



Updates From Our Members

Report from the Fort Babine Parents Club, October 2005

Our teeth are very important, so we took some training in learning how to varnish our children's teeth. I have been doing this every three months with the children's help. When the dentist came to our community last June she informed us that two years ago the kids of our communities were last in terms of dental health. But now with the new diet – sugar free – we are first. Yes our Fort Babine children are at the top!!

Our credit goes to our teachers who ask the children to brush their teeth in the mornings at school when they arrive and again after lunch. The children are reminded to do this after supper at home, with their parents' encouragement.

Thanks parents, children, and teachers for helping us understand how important our teeth are. "High Five" to the Fort Babine children.

Clara Williams, CHR
Carrie Kinney, Community Counsellor

Gitanyow Parents Club, November 2005

Our Parents Club started up this new school year with weekly meetings every Tuesday at 1 PM. We have been planning events that

will include fundraising so the students can go on an educational field trip during the spring break.

Thursdays we have a reading club for the elementary students from 6 to 8 PM. Parents bring their children. They read with them and they get to bring a book home and return it the following week. Homework support is offered every Wednesday afternoon from 3:15 to 5:15 PM. Recreational activities are held from 3:30 to 5:30 PM Monday and Friday.

With each weekly meeting we have a few more parents getting involved and discussing the importance of each child's education and how they can get involved.

We look forward to a successful school year of working together and developing a caring and hard working team.

We'd like to say *Thank You* for the support and keep the newsletters coming.

Jacqueline Smith

Seabird Island Parents Club, October 2005

On October 25th, 2005 we held our First Annual Book Fair and Literacy Carnival at Seabird Island Community School.

This event was a huge success and enjoyed by over 80 parents and students. As our first carnival was so close to Hallowe'en we asked the students to come in their costumes for a little added fun. Several of the students did attend in their costumes and we had lots of interesting prizes for all who attended such an important event.

The carnival was very well organized by our primary teachers and their volunteers. Each stand or booth cost 25 cents for participation, at which time you could collect between 2 and 4 coupons. For every 4 coupons collected the students could pick a new book of their choice. Most participants went home with a minimum of 4 awesome new books for their enjoyment.

Our parents club generously donated \$400.00 for this event and we are all anxiously awaiting next years' literacy carnival.

Thank you for your support.

Carol Litzenberger, PAC Secretary

What Can Your Parents Club Do?

Could your Parents Club help out by taking photos at special school events or field trips? Maybe you could even share some photos with parents who weren't able to attend the event. It might make those people feel more involved and encourage them to join in future school activities.

FIRST NATIONS PARENTS CLUB



BULLETIN

MAR 2006, ISSUE 2, VOL 9

Features

1

Hello Parents Club Members

2

Ideas for Getting Kids to Eat More Fruits and Vegetables

Quick Tip

3

Kids and Snacking Recipe

4

Updates From Our Members

What Can Your Parents Club Do?



Contact Us!

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Hello Parents Club Members

We hope you have all been enjoying a healthy and happy winter with your families – but if you are like the staff at the Parents Club office you are ready for some warmer weather. That's why it's great to know that March 20 is the official first day of spring. That means your kids will be able to get outdoors more for some fun and healthy exercise in the fresh air and sunshine.

There's another reason why this is an excellent time of the year to focus on healthy living; March is National Nutrition Month in Canada. Nutrition Month began in just a few provinces during the 1970s, when a small group of community nutritionists wanted to set aside a special time for nutrition-related activities. Then in the early 1980s, the Canadian Dietetic Association (now the Dietitians of Canada) brought all of those efforts together to create a national month-long celebration of good eating.

The theme of the 2006 National Nutrition Month Campaign is "Make Wise Food Choices Wherever You Go." The goals for the month include the following.

- Encouraging and supporting people in making wise healthy eating choices
- Providing practical solutions for wherever people buy foods, such as grocery stores, restaurants, cafeterias, and vending machines.
- Catching people making wise food choices, as dietitians will be visiting grocery stores



across Canada to answer questions about making wise food choices.

- Helping people become aware of local nutrition resources.

For much more information, you can visit the web site of the Dietitians of Canada (www.dietitians.ca). That site includes fact sheets, nutrition-related activities, and answers to Frequently Asked Questions. The web site also has a very interesting interactive activity called "Let's Make a Meal." That tool allows you to build a one-day menu by choosing various menu items for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks. It then compares your choices against the food guide servings recommended by Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating.

Inside this edition of the newsletter we've also included a few tips related to healthy eating, focusing on eating fruits and vegetables and making snacking a positive part of your family's diet. We hope you find some of the ideas useful, and we'd love to hear from you if your Parents Club does anything special for National Nutrition Month.

Need more information?



Is this the first time you've heard about the First Nations Parents Club? If you would like more information about the initiative, please contact our office at

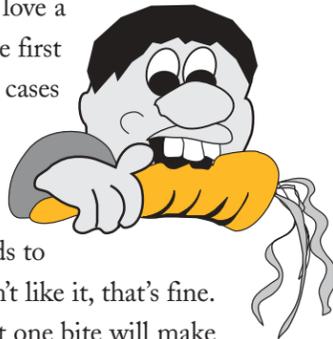
(604) 925-6087. The First Nations Parents Club is sponsored by the First Nations Schools Association to recognize the tremendous dedication of parents who support their children's learning. All Club materials and activities are available for free. To start a Club in your community, just contact us and request a Parents Club start-up package. We'd love to hear from you!



Ideas for Getting Kids to Eat More Fruits and Vegetables

Aaaahhh ... one of the most difficult challenges for parents everywhere! We know that our kids should be eating plenty of fruits and vegetables, but getting them to do so can be such a struggle. That's why we're offering a few techniques (borrowed from <http://www.dole5aday.com>) that might help if this issue is a battle in your home.

