

COMMUNITY COMING TOGETHER (CCT)

February, 2013

This month's theme is *Nutrition*



MARCH IS NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH

As we move into March, all across Canada, we celebrate nutrition month! As we continue to discuss the importance of taking care of our mental health and wellbeing, addressing nutrition is an important component in leading a healthy lifestyle and enhancing the way we see ourselves. "Body image is the mental picture we have of our bodies. It is affected by how one feels and values themselves. Those who feel really good about themselves, usually have a healthy body image." (Alberta Health Services, 2013). As we eat better, we feel better. By being conscious of the food and beverages we put into our bodies, we are at the same time increasing our own physical and mental health by promoting a healthy substance-free lifestyle. "Promote a healthy lifestyle rather than worrying about body shape or weight. It is important to remember that being skinny does not equal being healthy. In truth being too thin can be very unhealthy and result in long term health problems. Every body shape can be healthy if a combination of healthy eating and regular physical activity is maintained." (Alberta Health Services, 2013)

HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT NUTRITION?

Take a look at some of the top myths and misconceptions we have about nutrition and how to fuel our bodies!

Myth #1: Drinking energy drinks is the best way to get energized.

Truth: The best way to get energized is to eat well, be active, stay hydrated, and get enough sleep. Energy



drinks usually contain lots of sugar and have caffeine. Maximum amount of caffeine for teens is 85 mg – 150 mg per day. For comparison, one cup of coffee has about 80 mg of caffeine.

Did you know? 1 average can of an energy drink has more caffeine than the daily maximum amount!

Tips: Choose healthy drinks such as water, low-fat milk, fortified soy beverage, and 100% vegetable or fruit juice. Limit juice to $\frac{1}{2}$ a cup per day.

Myth #2: It's too hard to eat all the Vegetables and Fruit recommended in Canada's Food Guide.

Truth: Planning can make it easy for adults to get 7-10 servings of vegetables and fruits every day.

Tips: Have two or more servings at each meal and snack.

Pack vegetables and fruit for lunch. Fill half your plate with vegetables and fruit.

“People often say that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and I say that the most liberating thing about beauty is realizing that you are the beholder.”

- Salma Hayek

Myth #3: Energy drinks aren't that bad for you.

Truth: Energy drinks contain 14 teaspoons of sugar in a 475 mL can. There is more sugar in one cup (250 mL) of an energy drink than in one can of pop (355 mL), which has 10 teaspoons of sugar. These sugars are absorbed quickly into your blood and do not make you feel full. The energy provided does not last very long. Too much sugar also affects dental health and body weight.

Tips: Choose healthy foods and beverages from all four food groups to keep you fueled: vegetables and fruits, grain products, meat and alternatives, milk and alternatives, get enough sleep and choose healthy fluids (water, milk or 100% juice).

Myth #4: You'll gain weight if you follow Canada's Food Guide. It recommends too much food.

Truth: Canada's Food Guide describes the average amount or number of servings of food most people need in a day. Some people need more or less food than others. It depends on age, gender, body size and activity level. The portion (amount) you eat may be more or less than one Food Guide serving. It is important to know how many servings are in your portions.

Tips: Limit foods and beverages that are not part of Canada's Food Guide. These tend to be high in calories, fat, sugar and salt. Enjoy a variety of healthy choices from each food group in the amount that is right for your age, gender, and activity level.
(Alberta Health Services, 2013).

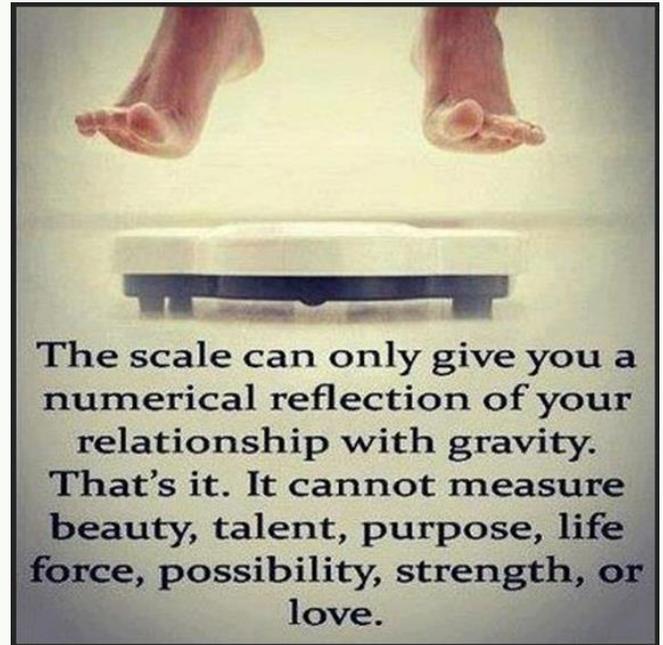
As we celebrate Nutrition across Canada for the month of March, take the challenge to dedicate yourself to enhancing your own mental health and wellbeing! Follow Canada's food guide to meet recommended nutrition requirements, get enough sleep, stay active, and be substance free.

References:

<http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/6457.asp>

<http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/6438.asp>

(Thanks to Nicole O'Reilly for this month's article)



MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS!

As part of the Provincial Mental Health Capacity Building in Schools Initiative, we are very pleased to announce the launch of our Mental Health Matters webpage! This page is a great resource for finding out all about our project along with various tools and resources. Please check it out!

<http://www.education.alberta.ca/admin/supporningstudent/safeschools/mhm.aspx>