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PSBGZqx-Phs>.

Sample Images of Whole Foods





Sample Images of Processed Foods





Whole Food Substitutions for Processed Food

What are some processed foods you eat?	What whole foods could you substitute?



What are whole foods and processed foods?

Whole food is food with nothing added, like apples, corn, and chicken. Whole food gives the body nutrients such as fibre, vitamins, and minerals.

Processed foods have additional ingredients added to them, like salt, sugar, fat, and dyes. Processed foods may also be changed in some way while they are being prepared, like canning. They provide calories (energy) but may not have as many nutrients as whole foods.



WHOLE FOOD EXAMPLES:
Oatmeal, potatoes, and salmon.



PROCESSED FOOD EXAMPLES:
Granola bars, french fries, and fish sticks.

How can your family begin to eat more whole foods?

If you eat processed foods, try to:

- eat them less often
- eat them in small amounts
- replace them with healthier options

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What are some processed foods you eat?	What whole foods could you substitute?
Potato chips	Carrot sticks



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"A healthy outside starts from the inside."

Robert Urich

RESOURCE 5-905
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To access the following document to print, visit:

<https://www.framingham.edu/Assets/uploads/academics/colleges/science-technology-engineering-and-mathematics/food-and-nutrition/ documents/pd17-processed-food.pdf>.



Processed Food: What is OK and what you should AVOID



Whole (real) food are natural foods grown in the ground, minimally processed, usually do not have ingredient list and spoil fast. These include:

- Fresh Fruit & Vegetables
- 100% Whole Grains
- Nuts and Seeds

Processed foods are food which are not in their original state. They usually are packaged, boxed or canned and have ingredient lists.

- Fortified food (food with added nutrients)
- Heavily processed food (large amounts of hidden sodium, fats, and sugar)

"The term *processed food* includes *any food* that has been purposely changed in some way prior to consumption. It includes food that has been cooked, canned, frozen, packaged or changed in nutritional composition with fortifying, preserving or preparing in different ways.
Any time we cook, bake or prepare food, we're processing food."

Torey Armul, MS, RD, CSSD, LDN, a spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

The Continuum of Processed Foods

Categories	Example	Explanation
Minimally processed food	Bagged carrots, chopped lettuce, raw nuts	These foods are often simply pre-prepped in their original form for convenience.
Frozen and canned food	Frozen fruits and vegetables, canned fruits, vegetables, soup, beans	Fruits and vegetables are often picked at their peak and frozen to lock in nutritional quality and freshness.
Food with combined ingredients or added nutrients	Pasta sauce, salad dressing, cake mixes, ketchup, yogurt, breakfast cereal	Foods with added ingredients for flavor or texture or food with added nutrients. Food are no longer in their original form.
Ready-to-eat foods	Crackers, granola, deli meat	Simple ready-to-eat food, are usually heavily processed.
Pre-made meals	Frozen and microwave meals, instant noodles	The most heavily processed food with added sugars, sodium and fats.



← Processed Foods Continuum →

Created by: Lai Yee Phoon, Graduate Student in Food and Nutrition, Framingham State University, 2017

Nutrition facts:



- **Reduced fat or fat-free** products often have hidden added sugars. Added sugars often are used to improve taste and consistency in low fat products.
- **Sugar-free** does not mean a product is calorie-free or has fewer calories. These products often contain sugar alcohols, which are lower in calorie but with added fats. (Starting July 2018, added sugars will be included on the Nutrition Facts Label.)
- **0g trans-fat.** The food might still contain less than 0.5g of trans fat per serving. Try to avoid words in the ingredient list such as hydrogenated oils and shortening.
- **Cholesterol free** doesn't mean, literally, no cholesterol. Cholesterol-free products contain less than 2 mg per serving. Cholesterol is only found in animal products like meat, dairy, eggs, butter, etc. Plant-based products are cholesterol-free.
- Studies suggest some **frozen fruits and vegetables** have just as many nutrients as their fresh counterparts.
- Some vegetables with high amounts of fat-soluble nutrients (vitamins A,D,E,K) such as carrots, leafy greens, and broccoli are able to **protect nutrients** longer in frozen state.
- Foods with high amounts of water-soluble vitamins (B and C) are **best fresh** such as bell peppers, citrus fruits, cabbage, and berries.
- **Fortified food:** Addition of key nutrients such as fiber, vitamins, iron, folic acid, iodine etc. to increase nutritional content (but also look for hidden sugar, sodium and fat).



While some processed foods should be consumed with caution, many actually have a place in a balanced diet. **Balance is key!**

Traffic light for food selection:

Green-Light food: GO!	Yellow-Light Food: Moderation	Red-Light Food: AVOID!
100% whole wheat/ whole grain product	Multigrain or made with whole grain*	White bread
Fresh fruits/vegetables	Dried Fruits	Instant noodles
Frozen fruits/vegetables	Canned fruit and vegetables	Microwave meal
Bagged/cut fruits and vegetables	Canned food (tuna, beans, soup)	Frozen meal
Raw nuts	Flavored, salted nuts	Deli meat
Fortified products (milk, breakfast cereals – look for at least 5 g of fiber per serving)	Store-bought cookies, yogurt, cheese, crackers, granola (look for at least 2 g of fiber and less than 10 g of sugar per serving)	Partially hydrogenated oils, high-fructose corn syrup, or artificial colorings (pie crust, pudding, popcorn etc)

* There is no guarantee that multigrain bread is made with 100% whole grains or it's free of refined grains. Multigrain may have been processed to remove their bran and germ, which strips them of nutritional value (including fiber and important nutrients).

Take home message:

- Do not assume, always **check and compare** food labels.
- **Avoid** added sugars, fats, sodium and hydrogenated oil in the ingredient list.
- It is **OK** to consume processed (frozen, packaged, fortified) food as some of them have a place in a balanced diet. **Balance** is the key!



Sources:

1. <http://www.eatright.org/resource/food/nutrition/nutrition-facts-and-food-labels/avoiding-processed-foods>
2. <http://www.foodandnutrition.org>
3. <http://projecthealthychildren.org/why-food-fortification>

Created by: Lai Yee Phoon, Graduate Student in Food and Nutrition, Framingham State University, 2017

Lesson: Why is it important to eat together as a family?

