

Parent Health Connection

TIPS FOR PARENTS

Health = Success in Learning!

You can help your child succeed in school.
Healthy children are better learners! (Health Canada, 2002)

Why?

Test results, classroom learning and overall health are directly linked to what your children eat, how much they sleep, their routines and how much physical activity they get. As a parent you can provide healthy family habits that will last a lifetime *and* improve your child's success in school.



Who?

Great for grade 3 and grade 6 students who are preparing for the provincial testing, but useful for all students and their families.

What?

An easy-to-use chart to track and monitor healthy habits and routines at home. The chart includes: Healthy Eating, Healthy Activity, Healthy Relationships and Healthy Environment.

Where?

At home! All the suggestions and chart activities were created with your child's home life and home routines in mind.

When?

You can start charting any time, but it is helpful to begin one month before the provincial testing (EQAO testing is usually at the end of May or early June). Using this chart will encourage the healthy routines and behaviours that can lead to success.

How?

- Read the **Health = Success in Learning!** *Parent Health Connection* tip sheet.
- Decide together which new healthy habits you will add to your day.
- Commit to at least three healthy lifestyle goals. You could go to bed earlier, eat breakfast every day, or be creative and add your own goal.
- Post the tracking chart in a visible area of your home (the fridge, your child's bedroom door or wall).
- Place a check mark ✓ next to the healthy behaviours accomplished each day.

Last year's results:

Students: Over 90 per cent said the chart helped them make healthier choices. Almost 80 percent told us they established new routines. Many students said they became more responsible for their own health behaviours and felt more able to make positive changes in their lives.

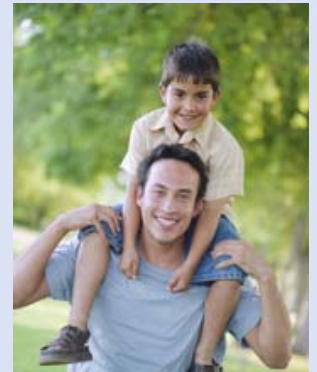
Teachers: Over 40 per cent commented that participants were more alert and attentive in class. Over half the teachers noticed positive changes in their students.

Parents: Over 70 per cent reported healthy changes at home. More than 90 per cent of the parents noticed an increase in their child's knowledge of health topics.

Help your child do well in school *and* give them the knowledge and skills to make healthy choices today and for a lifetime

Parenting is the most important and rewarding job you will ever do!

York Region



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Health=Success in Learning Chart

Copies available in:

Chinese
Punjabi
Tamil
Urdu

For more information contact:
Health Connection
1-800-361-5653
or visit
www.york.ca/healthyschools





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TIPS FOR PARENTS

Health = Success in Learning!

Research shows that healthy children are better learners. All parents want their children to feel good about themselves and succeed in school.

The healthy habits you have at home concerning healthy eating, activities, relationships and the environment can have a positive effect on your child's educational experience.

Recommended Websites

Active 2010
www.pausetoplay.ca

www.pausetoplay.ca/e_stay_fit.asp

www.pausetoplay.ca/e_interactive_muscle_machine.asp

Health Canada: Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide
www.canadasfoodguide.net

MV Parents
www.mvparents.com

People for Education
www.peopleforeducation.com

Ontario Ministry of Education:
Reach Every Student
www.edu.gov.on.ca/abc123

Sleep for Kids
www.sleepforkids.org

York Region School Services
www.york.ca/healthyschools

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Healthy Eating

Having your child eat a nutritious breakfast is an important step you can take to help your child succeed at school. Research shows that eating breakfast improves children's thinking, memory, problem-solving skills and helps them stay alert in school. Preparing a healthy breakfast made with foods from at least three food groups from Canada's Food Guide is one way to make sure your child gets the right nutrients to begin the school day. For example, try a whole grain cereal with milk and a banana, or even healthy leftovers from the night before.

Talk to your child about the foods they like and dislike and have them help prepare meals and pack a healthy lunch. Giving them choices of healthy foods will improve the chance that they will eat and enjoy the meal you have prepared.

Check out our nutrition fact sheets in the section on *Nutrition for School Aged Kids* at www.york.ca/healthyschools.



