

# Comprehensive School Health

## What is Mindfulness?

A state of active, open attention on the present moment. When you're mindful, you observe your thoughts and feelings from a distance, without judging them good or bad. Instead of letting your life pass you by, mindfulness means living in the moment and awakening to experience.



(Gina Biegel, Stressed Teens Program, 2012).

### 10 practical tips to start being more mindful right now:

- Take a couple of minutes to notice your breathing. Sense the flow of the breath, the rise and fall of your belly.
- Notice what you are doing as you are doing it and tune into your senses. When you are eating, notice the colour, texture and taste of the food.
- When you are walking, tune into how your weight shifts and the sensations in the bottom of your feet. Focus less on where you are headed.
- Don't feel that you need to fill up all your time with doing. Take some time to simply be.
- When your mind wanders to thinking, gently bring it back to your breath.
- Recognize that thoughts are simply thoughts; you don't need to believe them or react to them.
- Practice listening without making judgments.
- Notice where you tend to zone out (e.g., driving, emailing or texting, web surfing, feeding the dog, doing dishes, brushing teeth, etc.). Practise bringing more awareness to that activity.
- Spend time in nature.
- Notice how the mind likes to constantly judge. Don't take it seriously. It's not who you are.

Reference: [www.mindfulness.org](http://www.mindfulness.org)

### Inside this issue:

**Mindful Eating** 2

**Healthy Eating and Holidays** 2

**Vegetable and Cheese Recipe** 2

**How Canada Stacks Up** 3

**Tails From the Trail** 3

**Increase your Activity** 3

**Reduce Radon** 4

**Youth Smoking Susceptibility** 4

**Hand Washing for Health** 4

“Stop, breathe, look around and embrace the miracle of each day, the miracle of life.”

— Jeffrey A. White

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## Mindful Eating



Have you or your family ever stopped to really think about what you are eating, or why you eat what you do each day? Do you eat the same thing for breakfast every day or sometimes eat a large popcorn just because it is there?

People eat for many different reasons including to fuel the body, celebrations, out of habit, boredom, or to help cope with emotions. If we eat our food too quickly we don't really taste it and we may eat too much. Mindful eating can help us to improve the way we think about food, enjoy our food more and be healthier.

Here are some tips to help your family become mindful eaters:

- When you are eating, pay attention with all of your senses. Look at the colours on your plate, smell the aroma of the homemade soup, feel the texture of the avocado in your mouth, enjoy the taste of squash grown in a local garden.
- Make the healthy choice the easy choice. Your family will be more likely to eat vegetables and fruit if they are available and easy to grab. Place a bowl of fresh fruit on the table. Have washed, cut vegetables on hand in the refrigerator.
- Limit distractions such as electronics when the family is eating. Focus on the family and the food you are eating. Share stories about your day.
- Take time to eat your meals. Aim for 20 minutes to eat each meal. Put your fork down between bites. Chew your food well. Think about where the different foods have come from.
- Be aware of hunger and satiety (feeling full) cues to guide your decisions to begin and end eating.

Adapted from Centre for Mindful Eating

## Healthy Eating During the Holidays

Food is everywhere during the holiday season making it hard to stick with healthy eating and exercise habits. But with a little planning and attention you can make it through the holiday season without spinning out of control. Below are some ideas that might work for you and your family.

- Eat regularly: Skipping meals can lead to over eating – “in the holiday rush do not forget breakfast”. By eating regular meals you will not be hungry and will be less tempted to overeat at parties or gatherings.
- Load up with colour: Tis the season for red and green. Fill half your plate with vegetables and fruit. Choose fresh veggies, leafy green salads, fruit and vegetable soups as starters to holiday meals or healthy snacks.
- Enjoy your holiday favourites: Enjoy the special foods like short bread cookies, peanut butter balls, pies, turkey with stuffing, mashed potatoes but keep your portions in check. Use smaller plates; do not feel that you need to clean your plate at every meal or snack.
- Be active: Balance out holiday eating with holiday activities.

## Vegetable and Cheese Christmas Tree Platter recipe

Serves about 8

### Ingredients

- 3 cups fresh broccoli
- 2 cups grape tomatoes
- 1/3 cup white cheddar cheese, cut into cubes
- 1/2 cup sharp cheddar cheese, cut into cubes
- 1/4 cup carrots, sliced



### Directions:

1. Arrange the broccoli florets on a large serving platter in the shape of a tree. Place tomatoes in horizontal lines along the tree to make a garland. Sprinkle chopped carrots over the florets to make brightly coloured ornaments.
2. To form the base, stack the white cheddar cheese cubes in a stump formation. Using the yellow cheddar cheese, make an asterisk (or star) shape and place that on the top of the tree.
3. Serve with your favourite vegetable dipping sauce.