Objectives

Participants will:

- Learn why it is important to eat together as a family
- Share and learn different healthy habits when eating together as a family

Materials

- Flip chart and markers
- Handout: *The Benefits of Eating Together for Children and Families*, p. 27 (1 for each participant)
- Postcard: *Why is it important to eat together as a family?*, p. 29 (1 for each participant)
- *Family Gratitude Cards* in a container
- Handout: *Family Gratitude Card Page*, p. 30 (1 for each participant)

Process and Discussion

- Ask participants, “Why is it important to eat together as a family?” Write responses on the flipchart. If it does not come up in discussion, share the following information. “Eating meals together is good for the whole family. Everyone gets a chance to enjoy each other’s company and the food they are eating. This helps children form a healthy relationship with food that will last their whole lives.”
- Share the handout, *The Benefits of Eating Together for Children and Families*. If there are items that have not come up in discussion, add them to the list on the flip chart.
- Hand out the postcard, *Why is it important to eat together as a family?*
- In pairs, ask participants to identify from the postcard which habits their family does when eating together. In pairs, ask each participant to share their family’s habits and choose one they are going to try at home in the next week.
- Have each participant pick one of the *Family Gratitude Cards* from the container and share with the group their answer to the question on the card. Explain that this is an activity participants can do with their families.
- In the large group, ask:
 - How was that activity?
 - What did you notice when you were sharing the answer to your gratitude card?
 - What did you notice when other people were sharing?
 - How could you use this activity with your children?

Taking Home the Conversation

- Have participants choose with their families a time when they will all eat together as a family. Participants can share with their families why this is important.

Family Activity Idea to Share with Participants

Create and decorate a gratitude container (e.g., use an empty yogurt container and colour, cover in paper, glue different small pictures onto sides). Cut out the Family Gratitude Cards and place them in the container. When family members are eating together, each family member chooses a card and answers the question. This is an activity that can be done daily.

The Benefits of Eating Together for Children and Families

For more information and/or to access the resource to print, visit:

<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthy-eating/eating-together>.



HealthLinkBC

The Benefits of Eating Together For Children and Families

Today's busy lifestyle can make eating together a challenge, but it's worth the effort it takes. There are nutrition, health, social, and mental benefits to eating with others. Here are some tips and strategies to help you get started.

Schedule Time to Eat Together

- Eating together can happen at breakfast, lunch or dinner. Choose the meal that gives you the most time to talk and connect.
- If you don't usually eat together, start by scheduling one meal per week and increase the number as you are able.
- Circle your friends and family around healthy foods as often as you can. The more you eat together, the more you benefit.
- Try to schedule activities so that they don't interfere with mealtimes. If that's not possible, create a meal together around a picnic table in a park on the way to piano lessons or rink-side before hockey.

Tip: Once you decide what meal you are going to eat together, mark it on your calendar like you would any other event. If you have a plan, it is more likely to happen.

Everyone Can Help Plan & Prepare Meals

- Eating together is more likely to happen when everyone helps.
- Involve kids of all ages in planning, shopping for and preparing meals. These are important life skills that can help us eat well.
- Children and others new to the kitchen can help in the following ways: take foods out of the fridge or cupboard, tear up lettuce for a salad, sprinkle cheese on a pizza, help wash fruits and vegetables, layer fixings in a sandwich, or put muffin liners in the pan.

- Kids with more experience in the kitchen can do the following: crack eggs, toss a salad, measure ingredients, stir ingredients in a bowl, put batter into muffin tins, roll balls of cookie dough and put them on the baking sheet, or pick herbs from the garden.
- Children are more likely to eat the foods they help you to prepare.
- Cooking together is a great way to connect with each other and have fun!
- Use a combination of fresh ingredients and ready-made foods to make fast, easy meals. Over time, make more from scratch. Remember, the meal doesn't have to be perfect. It's the time together that's important.
- Cooking is a great time to teach about food safety. Remind children to wash their hands before and after preparing food, to wash vegetables and fruit before eating, and not to mix ready-to-eat foods with foods that need to be cooked.
- Cooking together is also a great way to teach kids about kitchen safety. Always supervise their activities. Getting burned or cut puts an end to the fun fast!

Tip: If you aren't confident in the kitchen, choose simple and familiar recipes. This will help you enjoy your time together instead of trying to figure out the next step in the recipe.

Make Mealtimes about Being Together

- Eating together provides a time to be connected. This helps children feel loved, safe and secure.
- Focus on enjoying each other's company, not on what or how much each child is eating.
- Use meal times to teach children about family values and traditions.
- Keep mealtime conversations positive. Encourage children to talk about their

day. This helps to develop more communication between family members.

- Schedule difficult or disciplinary conversations for some time other than meals.

Tip: Turn off distractions like the TV, computer, tablets and phones during mealtimes. Keep toys and books off the table.

Model Positive Eating Behaviour

- You are an important role model for good table manners, trying new foods, and enjoying mealtimes. Children and youth are more likely to eat foods their parents and family also enjoy eating.
- Make offering new foods part of your regular mealtime routine. Children often need to see, smell, and touch a food many times before trying it. Offer new foods with familiar foods and include foods your child has refused in the past.
- Not everyone likes every food, and that's okay. Encourage kids to say "no, thank you," or teach them what you would like them to do or say if they don't want to eat something.
- Trust children to show or tell you how much they want to eat and when they are finished eating. An important part of healthy eating is learning to stop when they are full. Being forced or pressured to finish food can make your child ignore their internal hunger and fullness cues.
- Try not to rush children through a meal. Children often take longer to eat than adults. Remind children to eat slowly, chew their food well and enjoy what they are eating.

Health and Social Benefits to Eating Together

- People of all ages eat better when they share a meal with others. They tend to eat more fruits and vegetables and other nutrient-rich foods. They also eat less pop and fried foods.

- Eating together gives young children the chance to learn more words and how to communicate better.
- Other benefits for kids and teens include:
 - healthier eating into adulthood
 - healthier body weight
 - lower risk of disordered eating
 - less use of cigarettes, drugs, and alcohol
 - fewer behaviour problems and decreased early sexual activity
 - better self-esteem and less depression
 - better grades and higher scores on achievement tests at school
- The benefits of eating together are greatest if you don't eat in front of the TV and other screens.

