

Healthy Beginnings



Healthy Beginnings e-newsletter Fall 2015

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A new guide for protecting and promoting health in child care

Child care providers are entrusted with the important task of caring for young children. Children depend upon their care providers to maintain a safe and healthy environment to grow and develop.

[A Public Health Guide For Child Care Providers](#) provides evidence-based recommendations on how to maintain a safe and healthy environment in child care centres.

This updated guide (formerly known as the Come Grow with Us manual) is now online!

The guide includes information on:

- Preventing illness
- Outbreak management
- Immunization and health records
- Safe environments
- Healthy growth and development

There is also a user-friendly glossary as well as resource pages and links to references.

The guide is available to the public in two online versions, a digital flip book and an accessible pdf. For more information, contact Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653.

Bounce Back & Thrive!

Bounce Back & Thrive! (BBT) is a free program offered by York Region Public Health to parents and caregivers of children between one and eight years of age. This interactive 10-week resiliency skills training course is led by two Public Health Nurses (RNs).

Participants learn how to help themselves and their children "bounce back" from everyday stresses, calmly solve problems and conflicts and help their children handle disappointment, anger and frustration. These skills will help participants and their children feel good about themselves and become confident and hopeful about the future.

BBT is offered during the day and in the evening. Programs run once a week for ten weeks and sessions are two hours long. BBT is available at locations throughout York Region. Child minding and transportation may be available.

To register, visit york.ca/parenting or for more information call York Region Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653.



Members of the Healthy Beginnings Committee

Child & Family Health

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Health Protection

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What's New in Consumer and Professional Resources (new and revised resources)

Consumer

- [Caffeine and your health](#)
- [Calcium the non-dairy way](#)
- [Guide to eating fish for women, children and families brochure](#) and wallet card
- [Healthy eating on the go](#)
- [Healthy meals for fast-paced lives](#)
- [How to build a healthy toddler](#) and [How to build a healthy preschooler](#), 2015 (NutriSTEP® inserts)
- [How to feed your growing child ages 2-5](#)

- [Nutri-eSTEP promotional parent flyer](#)
- [Storybooks about food for babies and young children](#)
- [The truth about fruit juices and drinks](#)
- [Healthy weight gain during pregnancy](#)
- [Trust me, Trust My Tummy: Feeding Cues 6-24 months](#) video

Professional

- [NutriSTEP® description and order form](#)

Nighttime feeds are normal

“When will my baby start sleeping through the night?” Every health care and early years professional has been asked this question. Tired parents are often looking forward to longer sleep periods. They may be feeling pressure from family or friends that equate “good parenting” with getting the baby to sleep through the night.

The fact is nighttime feeds are normal. Babies need to eat around the clock. In fact, babies can take up to a third of their calories during the night.

Unfortunately, many parents are given advice by well-meaning family and friends to encourage a baby to sleep longer. These techniques (“crying it out”, introducing solids before 6 months) can

create stress to both baby and parents and can lead to health consequences for the baby such as insufficient intake of calories.

You can support families by:

- Saying feeding throughout the night is normal
- Reinforcing safe sleep practices (baby in room within arm’s reach of mother, on back)
- Creating calm environment for nighttime feeds
- Reminding mothers to take naps during day “sleep when baby sleeps”

Reinforce with the families you work with the importance of responding to their baby’s needs, night and day.



Specialty feeding products: why not?

Specialty feeding products, like rice rusks, food puffs, baby food squeeze pouches and mesh feeding bags have become popular.

Here is why parents should save their money and avoid these convenience products.

Rice rusks and food puffs

These products are made of mostly refined grains and flavouring with very little or no real fruit or vegetables. They should not replace healthy foods. These products dissolve in the mouth which does not help babies learn and practice the important skill of chewing.

Baby food squeeze pouches

Eating pureed foods from squeeze pouches does not help babies learn how to chew. Seeing, touching and smelling food is part of the learning process, so when food is hidden in pouches, children do not get exposure to the food.

Offering them frequently can also become a dental concern. When children suck on the pouches, the natural sugars in the fruit sit in the mouth and can lead to tooth decay, much the way juice does.

Mesh feeding bags

Placing food in a mesh feeding bag does not help babies learn how to chew. Many parents offer these to lower the risk of choking but if parents offer soft mashed or cut up foods based on babies developmental needs and seat their baby upright in a highchair when eating, their risk of choking is almost the same as an adult. Parents often get gagging and choking confused.

Mesh feeding bags should not be used as a teething tool since placing frozen fruit in it can also lead to tooth decay, just as the squeeze pouches can. Also, they are likely to have bacteria since they are difficult to clean.