Colleen MacDonald-Briggs, Registered Dietitian  
Public Health, Horizon Health Network

# HOW CANADA STACKS UP

In 2014, 15 countries released a Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth based on the Active Healthy Kids Canada Model. Here are the results:



OVERALL PHYSICAL ACTIVITY	ORGANIZED SPORT PARTICIPATION	ACTIVE PLAY	ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION	SEDENTARY BEHAVIOURS	FAMILY & PEERS	SCHOOL	COMMUNITY & THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT	GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES & INVESTMENTS
Mozambique <b>B</b>	New Zealand <b>B</b>	New Zealand <b>B</b>	Finland <b>B</b>	Ghana <b>B</b>	Australia <b>C</b>	England <b>A-</b>	Australia <b>A-</b>	Colombia <b>B</b>
New Zealand <b>B</b>	Australia <b>B-</b>	Kenya <b>C</b>	Kenya <b>B</b>	Kenya <b>B</b>	Canada <b>C</b>	Finland <b>B</b>	Canada <b>B+</b>	Finland <b>B</b>
Mexico <b>C+</b>	Canada <b>C+</b>	Mozambique <b>C</b>	Mozambique <b>B</b>	New Zealand <b>C</b>	Finland <b>C</b>	Australia <b>B-</b>	England <b>B</b>	Scotland <b>B</b>
Kenya <b>C</b>	Finland <b>C</b>	Nigeria <b>C-</b>	Nigeria <b>B</b>	Ireland <b>C-</b>	Kenya <b>C</b>	New Zealand <b>B-</b>	Finland <b>B</b>	South Africa <b>B</b>
Nigeria <b>C</b>	Ghana <b>C</b>	Finland <b>D</b>	Mexico <b>B-</b>	Colombia <b>D</b>	New Zealand <b>C</b>	Canada <b>C+</b>	Ireland <b>B</b>	Australia <b>C+</b>
England <b>D+</b>	Kenya <b>C</b>	Australia <b>INC</b>	England <b>C</b>	Finland <b>D</b>	Scotland <b>D-</b>	Kenya <b>C</b>	Scotland <b>B</b>	Canada <b>C</b>
Colombia <b>D</b>	South Africa <b>C</b>	Canada <b>INC</b>	Scotland <b>C</b>	Mexico <b>D</b>	Colombia <b>INC</b>	Mozambique <b>C</b>	United States <b>B-</b>	Kenya <b>C</b>
Ghana <b>D</b>	England <b>C-</b>	Colombia <b>INC</b>	South Africa <b>C</b>	United States <b>D</b>	England <b>INC</b>	Ireland <b>C-</b>	New Zealand <b>C</b>	Mexico <b>C</b>
Finland <b>D</b>	Ireland <b>C-</b>	England <b>INC</b>	New Zealand <b>C-</b>	Australia <b>D-</b>	Ghana <b>INC</b>	United States <b>C-</b>	Ghana <b>D</b>	Mozambique <b>C</b>
South Africa <b>D</b>	United States <b>C-</b>	Ghana <b>INC</b>	Australia <b>D</b>	Canada <b>F</b>	Ireland <b>INC</b>	Ghana <b>D</b>	South Africa <b>D</b>	Ghana <b>D</b>
Australia <b>D-</b>	Colombia <b>D</b>	Ireland <b>INC</b>	Canada <b>D</b>	Nigeria <b>F</b>	Mexico <b>INC</b>	Mexico <b>D</b>	Mexico <b>F</b>	England <b>INC</b>
Canada <b>D-</b>	Mexico <b>D</b>	Mexico <b>INC</b>	Ghana <b>D</b>	Scotland <b>F</b>	Mozambique <b>INC</b>	South Africa <b>D</b>	Mozambique <b>F</b>	Ireland <b>INC</b>
Ireland <b>D-</b>	Mozambique <b>F</b>	Scotland <b>INC</b>	Ireland <b>D</b>	South Africa <b>F</b>	Nigeria <b>INC</b>	Colombia <b>F</b>	Colombia <b>INC</b>	New Zealand <b>INC</b>
United States <b>D-</b>	Nigeria <b>INC</b>	South Africa <b>INC</b>	United States <b>F</b>	England <b>INC</b>	South Africa <b>INC</b>	Nigeria <b>INC</b>	Kenya <b>INC</b>	United States <b>INC</b>
Scotland <b>F</b>	Scotland <b>INC</b>	United States <b>INC</b>	Colombia <b>INC</b>	Mozambique <b>INC</b>	United States <b>INC</b>		Nigeria <b>INC</b>	Nigeria <b>INC</b>

Source: Active Healthy Kids Canada (2014). Is Canada in the Running? The 2014 Active Healthy Kids Canada Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth. Toronto: Active Healthy Kids Canada.