For More Information

There are local and national resources to help you get started:

- Better Together: www.bettertogetherbc.ca. Check out 'Blog' and 'Kid-Friendly Recipes' to get you excited about cooking together, and 'Learning' to discover tips, resources and ideas for overcoming challenges.
- Family Kitchen: www.familykitchen.ca. Check out the 'Getting Started' for steps to success, and 'Recipes & Ideas' for beginner, intermediate and advanced-level cooks.
- The Ellyn Satter Institute: www.ellynsatterinstitute.org. Check out Master Family Meals Step By Step for information on how to make family meals healthy, positive experiences for all family members.

Last Updated: April 2017

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For more information about healthy eating and nutrition, visit www.HealthLinkBC.ca/healthy-eating or call **8-1-1** (toll-free) to speak with a registered dietitian. For deaf and hearing-impaired assistance, call **7-1-1**. Translation services are available in more than 130 languages on request.

Why is it important to eat together as a family?

Eating meals together is good for the whole family. Everyone gets a chance to enjoy each other's company and the food they are eating. This helps children form a healthy relationship with food that will last their whole lives.

How can eating together help your family?



What are some of your family's habits when eating together?

Check some that apply and add some of your own.

- Sitting at the table
- Taking your time to eat
- Sharing stories about your day
- Turning off distractions, like phones and TVs
- Letting your child choose what and how much to eat
- Laughing together
- Making sure the family connect during one meal each day
- Other _____

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"Family meals mean love and security."

Ellyn Satter, Registered Dietitian and Family Therapist

Family Gratitude Cards

Cut the following cards out and place them in a container. Have each person at the table pick one card and answer.

What is something that makes you happy?	What is one of your favourite things to do?	What is something about each of your siblings that you are grateful for?
Who did something nice for you today? What was it?	What abilities do you have that you are thankful for?	What are you thankful for in nature?
What friend are you thankful for and why?	What is your favourite food?	What is your favourite smell?
What sound do you love to hear?	What is a really great memory that you have?	What technology are you grateful for?
What is something about your body that you are grateful for?	What do you love about your home?	What is one of your favourite books?
What is one of your favourite places to visit?	What sight do you love to see?	Share a special memory that you have of yourself with one or more of your family members.
What is your favourite season and why?	What holiday are you grateful for?	Who did something nice for you today? What was it that they did?
For kids: What is something you love to do with your parents? For parents: What is something you love about each of your kids?	What was your favourite part about today?	How do you show kindness to others?

Lesson: What is mindful eating?

Objectives

Participants will:

- Learn what mindful eating is
- Learn to identify what senses are being used when eating
- Learn questions to ask children to practice mindful eating

Materials

- A variety of healthy snack foods (e.g., cut up fruit and/or vegetables, crackers, pieces of cheese, nuts)
- Postcard: *What is mindful eating?*, p. 34 (1 per participant)
- Handout: *Mindful Eating Placemat*, p. 35 (1 per participant)

Process and Discussion

- Ask participants, “What does it mean to be mindful?” After the group has answered, summarize the discussion and add, “Being mindful means paying full attention to something. It means slowing down to notice what is happening in the moment.”
- Have participants take three deep breaths. Tell the group, “A quick way to become mindful is to take three deep breaths.”
- Tell the group, “Another good technique to become mindful is using the 5-4-3-2-1 technique by focusing on the five senses. This is a good activity to use with children.” Lead the group in the following activity.
 - 5 – What are 5 things that you can **see**? Say them to yourself (silently or out loud). For example, you could say, I see a picture, I see the clock, I see a door, I see the flip chart, I see the chair.
 - 4 – Notice your body and think of 4 things that you can **feel**. Say them to yourself. For example, you could say, I feel the clothing on my body, I feel the hair on the back of my neck, I feel the air enter my nose as I breathe, or I feel the chair I am sitting on.
 - 3 – **Listen** for 3 sounds. It could be the sound of a chair being moved in the room, the sound of a fan blowing, or the sound of wind blowing outside. Say the three things to yourself.
 - 2 – Say two things you can **smell**. For example, the smell of hand soap used or the smell of flowers in the room. If you can’t smell anything, state your 2 favourite smells.
 - 1 – Say one thing you can **taste**. It may be the flavour of gum you are chewing, or the flavour of toothpaste used. If you can’t taste anything, say your favourite thing to taste.
 - Take a deep belly breath to finish.

- Ask the group, “How was that experience? What did they notice? How would you use this activity with your child(ren)?”
- Ask participants, “What does mindful eating mean?” After the discussion, share with the group, “Mindful eating happens when you notice your thoughts, feelings, and the way your body feels while you are eating.” Ask participants, “Why is mindful eating important?” Summarize the group’s discussion and add, “Mindful eating allows a person to identify how it feels to be hungry or full. Mindful eating teaches a person to slow down while eating which will allow for digestion to be better.”
- Give participants the *What is mindful eating?* postcard.
- Have each participant choose a snack item and instruct them not to eat it yet. In pairs, ask participants to practice asking each other the following questions from the postcard:
 - What colour is the food?
 - What shape is the food?
 - What does it feel like when you touch the food with your finger?
 - How would you describe the smell of your food?

Tell the participants that they will need to eat the snack to answer the following questions.

 - What does it sound like when you take a bite?
 - What does the food feel like on your tongue?
 - What does the food you are eating taste like?
- In the large group, ask:
 - How was that activity?
 - What did you notice about eating your snack?
 - Did anything surprise you?
 - Did your food taste different this time compared to times you have tried it before?
 - How did this activity help you practice mindful eating?
 - What does mindful eating mean to you?
 - How can you use this activity with your children?

Taking Home the Conversation

- Give participants the handout, *Mindful Eating Placemat*, and ask them to identify one thing they are going to focus on the next time they are eating (e.g., sit at the table, not eat in front of the T.V., put the fork down between bites, close eyes and savour the taste of the food, focus on taste, chew more (for example 25 times), and/or eat with non-dominant hand).