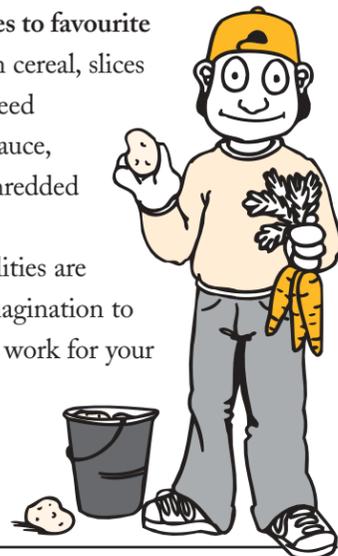
- **Trying is believing.** Many fruits and vegetables taste great, but kids won't know that if they don't taste them. Making this happen can take some patience. Sometimes children will love a new fruit or vegetable the first time they try it. In other cases it can take two, three, or even ten tries before a child gets used to a new taste. Try asking your kids to take one bite. If they don't like it, that's fine. Allowing them to stop at one bite will make trying new foods less scary. If, after trying a new fruit or vegetable two or three times your child still does not care for it, move on to something else. Forcing children to eat something usually doesn't work, but keep offering new fruits and vegetables – eventually your kids might try and like them.



- **Seeing is believing.** Children learn behaviours by watching older siblings and adults, so modeling healthful eating is a great way to help kids develop better eating habits. The next time you're offered a vegetable, take a large helping and say "I love this!" Soon your kids will be loving it, too.
- **Offer choices.** Offering kids two to three fruit or vegetable choices works well because it lets kids make decisions and have some control over what they're eating. Also, asking kids to pick the fruits and vegetables for a meal allows them to choose their favourites or even suggest new ones to try.
- **Make it easy.** When kids come home hungry for a snack, they almost always grab what is most

convenient. Place fruits and vegetables where they can be reached most easily, such as a fruit bowl in clear site, on the lower shelves of the refrigerator, or in the front of a cupboard. Also, have "grab and go snacks" in small plastic bags (like cut up raw vegetables, peeled oranges, washed seedless grapes, etc.) ready and waiting in your refrigerator.

- **Make it fun.** Present fruits and vegetables in fun ways, like cut up in funny shapes, or arranged to look like an animal or a face. Check out the Parents Club Calendar for more ideas.
- **Crunchy and sweet can't be beat.** Kids love bite-size pieces of fruits and vegetables, and crunchy, raw vegetables with dip are almost always a favourite!
- **Kids like to eat what they make.** Kids are more likely to try something if they've helped to prepare it. Your kids can help look for recipes, create shopping lists, go to the grocery store, and make fruit and vegetable servings at home.
- **Add fruits and vegetables to favourite foods.** Sliced bananas on cereal, slices of peppers on pizza, pureed vegetables in spaghetti sauce, strawberry smoothies, shredded carrots and lettuce on a sandwich ... the possibilities are endless. Just use your imagination to come up with ideas that work for your kids.



Kids and Snacking

Some people worry that snacking between meals is a bad habit, but that really isn't the case. In fact, children need to include healthy snacks in their diet in order to maintain their energy levels throughout the day. Also, a 100 to 200 calorie snack eaten two to three hours before a meal will take the edge off kids' hunger and keep them from overeating – a trick that works for adults, too.

What should you know about snacking to make it a positive part of your family's diet?

- Don't think of snacks as extras. Make them a part of your food plan for the day. If you are concerned about the number of calories you or your children are eating, just include your snacks in your calorie count.
- Plan the day's foods around the four food groups to balance out your snacks and meals. For example, snacking on an orange and a couple of graham crackers counts towards your daily intake of fruits and grains.
- Use snacks to fill any gaps in what you eat at meals. If breakfast, lunch, and dinner aren't giving

your kids enough fruit and vegetable servings, snacks can make up the difference.

- Plan snacks ahead of time to avoid grabbing the first thing you see, and keep nutritious foods in convenient places. For example, keeping some healthful snacks in the car can help you avoid stopping for donuts or chips. At home, keep some carrot sticks and yogurt dip at the front of the fridge, but keep the cookies in a hard-to-reach cupboard. Try to keep some dried fruit, fig bars, low-fat granola bars, or trail mix on hand for kids to grab in a hurry.
- You don't have to totally give up your favourite less-than-healthy snacks. Just eat them occasionally and make sure they fit into your day's total for fat and calories. And remember ... even low-fat snacks are not good in excess, and low-fat foods often use extra sugar and calories to boost their taste, so be careful.

With a little bit of effort, snacking can be a nutritious and delicious part of your family's diet ... so enjoy.

Yummy Wheat Germ Balls

Perfect for cheese-lovers, this little snack uses dried fruit and coconut for extra flavour.

4 ounces cream cheese
1/4 cup toasted wheat germ
1/2 cup raisins
crushed peanuts (optional)
shredded coconut (optional)

1. Soften the cream cheese in the microwave.
2. Add toasted wheat germ to the cream cheese and stir.
3. Chop raisins finely in the food processor, and then add to the cream cheese mixture.
4. Form the mixture into small balls and roll the balls in crushed peanuts and/or shredded coconut. Refrigerate until firm.

SUBSTITUTION TIP: You can use any dried fruits such as dried cranberries, apricots, peaches etc.



Quick Tip - At any point during the school year, if your kids seem to be losing motivation for homework and you are having trouble reinvigorating them, share your concerns with their teachers. Talk about whether the problem is the quantity of homework, the assignments themselves, or your children's attitude toward school. An open dialogue with the teacher will help to avoid what could otherwise become serious problems.