

## Getting on board; Working together to keep our children healthy

New Brunswick has a school nutrition policy called Healthier Foods and Nutrition in Public Schools but you may be asking yourself...

WHY IS THIS POLICY SO IMPORTANT?

*Fact:* 24% of New Brunswick's children from the ages of 12 and 17 years old are either overweight or obese

- At least 1 out of every 4 children in NB is overweight or obese
- In a class of 30 students, 7 or 8 of them would be overweight or obese

*As a result of obesity it is possible that for the first time in history our children may have a shorter lifespan than their parents.*



WHY DOES IT MATTER WHAT FOODS ARE AVAILABLE IN SCHOOLS?

*Fact:* School aged children typically consume between 30-50% of their daily food and beverage intake during school hours

*When children are well nourished they are better able to learn. Concentration, memory and behaviour improve in children who are well nourished.*

At least 80% of premature heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and 40% of cancers could be prevented through healthy diet, regular physical activity and avoidance of tobacco products.

**Keeping our kids healthy is everyone's responsibility!**



## WHAT IS POLICY 711 AND HOW WILL IT HELP?

Policy 711 (Healthier Foods and Nutrition in Public Schools) applies to all public schools in New Brunswick. It promotes the consumption of healthy foods and beverages and provides an environment that maximizes the students' ability to learn and succeed. It applies wherever and whenever food or beverages are sold or offered at school including cafeterias, vending machines, canteens, hot lunch and breakfast programs as well as fundraising endeavors organized by schools or students.



Schools can directly influence student's health and behaviours. It is important to recognize that young people learn better and achieve more when they are healthy. Policy 711 encourages healthy lifestyle choices, and promotes students' wellbeing. Incorporating health into all aspects of school and learning is crucial to preventing childhood obesity and other chronic diseases! The good news is that by getting the participation and support of families and the entire school community, we CAN make a difference...

## AS A PARENT, WHAT CAN I DO?

There are many things parents can do to support Policy 711:

- Support and advocate for healthy food and beverage options throughout your school
- Be a positive role model for healthy eating habits!
- Offer teachers ideas for non food rewards to acknowledge student behaviour or achievement (ex. Reward class with extra gym time rather than giving candy)
- Get students involved with decisions around the foods offered in their school
- Reinforce school efforts by sending in healthy food and beverages from home
- Provide healthy options if asked to donate for a special event at the school

**Childhood obesity is preventable.**

**By working together, we CAN make a difference!**

Dietitians working at Public health, zone 3