- When the children are calm, encourage participants to teach their children, the *Smell the Flower, Blow Out the Candle* activity. This activity is best practiced often so that children understand that deep breathing is a tool that can be used in any situation where they would like to feel calmer and focused. For more information, visit the virtual My Curious Brain Resource Room (<https://skprevention.ca/my-curious-brain-virtual-resource-room-1/>) to watch a video of the activity.
 - Imagine you are holding a flower in one hand. Then, imagine you are holding a cupcake with a lit candle in the other hand. Slowly, take a deep breath, pretending to smell the flower. Then, slowly blow the breath out, pretending to blow the candle out. Do this three times.

Family Activity Idea to Share with Participants

Teach children to pay attention to their 5 senses while taking small bites. Ask your child(ren) the questions from the *What is mindful eating?* postcard while eating.

- What colour is the food you are eating?
- What shape is the food you are eating?
- What does it sound like when you take a bite?
- What does it feel like when you touch the food with your finger?
- What does the food feel like on your tongue?
- How would you describe the smell of your food?
- What does the food you are eating taste like?

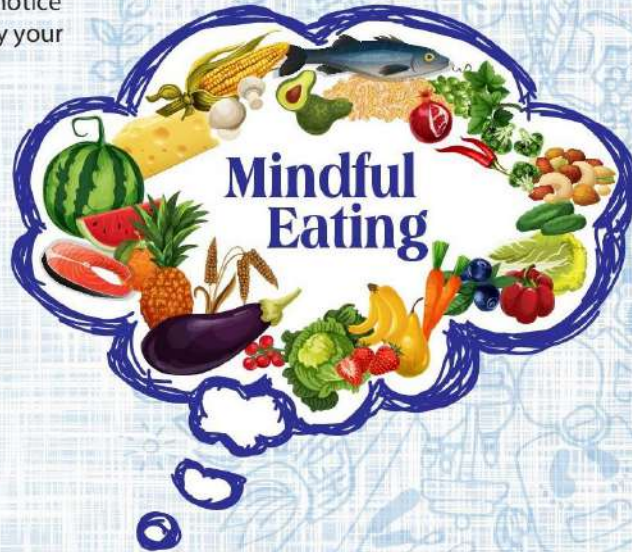
You can answer these too and see if your answer differs from your child's.

What is **mindful eating**?

Mindful eating happens when you notice your thoughts, feelings, and the way your body feels while you are eating.

Why is mindful eating important?

- Your child will learn about how it feels to be hungry or full
- Your child will learn to slow down when eating
- Your child's digestion will be better



How can you teach your child mindful eating?

Help your child practice mindful eating by having them pay attention to their 5 senses while taking small bites of food.

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Ask your child the following questions while eating. You can answer these, too, and see if your answers are different from your child's.

- What colour is the food you are eating?
- What shape is the food you are eating?
- What does it sound like when you take a bite?
- What does it feel like when you touch the food with your finger?
- What does the food feel like on your tongue?
- How would you describe the smell of your food?
- What does the food you are eating taste like?

"Mindful eating means simply eating and drinking while being aware of each bite and sip."

Thich Nhat Hanh

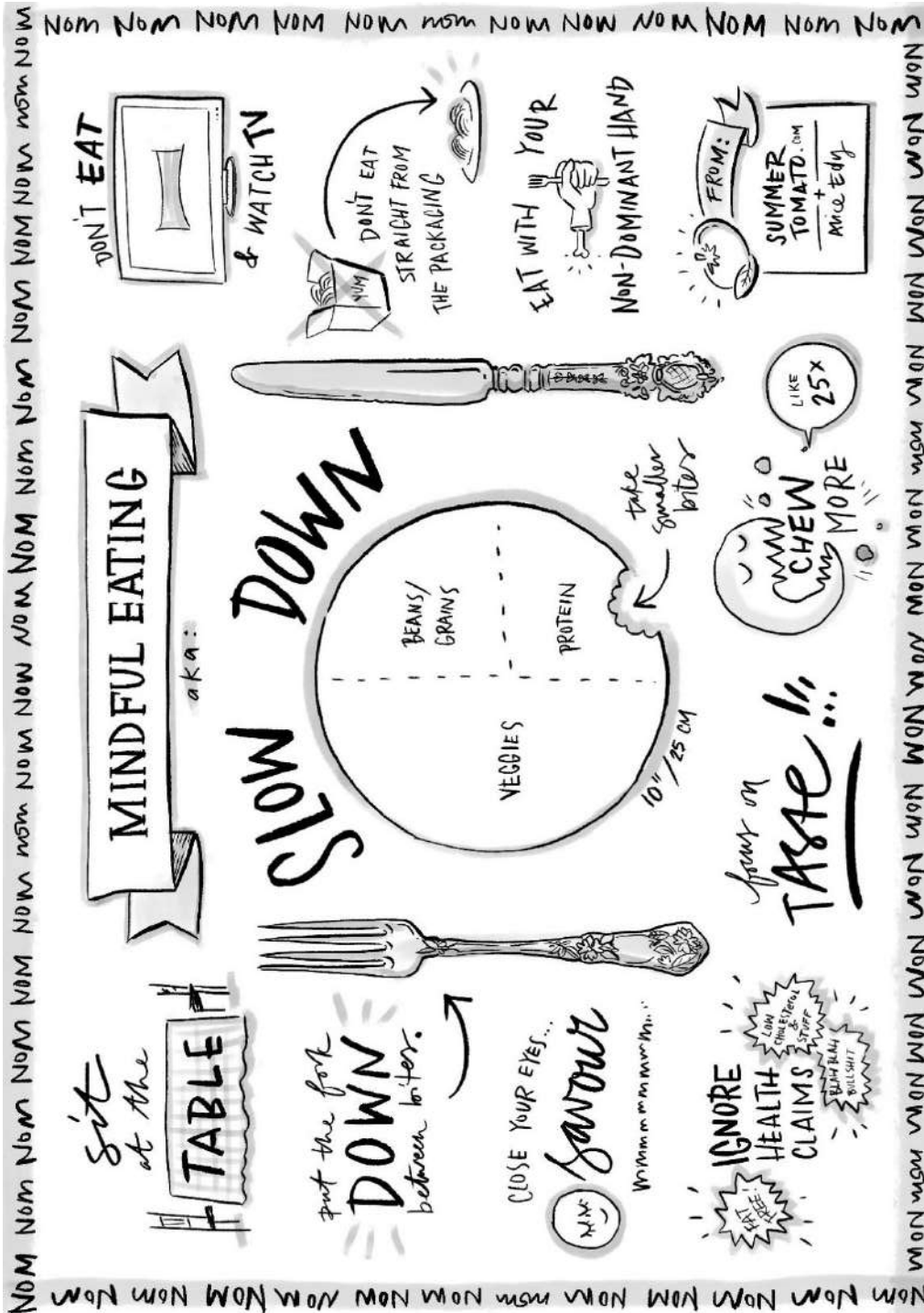


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To access the *Mindful Eating Placemat* to print, visit:

<https://summertomato.com/2016/10/19/use-this-mindful-eating-placemat-to-remember-to-slow-down-and-enjoy-your-food/>.