Remind parents:

- That these products do not help babies and toddlers learn how to eat
- To offer food that is developmentally appropriate. This means for babies, food may be spoon-fed, minced or cut-up. For toddlers and preschoolers, food is generally cut into small pieces, called [finger foods](#). For parents who are concerned about choking risk, refer them to our [choking prevention tips](#) fact sheet.
- To offer foods from [Canada's Food Guide](#), including fruit, vegetables, whole grains and meat and meat alternatives (e.g. beans, eggs, fish) rather than relying on convenience products
- That babies and young children need a variety of food and textures to learn good eating habits
- To avoid or limit rice rusks, food puffs or baby food squeeze pouches. If they are used, only offer with healthy foods as part of a meal or snack. For squeeze pouches, pour contents into a bowl and encourage self-feeding with a spoon and choose varieties with whole fruit and vegetables as the only ingredients.
- Mesh feeding bags are simply not needed
- Not to offer any of these products as a way to sooth or occupy a child's attention
- To eat together as a way to role model healthy eating



Beware of homemade infant formula

In November 2014, Health Canada, the Canadian Paediatric Society and Dietitians of Canada issued a warning for parents about the possible risks of homemade infant formula recipes. These recipes, often found on the internet, are not recommended.

Homemade infant formulas may have harmful bacteria and incorrect amounts of nutrients to meet a baby's needs, which can lead to severe malnutrition and possible fatal illnesses.

Websites promoting homemade infant formulas say that the ingredients are more "natural" and offer health benefits over the ingredients in commercial infant formula.

It's important to know that commercial infant formula companies must comply with safety and nutritional quality standards before being sold in Canada.

So while breastfeeding exclusively for the first six months with continued breastfeeding for two years and beyond is what is recommended, some

parents feed with infant formula. These parents need to be supported and be provided information so that they are making an informed decision. That includes letting them know about the risks of making homemade infant formula.

What you can do

- Remind parents that only commercial infant formulas are safe to offer, when prepared according to the instructions found in the York Region [Infant formula](#) fact sheet.
- If a parent is concerned about their milk production, encourage them to contact Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653 to get [breastfeeding support](#).

For more information on the risks of homemade infant formula, refer to the [Health Canada](#), [Canadian Paediatric Society](#) and [Dietitians of Canada](#) websites.

Healthy Smiles

Oral health is important to overall health and is a key part of total well-being. Parents can visit [york.ca](#) to learn about things like:

- The importance of baby teeth
- Tips for a healthy smile
- Brushing and flossing
- What is a cavity
- Dental emergencies

Invite parents to link to [Your Oral Health](#) to learn more. Parents with questions or concerns about their child's oral health can speak with a York Region Public Health registered dental hygienist, Monday to Friday, 8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M., by calling Health Connection, 1-800-361-5653.

They can also visit [york.ca/teeth](#) or watch our YouTube video to learn about programs and services provided by the [York Region Public Health Dental Program](#).



Brief Updates

Translated resources

York Region Public Health has translated our most popular nutrition resources into the languages that are commonly requested by our community partners!

- Guide to eating fish for women, children and families factsheet [Traditional Chinese](#)
- Healthy eating for your baby [Arabic](#) [Farsi](#) [Tamil](#) [Traditional Chinese](#)
- Healthy eating for your child [Arabic](#) [Farsi](#) [Tamil](#) [Traditional Chinese](#)

Please contact Susanne Bennett to request the Nutrition Services resources order form which includes a full list of our translated resources at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 74335 or susanne.bennett@york.ca

York Region Public Health is hosting a live twitter chat on **Picky Eating**. Join the conversation by following #CheckUpChat on Tuesday, January 12th from 2:00-3:00 p.m. Chat with us and invite parents too!

EatRight Ontario

While the Healthy Beginnings fact sheets may answer some questions about feeding babies and young children, families may benefit from talking directly to a registered dietitian.

EatRight Ontario is a provincial service that offers free nutrition information by registered dietitians for all stages of life, from feeding babies to nutrition for seniors and everything in-between.

Families can call or email a registered dietitian and be connected to nutrition information and services in their community. EatRight Ontario also has a website with practical tips and recipes as well as useful links and videos.

Referring to EatRight Ontario will help to make sure the families you support receive consistent, evidence-based nutrition information.

A registered dietitian at EatRight Ontario can be reached by calling 1-877-510-5102 or by going to ontario.ca/eatright

Try the service yourself!

Recognizing hunger and fullness cues

York Region has partnered with Toronto and Peel Public Health Units to develop a feeding video to help parents recognize the signs of hunger and fullness in their babies and toddlers.

[Trust Me, Trust My Tummy: Feeding Cues 6-24 months](#) is a practical video to teach parents and caregivers of children ages 6-24 months to recognize feeding cues; these are the signs of hunger and fullness.

Recognizing and following children's feeding cues is a key element to developing good eating habits and supports a positive mealtime experience for the whole family.

Share [the link](#) with the parents and caregivers you know.

