



Comprehensive School Health

Health and wellness goals have always been a priority at Harvey Elementary school and it is understood that if students are well, then learning can take place. Harvey Elementary School has been practicing some mindfulness and yoga for a few years. Now they are being offered to all students and staff and are delivered in a variety of ways.

Katherine M. Szo recently received her instructor certification for teaching yoga in schools and has incorporated yoga in various ways at the school. There is a k-2 yoga club and a 3-5 yoga club that are offered weekly. In an attempt to help students with anxiety, worry, focus and control of their emotions, she offers a “Mindfulness Monday” group for girls and the same thing for boys during "Warrior Wednesday". Yoga and Mindfulness are also incorporated into health and literacy classes.

The students are really enjoying the classes.....some of the things they are saying about the yoga clubs are:

"I enjoy coming to yoga club because it helps me to relax and to get in the green zone" (each staff and student has recently been trained in Zones of Regulation),

"I always feel better leaving than when I arrive.",

"It makes me feel better about myself", "It allows me to get away from a stressful situation"

"It helps me to concentrate",

"It gives me strategies to calm myself",

"It teaches me to be calm and patient",

"It is good for my muscles, It makes me strong", "Yoga is calming, it's fun, it's awesome." :)

A 'yoga' room has been set up in the school and the outdoor classroom is used for yoga when the weather is nice. Staff have the opportunity to take part in a weekly yoga practice after school as well. More recently the PSSC approached Katherine to offer a yoga class in the evenings making it also available to the community.

Please see below for more mindfulness links:

<http://www.shambhala.com/sitting-still-like-a-frog.html>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_mZbzDOpylA

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GIJn5XhqPN8>



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"Exercise is another tool at your disposal, and it's handy because it's something you can prescribe for yourself,"

– John J. Ratey,

Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain



March is Nutrition Month!

Eating well can boost your health and help you feel your best. Instead of trying to change everything at once focus on making small lasting changes and stick with it. Each week in March try the below tips to make small positive changes to your meals and snacks.

Week 1: Pledge to make small changes: Take stock of your cupboards, fridge and freezer.

- Vegetables and fruit: fresh or plain frozen, dried or canned
- Whole grains: oats, barley, quinoa, pasta, cereals, crackers, breads
- Milk Products: milk, cheese, yogurt, kefir
- Nuts, seeds and nut butters: pumpkin seeds, flax, natural peanut butter
- Canned and dried pulses: lentils, chick peas, kidney beans
- Fish: plain, frozen, fish fillets, canned tuna, salmon
- Meat, poultry and eggs: fresh cuts of red meat, turkey, chicken and eggs



Week 2: Quality counts: Take small steps to bump up the quality of your meals and snacks: Jump start your day: Power through your morning with a good breakfast.

In a hurry? Blend frozen berries, yogurt and milk for a super smoothie. Make it even better with baby spinach and ground flax. Wrap peanut butter, a banana and trail mix in a whole grain tortilla for a portable breakfast.

Week 3: Prioritize your portion size: How much you eat is just as important as what you eat. Wondering if you are eating too much or too little? Use your hand and try these estimates.

- 1 cup of leafy green vegetables or 1 whole piece of fruit = 1 fist
- Fresh, frozen or canned vegetables = 1/2 fist
- 1 slice of bread or 1/2 bagel = 1 hand
- 1 cup milk or 3/4 cup of yogurt = 1 fist
- 50 grams of cheese = 2 thumbs
- Serving of chicken = palm of hand
- 3/4 cup pulses (e.g. lentils, black beans, chick peas)=1 fist



Week 4: Try something new! Think healthy eating is bland? Give new life to a favorite food!

- Red pepper flakes deliver delicious heat to lightly sautéed fresh or frozen greens.
- Grainy mustard and lemon adds tangy freshness to fish, like cod.
- A dash of nutmeg is neat on carrots, butternut squash and parsnips.
- Curry livens up lentil soup and makes a tofu- and -veggie stir-fry sizzle.
- Cinnamon pairs sweetly with apples, pears and sweet potatoes.