Lesson: Why is physical activity important for children?

Objectives

Participants will:

- Learn why physical activity is important for children
- Learn the recommended amount of time children should be physically active
- Brainstorm ideas on active play ideas for children

Materials

- Flip chart and markers
- Handout: *Canadian 24-hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years (0-4)* and/or *Canadian Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth*, (depending on the age of participants' children), p. 38 (1 per participant)
- Handout: *Active Play Ideas*, p. 41 (1 per participant)
- Postcard: *Why is physical activity important for children?*, p. 42 (1 per participant)

Process and Discussion

- Ask, "What does it mean for children to be physically active?" Share that physical activity is any activity that involves moving the body. For example, walking, jumping, or dancing.
- Ask, "Why is it important for children to be physically active?" Write responses on the flip chart. Include the following if not supplied by participants: to be healthy, build stronger bones and muscles, create connections in the brain, develop healthy relationships, build confidence, release energy, create calm, and be able to focus.
- State that research has shown that Canadian children are not meeting the recommendations for movement. Hand out *Canadian 24-hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years (0-4)* and/or *Canadian Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth* (depending on the age of participants' children).
- Have each participant identify how much physical activity is recommended for their child(ren). Ask, "Is your child(ren) meeting the recommended amount of time for physical activity?" Explain that the group is going to work in pairs to brainstorm different activities for children to do to become more active.
- Ask, "What does active play mean?" Share that "active play includes physical activity and also includes participating in fun activities that make a child breathe faster and deeper, get warm, increases heartbeat, and/or creates redness in cheeks. Active play is important for social, emotional, and physical development. Examples include playing tag, pretending to be animals, follow the leader games, making an obstacle course, and kicking, throwing, and catching a ball."

- Hand out, *Active Play Ideas* (see example below). Explain the handout and talk about the example below. In pairs, ask participants to share their child's favourite way to be active and then brainstorm different active play ideas for children to be active inside and outside. Invite participants to write the ideas on the handout.

Active Play Ideas

Inside	Outside
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pretend to be animals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play tag
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the leader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making an obstacle course
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making an obstacle course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kicking, throwing, and catching a ball

- Have each pair share one idea from their list with other participants. Share that for healthy growth and development, children need unstructured active play (free time) and structured active play (organized activities and games).
- After each pair has shared at least one inside and outside activity, ask:
 - How was that activity?
 - What did you notice/learn about physical activity/active play?
 - What are you becoming aware of for yourself?
 - What does engaging in physical activity mean to you?
 - How can you use this information with your children?

Taking Home the Conversation

- Give participants the postcard, *Why is physical activity important for children?* Encourage participants to talk with their family about each person's favourite physical activity and write down the ones they want to try. Encourage each family member to identify one activity they would like to try for the first time.

Family Activity Idea to Share with Participants

Create a physical activity/active play jar. Include all the different activities on slips of paper and insert them into a container. Every day, pick at least one activity to do.

Canadian 24-hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years

To access the resource to print, visit: <https://bit.ly/earlyyearsmovement>.

CANADIAN 24-HOUR MOVEMENT GUIDELINES FOR THE EARLY YEARS (0-4 YEARS)

SLEEP

MOVE

INFANTS LESS THAN 1 YEAR

14 to 17 hours (for those aged 0-3 months) or 12 to 16 hours (for those aged 4-11 months) of good-quality sleep, including naps.

TODDLERS 1-2 YEARS

11 to 14 hours of good-quality sleep, including naps, with consistent bedtimes and wake-up times.

PRESCHOOLERS 3-4 YEARS

10 to 13 hours of good-quality sleep, which may include a nap, with consistent bedtimes and wake-up times.

INFANTS LESS THAN 1 YEAR

Being physically active several times in a variety of ways, particularly through interactive floor-based play—more is better. For those not yet mobile, this includes at least 30 minutes of tummy time spread throughout the day while awake.

TODDLERS 1-2 YEARS

At least 180 minutes spent in a variety of physical activities at any intensity, including energetic play, spread throughout the day—more is better.

PRESCHOOLERS 3-4 YEARS

At least 180 minutes spent in a variety of physical activities spread throughout the day, of which at least 60 minutes is energetic play—more is better.

INFANTS LESS THAN 1 YEAR

Not being restrained for more than 1 hour at a time (e.g., in a stroller or high chair). Screen time is not recommended. When sedentary, engaging in pursuits such as reading and storytelling with a caregiver is encouraged.

TODDLERS 1-2 YEARS

Not being restrained for more than 1 hour at a time (e.g., in a stroller or high chair) or sitting for extended periods. For those younger than 2 years, sedentary screen time is not recommended. For those aged 2 years, sedentary screen time should be no more than 1 hour—less is better. When sedentary, engaging in pursuits such as reading and storytelling with a caregiver is encouraged.

PRESCHOOLERS 3-4 YEARS

Not being restrained for more than 1 hour at a time (e.g., in a stroller or car seat) or sitting for extended periods. Sedentary screen time should be no more than 1 hour—less is better. When sedentary, engaging in pursuits such as reading and storytelling with a caregiver is encouraged.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:
BUILDYOURBESTDAY.COM/EARLYYEARS

CANADIAN 24-HOUR MOVEMENT GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH:

An Integration of Physical Activity, Sedentary Behaviour, and Sleep

PREAMBLE

These guidelines are relevant to apparently healthy children and youth (aged 5–17 years) irrespective of gender, race, ethnicity, or the socio-economic status of the family. Children and youth are encouraged to live an active lifestyle with a daily balance of sleep, sedentary behaviours, and physical activities that supports their healthy development.

