



For Your Health

During the month of December, it can sometimes seem that the treats never end. Boxes of chocolate, delicious desserts, and tasty party foods are all around, making this a good time to think about healthy eating. Tied to the concept of nutrition is that of body image, and the need to encourage children to understand and take responsibility for their own weight and health.

If you are looking for some information about this topic, try looking at www.missionnutrition.ca. That site includes some interesting questions to help you think about your own attitudes about food, body image, and health, as well as ideas about how your perspectives might be affecting your kids. It also includes many links to sources of additional information.

Here are just a few of the ideas shared on the Mission Nutrition

web site under the commonly asked questions section.

- Help your children to understand that healthy people come in a variety of shapes and sizes and that there is no one "ideal" body shape.
- Teach your children to be aware of unrealistic and unhealthy images in the media.
- Encourage your children to focus on abilities rather than on appearance.
- Try to be aware of the messages you send about your body and the comments you make about other people's bodies.
- Enjoy the pleasure of healthy eating with your children and emphasize how all foods can fit into a healthy diet if eaten in the right amount.
- Find fun ways to be active with your children to help them experience the joy of physical activity.

Cranberry Chutney

1 large onion, diced	3 - 4 apples, diced
2 pears, diced	1 kg cranberries
1 cup red wine vinegar	1/4 cup fresh ginger, finely chopped
1 tbsp mace	200 g dried cranberries
2 - 3 cups brown sugar (depending on the sweetness of the fruit)	

Sauté the onions, apples, and pears in 1 tbsp oil to sweat. Add cranberries, stirring constantly. Add brown sugar and vinegar. Bring to a boil. Add ginger and mace and simmer 10 - 15 minutes. Add dried cranberries and simmer 10 - 15 minutes longer. Remove from heat and enjoy with turkey, chicken, or cheese.

BCCPAC Annual Conference

For this year's Annual BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC) Conference, the First Nations Parents Club was asked to facilitate a workshop on parenting from a First Nations perspective, and James and Loretta Cook from the Nanoose First Nations Parents Club hosted that event. James and Loretta had previously attended the BCCPAC Annual Conference on two occasions, and they have been actively involved in their own community's Parents Club for several years. Being parents of six and grandparents of ten children certainly makes them well qualified to share their perspectives!

James and Loretta's workshop offered great insight into the challenges and rewards of parenting, and also highlighted the work being done by other Parents Clubs around BC. The presentation was enjoyed by all who attended, and the First Nations Parents Club thanks James and Loretta for their efforts.



FIRST NATIONS PARENTS CLUB



BULLETIN

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BCCPAC Annual Conference
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Cranberry Chutney



Contact Us!

First Nations Schools Association Parents Club
#113 - 100 Park Royal South
West Vancouver, BC
V7T 1A2
Toll Free: 1-877-422-3672



Enjoy the Season Safely

With winter now upon us and another busy holiday season just ahead, the First Nations Parents Club decided to celebrate with an extra edition of the newsletter. We certainly hope that you and your families are enjoying another successful and exciting school year!

While December can be a very busy month, it is still a great time to stay physically active and enjoy some winter sports. In fact, it is especially important to get exercise at this time of the year, when it is so difficult to resist all of the delicious treats that abound.

But while winter activities are great, injuries can quickly spoil the fun. So don't forget that helmets aren't just important in the summer; they are also critical for skiing, snowboarding, and ice-skating. Also, children must wear clothing appropriate for the weather conditions. For that reason, we thought it might be useful to share the following cold weather tips, which we borrowed from www.safekidscanada.ca.

To prevent frostbite, all winter activities require warm, dry clothing, including:

- a warm, close-fitting hat that covers the ear lobes, ideally with a chin-fastening strap for younger children;
- mittens, which are more effective than gloves at keeping hands warm;
- loose layers, with an absorbent synthetic fabric next to the skin, a warmer middle layer, and a water resistant/repellant outer layer;
- a single pair of socks, either wool or wool

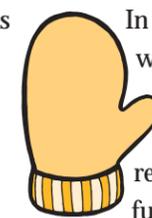


blend rather than cotton. (Avoid extra thick socks, as they can cause cold feet by restricting blood flow and air circulation around the toes);

- boots that are dry and not too tight;
- zipped up jackets, with any drawstrings on hoods and jackets removed, as they are a safety hazard; and
- tube-shaped neck warmers rather than scarves, which can easily get caught in things during play. (If scarves must be used, make sure they are tucked into jackets).



Remember that most body heat is lost through the 'extremities' - the head, hands, and feet. Properly covering those body parts is essential for keeping kids warm.



In addition to having a safe winter season, we hope that you and your family will avoid too much stress in the month ahead. Make time to relax and enjoy some fun with your children.

Don't get caught up trying to create a "perfect" holiday. After all ... being together is what this season is really all about.





