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## FACTSHEET

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Ministry of Education

### **BACK TO SCHOOL TIPS FOR HEALTHY STUDENTS**

#### **All Students:**

- Insist your children eat breakfast every day as it provides necessary fuel for the brain to learn and helps maintain a healthy weight.
- Keep nutritious foods, like cut-up fruit and vegetables, cheese sticks, low-fat yogurt and butter-free popcorn, on hand to make healthy snacking easy.
- Encourage your children to choose milk or water at meals, instead of sugary drinks or pop.
- Get your children active by participating in sports, or go for nightly family walks or bike rides. Try a family swim or skate.
- Schedule regular medical and dental checkups.

#### **Primary Students**

- Include a variety of fruits and vegetables in your children's snacks and lunches every day.
- Have your children help pack their lunch so they can learn to make healthy choices early on.
- Help your children learn about and understand Canada's Food Guide.
- Take family walks with your children. If possible walk with your children to school, or co-ordinate with other parents to allow for youngsters to safely walk to school.
- Introduce your children to active games they can play on their own such as jumping rope, playing hopscotch or four square. When more children are around, introduce tag, baseball or soccer. Get outside and play at recess, lunch and after school. Use every piece of equipment in the school playground.
- Set a regular teeth-brushing routine and ensure your children brush and floss correctly.

#### **Intermediate/Middle School Students**

- When feasible, encourage alternate forms of transportation instead of getting a ride. Use the walking school bus in your neighbourhood if you have one or start one.
- Suggest your children take the dog for a walk before and after school. Sign up for a program at your local recreation centre. Try a family swim or skate session. Take part in community events like the Terry Fox run.
- Continue to encourage healthy eating habits in your teenagers. Use Canada's Food Guide to plan healthy meals and snacks as they have different nutritional needs.
- Teach your children to eat more nutritious snacks and avoid foods that are high in sugar, fat and sodium.

#### **Secondary Students**

- Encourage your teenagers to participate in intra-mural or after school sports.
- Help your teenagers explore new physical activities. Suggest a class at the local community centre or encourage them to participate in a walking or hiking group.
- Place your older children in charge of some of the family's meals and grocery shopping so they learn how to buy, prepare and enjoy nutritious meals using Canada's Food Guide.
- Encourage teens to get plenty of rest to ensure they are alert and ready to learn.