Children and youth should practice healthy sleep hygiene (habits and practices that are conducive to sleeping well), limit sedentary behaviours (especially screen time), and participate in a range of physical activities in a variety of environments (e.g., home/school/community; indoors/outdoors; land/water; summer/winter) and contexts (e.g., play, recreation, sport, active transportation, hobbies, and chores).

For those not currently meeting these 24-hour movement guidelines, a progressive adjustment toward them is recommended. Following these guidelines is associated with better body composition, cardiorespiratory and musculoskeletal fitness, academic achievement and cognition, emotional regulation, pro-social behaviours, cardiovascular and metabolic health, and overall quality of life. The benefits of following these guidelines far exceed potential risks.

These guidelines may be appropriate for children and youth with a disability or medical condition; however, a health professional should be consulted for additional guidance.

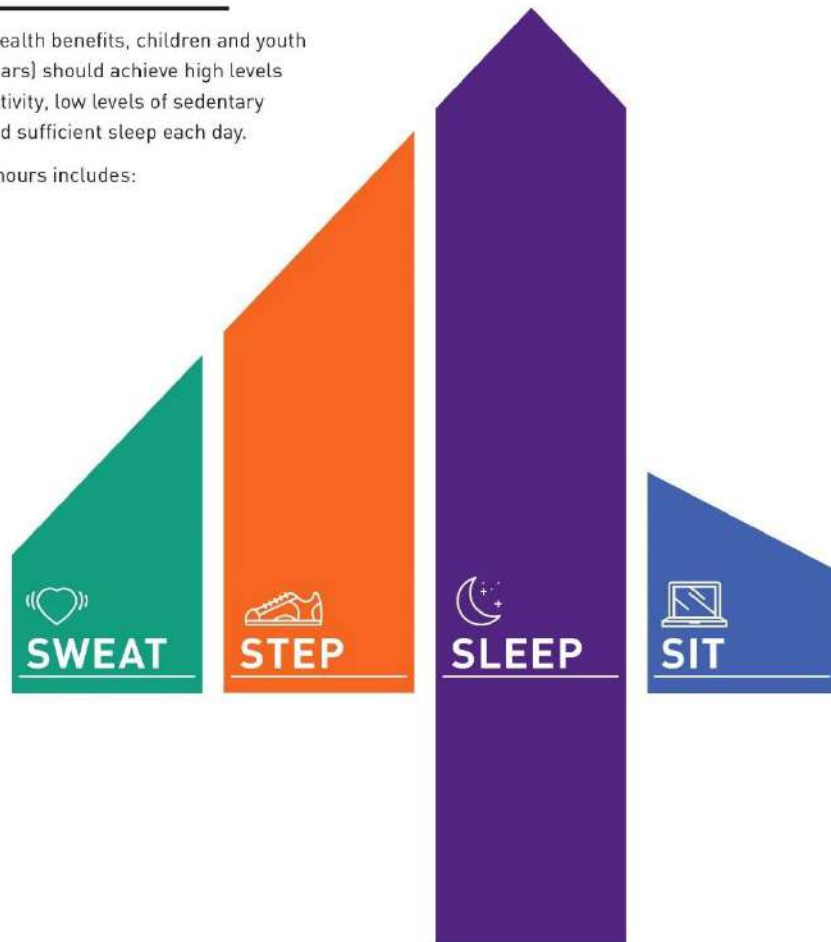
The specific guidelines and more details on the background research informing them, their interpretation, guidance on how to achieve them, and recommendations for research and surveillance are available at www.csep.ca/guidelines.



GUIDELINES

For optimal health benefits, children and youth (aged 5–17 years) should achieve high levels of physical activity, low levels of sedentary behaviour, and sufficient sleep each day.

A healthy 24 hours includes:



SWEAT

MODERATE TO VIGOROUS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

An accumulation of at least 60 minutes per day of moderate to vigorous physical activity involving a variety of aerobic activities. Vigorous physical activities, and muscle and bone strengthening activities should each be incorporated at least 3 days per week;

STEP

LIGHT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Several hours of a variety of structured and unstructured light physical activities;

SLEEP

SLEEP

Uninterrupted 9 to 11 hours of sleep per night for those aged 5–13 years and 8 to 10 hours per night for those aged 14–17 years, with consistent bed and wake-up times;

SIT

SEDENTARY BEHAVIOUR

No more than 2 hours per day of recreational screen time; Limited sitting for extended periods.

Preserving sufficient sleep, trading indoor time for outdoor time, and replacing sedentary behaviours and light physical activity with additional moderate to vigorous physical activity can provide greater health benefits.

Active Play Ideas

Inside	Outside
• Pretend to be animals	• Play tag



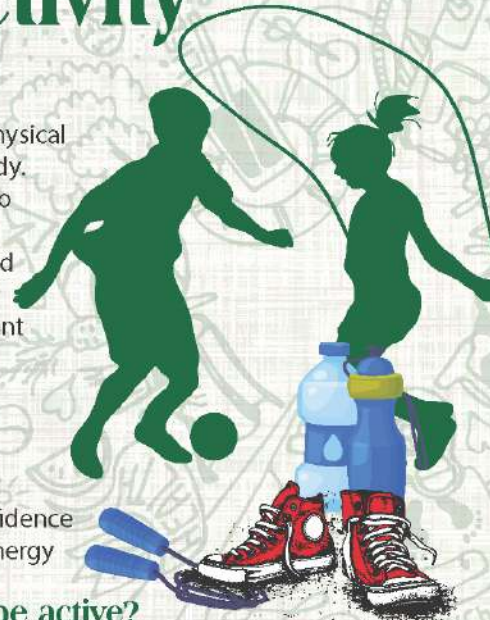
Why is physical activity important for children?

To be healthy, all children need physical activity. Physical activity is any activity that involves moving the body. For example, walking, jumping, or dancing. It is also important for children to be involved in active (physical) play that makes a child breathe faster and deeper, get warm, increases the heartbeat, and/or creates redness in cheeks. Active play is important for social, emotional, and physical development.