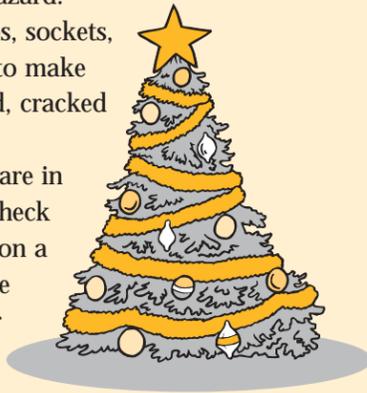
More Safety Tips for the Holiday Season



December is an exciting time for children (and parents)! Unfortunately, all of the excitement can sometimes lead to unfortunate accidents. For that reason, we thought this might be a good time to share a reminder about some common seasonal hazards and some simple steps you can take to keep your family safe (borrowed from www.safekidscanada.ca).

Safe Decorating

- Make sure your Christmas tree is well watered. Dry trees are a fire hazard.
- Check all lights, bulbs, sockets, and extension cords to make sure nothing is frayed, cracked or broken.
- To ensure that lights are in safe working order, check each set by setting it on a nonflammable surface and plugging it in for 10 to 15 minutes.
- Be sure the tree is firmly anchored so it can't fall on a child or pet.
- Don't put breakable ornaments, ornaments with small detachable parts, or ornaments that look like food or candy on the lower branches where young children can reach them.
- Use only flame-resistant decorations.
- Turn off the tree lights when you go to bed or leave the house.



Candle Safety

- Use sturdy candleholders that are unlikely to tip over.
- Keep candles away from curtains or anything that could catch fire.
- Never leave candles unattended or within reach of children, and teach children not to touch burning candles.
- Keep matches and lighters out of children's reach at all times.



Toy Safety

- Follow the age recommendations even if you believe that your child can handle more advanced toys! Age recommendations are related to safety, not to the ability of a child to master the toy or game.
- To prevent choking, for children under three buy toys that are bigger than their fist.
- Make sure battery-operated toys are in good condition and that the battery is securely hidden. Old batteries can leak and cause corrosive burns. If swallowed, button-type batteries can cause internal chemical burns or poisoning.



Safe celebrations

- Don't neglect the supervision of small children during family gatherings and holiday parties.
- If you are attending a party that is not suitable for children, leave them at home with a trained, trusted baby sitter.
- During parties at your own home, consider hiring a sitter or designating a family member to be responsible for small children at all times.
- Remember to clean up after a holiday party. A toddler could rise early and choke on leftover food or be exposed to tobacco or alcohol left within reach.
- Remember that homes you visit during the festive season may not be childproofed, so take extra precautions to keep everyone safe.



Helping Kids With Math

Learning math is a very important part of life because we all use math skills every day – sometimes without even realizing it. We use math when we shop, cook, manage our money, keep score in games, schedule our day, solve problems, and make predictions. Math is also used in almost every job that exists. For that reason, children should be encouraged to think of themselves as mathematicians, and to think of math as something that they can and should learn.

Unfortunately, many parents are not confident about their **own** math understanding and they find math intimidating. If you feel that way, remember – you do not have to be a math expert in order to help your children. Here are a few ways you can help your kids with math every day.

- Show your children that you think numbers are fun. Play games that involve numbers, sing counting songs, say counting rhymes, challenge your kids to make estimates and see whose guess is the closest, see who can count things the quickest ...

- When your children are young, count everything. Count steps, count dishes while setting the table, count the number of apples you're buying, count as you play a skipping game ...

- Talk about the many ways numbers are used in the world, and take your children on a "number hunt" – look to see how numbers are used on the microwave, the telephone, street signs, and in books and newspapers. Be excited when

your children discover a new use of numbers.

- Talk about time. Have your children check the clock when they go to school, eat meals, and go to bed. Together, talk about how to schedule activities to get everything done within the day.



- Whenever you can, identify things by their shape and size. For example, ask your child to pass you the "square" box, the "round" plate, or the "short" cup. You can also play "I spy" for different shapes, such as "I spy something that is rectangular" or "I spy a sign that is eight sided." Or go on a "shape hunt" by asking your kids to look for different shapes.

- Help your children to identify patterns. Highlight repeating lines in books and songs, play clapping games, have fun with basic dance steps, or create and talk about patterns while gardening, setting the table, or baking.

- Whenever possible, categorize or put things into groups. Sort laundry with your kids, sort

crayons by colour, arrange shoes by size ...

- Be encouraging and tell your children that anyone can learn math. Praise them when they use numbers, help them to understand that they use math all the time, and talk about how family members use math at work.

- Help your children practice doing math in their heads by asking questions like "I need four cups of flour. I have a half-cup measure. How many scoops do I need?" or "The book costs ten dollars. How can I pay for it using the money I have in my wallet?"

- Celebrate your children's efforts to solve problems, even if they get an answer wrong. Even if you did not have a positive experience with math class, try to be positive and avoid comments like "I'm no good at math." Children need to be confident that they can meet the math challenge.

- Try to make math practice a relaxed and enjoyable experience. Have fun playing math games in a friendly and supportive way. If your kids are frustrated with a specific game or activity, try something else and return to that game at another time.