Healthy Activity

Studies show that physical activity has many positive effects on educational success for children. These include improvements in problem-solving skills, concentration, test scores and classroom behaviour.

Low physical activity levels combined with poor nutrition indicate this generation of children may not live longer than their parents do

Although it is not easy to keep track of your child's activity during the school day, there are many ways to help your child get the recommended 90 minutes of physical activity per day. You can set an example for your child by becoming physically active yourself. Instead of taking the elevator, use the stairs. Instead of video games and television, spend time with your child by playing their favourite sport or going on a family walk around the neighborhood. Even adding 10 minutes of activity 3 times throughout the day can make a difference.

Children need time to relax and play after school so be careful not to overload them with too many structured after-school activities. Relaxed playtime is linked with development of memory and language skills, imagination and thinking patterns. Talk with your child and offer choices so that the activities will be more fulfilling and enjoyable.

Parenting is the most important and rewarding job you will ever do!



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Healthy Relationships

Children do well when they can:

- communicate
- solve problems
- manage feelings and impulses
- understand the feelings of others
- form trusting relationships

You can help your child by:

- teaching and acknowledging feelings
- supporting your child's skills and interests
- asking for their opinions
- really listening
- teaching empathy, kindness and manners
- turning mistakes into learning
- apologizing when in error
- appreciating successes
- teaching problem solving
- following through with consequences
- teaching traditions, beliefs and values

*Children need to feel valued.
Your smiles, hugs and undivided
attention show love and caring.*

When parents are involved in their child's school community, their child performs better academically and stays in school longer. You can help when you work as a team with the school by:

- making sure your child knows school rules
- knowing your child's friends
- making their friends welcome
- expecting success, responsible choices and behaviour
- teaching consistent study habits
- establishing a specific time and quiet place for homework

Healthy Schools, Healthy Kids!

York Region Community and Health Services joins with parents, students and teachers to create safe and healthy schools. Volunteer to be on your Healthy School Committee to make the most of your child's learning experience.

Parenting is the most important and rewarding job you will ever do!

Healthy Environment

A healthy home environment can influence how children behave and learn in school.



Studies show that family routines are important for academic success. Agree on rules that your child must follow at home regarding homework, television and chores. Remember to be clear about family expectations and provide lots of praise for positive behaviour. Sharing a meal together every day is a great way to enjoy family time.

*Turn mistakes, loss, failure
and disappointment into
learning experiences.*

If bedtime and mornings are difficult for your child, make a plan together and stick to it. Mornings can be easier if you plan ahead the night before. Spend time together making lunches and getting the next day's clothes ready. You can make bedtime enjoyable and comforting for your child by reading a favourite storybook or singing together. Children who have regular bedtime routines perform better academically.

*Children between the ages of
5 and 12 need 10 to 11 hours
of sleep every night.*

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***Healthy
kids are
better
learners!***

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For more
information contact:
Health Connection
1-800-361-5653
or visit
[www.york.ca/
healthyschools](http://www.york.ca/healthyschools)

March 2009

_____ 's Health = Success in Learning Chart for month of: _____

Healthy Habits	Week One							Week Two							Week Three							Week Four													
	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S							
Healthy Eating																																			
✓ Ate a healthy breakfast based on Canada's Food Guide*																																			
✓ Helped prepare a healthy meal																																			
✓ Other																																			
Healthy Activity																																			
✓ Took part in a physical activity outside of school																																			
✓ Slept between 10 and 11 hours																																			
✓ Other																																			
Healthy Relationships																																			
✓ Spent time with family																																			
✓ Had support from family with homework																																			
✓ Other																																			
Healthy Environment																																			
✓ Followed a regular routine for homework																																			
✓ Kept to regular morning and night-time routines																																			
✓ Other																																			

* To get a copy of Canada's Food Guide please visit www.canadasfoodguide.net (multicultural versions are available)

Use this monthly chart with your child to monitor healthy routines throughout the school year or before a major test or exam.

Try to include a healthy habit from each of the four areas and add your own!

If you would like more copies or have questions, please call

Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653 and ask to speak to a Public Health Nurse.