## Tales From the Trail

What do Mitchell Kean and Hannah Trites have in common? Both student-athletes have a pretty cool streak going, neither has lost a cross country running event in the Fredericton area since they started running cross country.

Mitchell is a grade 8 student at Nashwaaksis Middle School, is also a high level soccer and hockey player who runs. Hannah is already an accomplished track & field athlete who skis in the winter and plays just about every sport she can at Bliss Carman. Hannah started her streak while running for Liverpool Street School.



## Cross Country

It was an exciting fall of cross country running with over 1000 students representing their schools in various district, regional and provincial meets around the province

## Tips to Increase Your Child's Physical Activity Levels

### 1. Active Play

-allow them to play freely after school or on weekends, find a few friends and head to the local playground

### 2. Active Transportation

-did you know that kids who don't walk to school lose up to 2000 steps a day

### 3. Reduce Screen Time

-rather than giving them a tablet, encourage them to head outside and play

### 4. Be a Role Model

-live an active life and be a good role model who promotes active living



# Reduce Radon

Reducing radon levels in your home  
... for your children's health.



Radon is a harmful gas that comes from uranium in the ground. Radon gas can move into your home through cracks or gaps in the foundation. You can't see it, taste it or smell it. Almost all homes have some radon.

High levels of radon increase the risk of developing lung cancer. If you and your children are exposed to cigarette smoke and elevated radon, the risk of lung cancer is even higher.

Use a simple, three-month radon test kit to find out the radon level in your home. You can buy a test kit at some hardware stores or online.



If the test shows you have a high radon level, visit [reduceradon.ca](http://reduceradon.ca) to find out what you or your landlord can do.



Do not allow anyone to smoke inside your home.

[www.reduce-radon.ca](http://www.reduce-radon.ca)



[www.healthyenvironmentforkids.ca](http://www.healthyenvironmentforkids.ca)

## How Susceptible Are Our Youth to Start Smoking?

Did you know that in New Brunswick, grade 12 students who have tried smoking reported smoking their first whole cigarette by the age of 14? Since tobacco use is a leading cause of preventable illness, disability and death in Canada, it is important that families, teachers and other community leaders take action to prevent our youth from starting to smoke.

Key factors that may influence youth to become smokers have been highlighted through the findings from the *New Brunswick Student Wellness Survey (2012/13)* which show that students in grades 8, 9, and 10 as well as male students in grades 6 through 12 are at particularly high risk for future smoking.

Furthermore youth susceptible to smoking most likely:

- are children of or siblings to a smoker,
- live in households with no "no smoking" ban,
- rode in vehicles with a smoker in the week before the survey,
- have friends who smoke,
- have average to poor academic performance, and/or
- are less connected to their schools.

To learn more, download the New Brunswick Anti-Tobacco Coalition's evidence brief - [Susceptibility to Smoking Amongst Youth in New Brunswick.](#)

Submitted by Nathalie Landry, Communications Coordinator, NB Anti-Tobacco Coalition

## Glitter Bug Hand Show

Glitter Bug is a clever invention that not only helps you to visualize where germs lurk, but also how to properly wash your hands.



## Hand Washing for Health: 5 Facts

- Hand washing with soap is a do it yourself way to prevent infection.
- It is very cost effective in preventing the spread of disease.
- Everyone can protect health by hand washing.
- Water alone is not enough, use regular soap (not anti-bacterial soap).
- It is critical to wash your hands after going to the bathroom and before handling food.

For more information go to: <http://globalhandwashing.org/>

Contact us for more information or to borrow the **Glitter Bug Hand Show** kit for classroom use.

**CSH Newsletter Produced and Edited by:**

**Pat Kilfillen (Oromocto)**  
**Robert Knox (Woodstock)**  
**Julie McConaghy (Woodstock)**  
**Marg Milburn (Fredericton)**