Physical activity helps children in many ways.

- Builds stronger bones and muscles
- Creates connections in the brain
- Develops healthy relationships
- Builds confidence
- Creates calm and ability to focus
- Releases energy

What is your child's favourite way to be active?



For healthy growth and development, children need unstructured physical activity and active play (free time), and structured physical activity and active play (organized activities and games).



It is important for children to be physically active inside and outside and to try different activities such as running, jumping, balancing, throwing, and catching.

What are some active play ideas you can do with your child?

List different activities you could do with your child together in the space below.

Active Play Ideas	
Inside	Outside
Pretend to be animals	Play tag



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“Play gives children a chance to practice what they are learning.”

Mr. Fred Rogers

Lesson: What healthy habits support healthy relationships?

Objectives

Participants will:

- Learn habits to nurture and build a healthy relationship with children
- Become aware of personal responses to children's feelings

Materials

- Postcard: *What healthy habits support healthy relationships?*, p. 46 (1 per participant)

Process and Discussion

- Talk about the importance of having healthy relationships. As humans, we are social beings, and connecting with others is important for our health. Social connection improves immune systems, lowers anxiety and depression, helps regulate feelings, increases self-esteem, and fosters empathy for others. For more information, visit: <https://cmha.ca/the-importance-of-human-connection/>.
- Ask the group, "How do children learn about healthy relationships?" After the discussion, share with the group, "By watching the adults in their lives, children learn about trust and relationships. A child is shown a healthy relationship when given care, support, and help."
- Hand out the postcard, *What healthy habits support healthy relationships?* As a group, review the different habits parents/caregivers can do to build a healthy relationship with their child(ren). Provide an explanation for each habit shared.
 - Engage in uninterrupted, free time with your child each day. This will show your child that they are loved and that they are special to you.
 - Show interest in your child's activities. This gives your child the attention they desire and models that interest in others is an important part of healthy relationships.
 - Encourage your child to express feelings and recognize the feelings of others. This lets children know others have feelings too and that it is important to recognize and respond appropriately.
 - Play games with your child exploring feelings. This can give you information on your child's inner thoughts.
 - Respect your child's feelings. This teaches your child to trust their instincts and models empathy and respect for others.
 - Provide your child opportunities to develop relationships with other children to practice learning to share, take turns, and resolve conflict. This provides time for the child to build healthy relationship skills.

- Share with the group, “As previously discussed, children watch the adults in their lives for examples of how to connect and respond to other people. Children will behave in similar ways to the behaviours they see the adults closest to them use. As adults, it is important to be aware of our responses to other people’s feelings.”
- Have each participant work on their own to complete the back of the postcard to identify how they want to respond to their child’s feelings.

Child’s Feeling	Parent’s Response
Happiness	
Sadness	
Fear	
Anger	
Other _____	

- In the large group, ask:
 - How was that activity?
 - What did you notice/learn about building healthy relationships with your child?
 - What are you becoming aware of for yourself?
 - What does building healthy relationships mean to you?
 - How can you use this information with your children?

Taking Home the Conversation

- Encourage participants to practice with their children how to have different responses to other people’s feelings by playing charades (pretending). The adult can pretend to be experiencing a certain feeling (e.g., happy, sad, mad, scared) and ask the child to identify what feeling is being shown. Then ask the child, “If I am feeling sad (e.g., pretending to cry), what could you say/do?” If a child does not know, the adult can offer suggestions. For example, say, “You can ask if I want a hug.” Talking about different feelings with children helps children feel comfortable expressing their feelings and will help them build empathy toward others.

Family Activity Idea to Share with Participants

A family activity to help children learn about how different feelings look is to create a *Feelings Book*. On each page of paper write a different feeling (e.g., sad, mad, happy, scared, excited, silly). The child can then draw the face/body of a person to show what the feeling looks like to them. As you go through the different feelings, ask the child “Why do you think they are feeling sad? What could we do to help the person?”

What healthy habits support healthy relationships?

From birth, children connect with others and form relationships. By watching adults in their lives, children learn about trust, communication, and healthy relationships. Your child learns about healthy relationships when given care, support, and help.

There are many ways that you can help build connections with your child and nurture a healthy relationship with them. Some examples are given below.

- Engage in uninterrupted, free time with your child each day
- Encourage your child to express feelings in age-appropriate ways and to recognize other people's feelings
- Create opportunities for your child to practice sharing, taking turns, and resolving conflict

How does your child respond when you practice healthy relationship habits?



Knowing how to respond to other people's feelings helps children build healthy relationships. By watching the adults in their lives for examples, children will behave in similar ways.



Fill in the space below with examples of how you want to respond to your child when they are experiencing certain feelings.

Child's Feeling	Parent's Response
Happiness	
Sadness	
Fear	
Anger	
Other _____	

"Your child needs not only your attention but also a relationship with you."

Kenny Leman



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RESOURCE 5-913
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Lesson: What healthy habits help your child balance their energy?

Objectives

Participants will:

- Learn all people have different levels of energy throughout the day
- Learn how to recognize when a child needs to balance their energy
- Learn ways to help children balance their energy

Materials

- Flip chart and markers
- Postcard: *What healthy habits help your child balance their energy?*, p. 50 (1 per participant)

Process and Discussion

- Tell the group that today you are going to talk about energy levels. Share the following: “Throughout the day, we all have different amounts and types of energy. The amount and type of energy we have will influence how and what we think, the emotions we feel, and how we behave. Energy states can be classified as low, balanced, intense, and out of control.”
- Write the words on the flip chart (see an example below).

Low	Balanced	Intense	Out-of-control

- Ask the group, “How does your child show they have low, balanced, intense, or out-of-control energy?” Write responses on the flip chart (examples provided).

Low	Balanced	Intense	Out-of-control
<input type="checkbox"/> Sick <input type="checkbox"/> Sad <input type="checkbox"/> Tired <input type="checkbox"/> Bored <input type="checkbox"/> Moving slowly	<input type="checkbox"/> Happy <input type="checkbox"/> Calm <input type="checkbox"/> Focused <input type="checkbox"/> Ready to learn and connect	<input type="checkbox"/> Hyper <input type="checkbox"/> Worried <input type="checkbox"/> Silly/Wiggly <input type="checkbox"/> Anxious <input type="checkbox"/> Excited	<input type="checkbox"/> Mad/Angry <input type="checkbox"/> Mean <input type="checkbox"/> Yelling/Hitting <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of ability to reason <input type="checkbox"/> Ready to fight

- Share that when people have balanced energy, they feel safe, calm, and can make healthy choices.