Week 5: Make it stick: Planning how you will manage healthy eating road blocks before they happen is the key to success:

- Think about what might get in your way to healthy eating.
- Brainstorm solutions to get around roadblocks.
- Put supportive strategies in place. Recruit family and friends to help on your path to healthier eating.

A slip in healthy eating habits is a learning opportunity. When it happens, review your plan, adjust as needed and get back on track.

For more information about Nutrition Month go to: www.NutritionMonth2016.ca

Dietitians, Public Health, Horizon Health Network.

Beating the Winter Blues



BOKS is a free, before school physical activity program, funded by Reebok, Public Health Agency of Canada, and the Canadian Football League. This program is evidence-based, built around science suggesting that exercising in the morning sparks children's brains and assists them to be better prepared for learning. BOKS is running in over 1300 schools worldwide; over 170 of these in Canada. There are eight schools in NB that have either begun the BOKS program or have expressed an interest and are awaiting Principal approval.

BOKS does not need to be led by a staff member of the school. The program can be led by any Champion of Change in a community; a parent, grandparent, volunteer or other community member. Free virtual training modules are offered to lead trainers who are also granted access to the Canadian Trainer Hub and provided a paper copy of the Canadian BOKS Curriculum for their school.

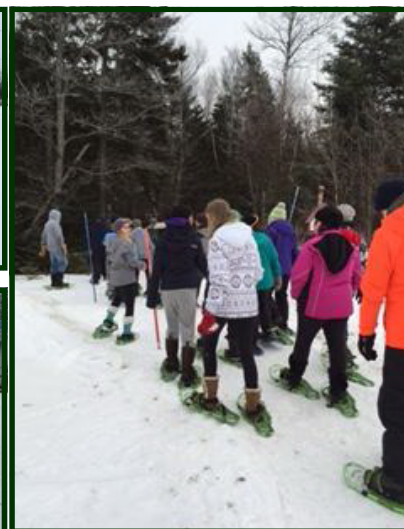
For more information see boksCanada@bokskids.org

Gagetown School Snowshoeing Club

Staff members from Gagetown School have started a Snowshoeing club and go out to enjoy the wonderful view nearby the school. The Club is composed of teachers and support staff, promoting physical and mental fitness for all as they "walk through" the Winter Blues! .



Meduxnekeag School Staying Active in Winter



Limiting Screen Time

Today, many children have some sort of device that has a screen they can look at; whether it is a cell phone, a tablet, or television. Studies are now showing that children spend almost 7.5 hours a day looking at screens—that's a complete work day (Participaction, 2013). Guidelines suggest that children ages 5-17 should limit their screen time to no more than 2 hours a day (Jones, 2015). This means that some children are spending more than 5 hours above the recommended screen time. Activity and play are valuable in the development of a child's brain. By engaging with your child and getting them active, you help them develop creativity, problem solving, and many other important skills. So why not get them away from the screens for a while, and try something fun!

Here are some winter activities to do with your child instead of spending time in front of a screen:

Go skating or sliding

Play outside, build a snowman

Paint or draw pictures

Play cards or board games

Cook with your children- pick a favorite recipe and help them make it.

There are lots of fun and exciting activities to do instead of sitting in front of a screen.

Try something new and see how much fun you can have!

For more information you can visit these websites:

http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/limiting_screen_time_at_home

<http://www.participaction.com>

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References:

Participaction. (2013). Learn the Facts. <http://www.participaction.com/make-room-for-play-/learn-the-facts/>

Jones, R. (2015). How to use technology to limit kids' screen time.

<http://blog.participaction.com/en/how-to-use-technology-to-limit-kids-screen-time/>



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Sarah Mahar was one of 7 guest readers for Family Literacy Day at Townsview School