- Ask, “What are ways that you can restore your energy to achieve a balanced state?”
Enter these responses on a separate flip chart. For example:
 - Getting enough sleep
 - Having a drink of water and/or a healthy snack
 - Listening to calming music
 - Taking slow, deep breaths
 - Being active (e.g., stretching, walking)
 - Being creative (e.g., painting, drawing, knitting)
 - Doing a quiet activity without screen time (e.g., reading, making a puzzle)
- Give participants the postcard, *What healthy habits help your child balance their energy?*
- Ask, “Looking at the list of ways to help your child balance their energy, what works for your child?”
 - Getting enough sleep
 - Having a drink of water and/or a healthy snack
 - Listening to calming music
 - Taking slow, deep breaths
 - Being active (e.g., stretching, walking)
 - Shaking a sensory bottle and watching the glitter settle
 - Being creative (e.g., painting, drawing, colouring, playing with playdough)
 - Doing a quiet activity without screen time (e.g., reading, making a puzzle)
- In the large group, ask:
 - How was that activity?
 - What did you notice/learn about restoring your energy? Your child’s energy?
 - What are you becoming aware of for yourself?
 - What does recharging your energy or your child’s energy mean to you?
 - How can you use this information with your children?

Taking Home the Conversation

- Tell the group that to help a child restore their energy, it is important to recognize the different energy states a child is experiencing. Ask the group to look at the list on the back of the postcard and identify which behaviours their child(ren) shows when they have low, balanced, intense, or out-of-control energy.
- Ask parents/caregivers to think about how they respond when their child is in different states of energy.

Low	Balanced	Intense	Out-of-control
<input type="checkbox"/> Sick <input type="checkbox"/> Sad <input type="checkbox"/> Tired <input type="checkbox"/> Bored <input type="checkbox"/> Moving slowly	<input type="checkbox"/> Happy <input type="checkbox"/> Calm <input type="checkbox"/> Focused <input type="checkbox"/> Ready to learn and connect	<input type="checkbox"/> Hyper <input type="checkbox"/> Worried <input type="checkbox"/> Silly/Wiggly <input type="checkbox"/> Anxious <input type="checkbox"/> Excited	<input type="checkbox"/> Mad/Angry <input type="checkbox"/> Mean <input type="checkbox"/> Yelling/Hitting <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of ability to reason <input type="checkbox"/> Ready to fight

Family Activity Idea to Share with Participants

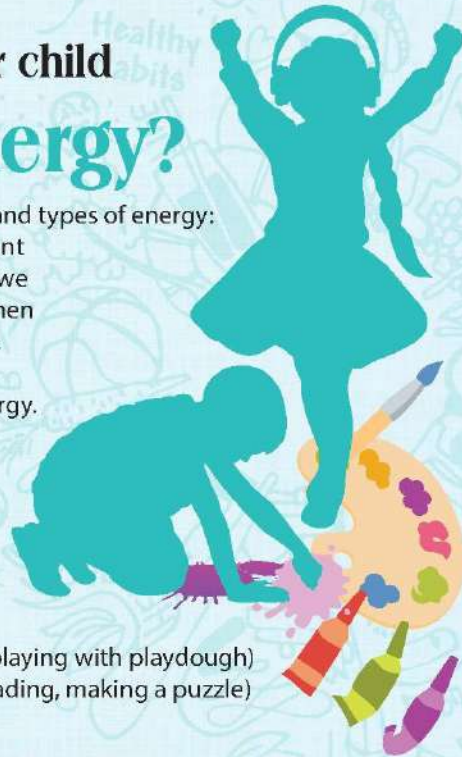
Teaching your child(ren) what tension feels like in the body will show them the difference between low and high tension. Have your child experience tightness and stress by asking them to pretend that they are uncooked spaghetti in a box (rigid, straight). Explain this is what high tension feels like and often when we have intense or out-of-control states of energy we feel this way. Next, ask your child(ren) to pretend they are cooked spaghetti (floppy, loose). This is what it feels like when we have low tension and energy.

What healthy habits help your child balance their energy?

Throughout the day, we all have different amounts and types of energy: low, balanced, intense, and out of control. The amount and type of energy we have impacts how and what we think, the emotions we feel, and how we behave. When a child has balanced energy, they feel safe and calm.

The following may help your child balance their energy.

- Getting enough sleep
- Listening to calming music
- Being active (e.g., stretching, walking)
- Taking slow, deep breaths
- Having a drink of water and/or a healthy snack
- Shaking a sensory bottle and watching the glitter settle
- Being creative (e.g., painting, drawing, colouring, playing with playdough)
- Doing a quiet activity without screen time (e.g., reading, making a puzzle)



What helps your child balance their energy?

healthy HABITS

To help your child restore their energy, it is important to recognize when your child's energy is in different states. How does your child show they have low, balanced, intense, or out-of-control energy?

Low	Balanced	Intense	Out-of-control
<input type="checkbox"/> Sick	<input type="checkbox"/> Happy	<input type="checkbox"/> Hyper	<input type="checkbox"/> Mad/Angry
<input type="checkbox"/> Sad	<input type="checkbox"/> Calm	<input type="checkbox"/> Worried	<input type="checkbox"/> Mean
<input type="checkbox"/> Tired	<input type="checkbox"/> Focused	<input type="checkbox"/> Silly/Wiggly	<input type="checkbox"/> Yelling/Hitting
<input type="checkbox"/> Bored	<input type="checkbox"/> Ready to learn and connect	<input type="checkbox"/> Anxious	<input type="checkbox"/> Loss of ability to reason
<input type="checkbox"/> Moving slowly		<input type="checkbox"/> Excited	<input type="checkbox"/> Ready to fight



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“When little people are overwhelmed by big emotions, it's our job to share our calm, not to join the chaos.”

L.R. Knost