



Hamilton

Child Care Connection

Connecting the Child Care Community

WINTER 2010



Cold Air and ASTHMA

Cold air is a common trigger for many children with asthma. When cold air enters the lungs it can cause the airways to tighten. This may lead to asthma symptoms such as coughing, wheezing, difficulty breathing and chest tightness.

For children with exercise-induced asthma, being active in cold air can be a double whammy. The good news is that the effects of cold air and exercising outdoors in winter can be anticipated and prevented with proper planning. Children with asthma should not have to avoid playing outside in the winter.

Tips for your child:

- * Ensure your child's asthma is well-controlled at all times. Follow an asthma action plan and talk to your doctor.
- * Ensure your child has a fast-acting reliever medication with them at all times and that they know how and when to use it.
- * If cold air or exercise is a known trigger for your child encourage them to take their reliever medication, if prescribed, 10–15 minutes before they are exposed to cold air and/or they start exercising.
- * Check weather conditions before they go out. Be sure they are dressed for the weather. A scarf that covers their nose and mouth is recommended.
- * Encourage your child to breathe through their nose when outside.
- * Listen for extreme cold alerts. Discourage any strenuous outdoor activities during those times.

For more information about asthma visit:

The Lung Association www.on.lung.ca
The Asthma Society of Canada www.asthma.ca

Submitted by: Elizabeth Conti,
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Community Services - Home Management & LEAP Programs



When finances are stressing you out and the bills are falling behind, who do you call? Home Management!

When meal planning, grocery shopping and cooking skills are lacking, who do you call? Home Management!

When the children are challenging, who do you call? Home Management!



When household routines and housekeeping are getting you down, who do you call? Home Management!



The Home Management program is a free service that teaches life skills to families and singles in their own home.

You can also check out your local OEYC (Ontario Early Years Centres) to find out what groups we may be facilitating there.

Call us if you think the Home Management Program might be for you!

Our number is 905-546-4804.

Please note that the **Learning, Earning, And Parenting Program (LEAP)**, which is part of Home Management, has changed the age requirement to qualify, *from 21 years and under; to, 25 years and under.*

If you know someone who

- is a parent on Ontario Works or ODSP **and**
- is 25 years of age or under **and**
- wants to return to school to complete their grade 12 or equivalent,

please have them call the LEAP Program at 905-546-3088.

Healthy Snacks

Children need snacks throughout the day to stay active, learn well and grow properly. Snacking is an important part of healthy eating for growing children. As their stomachs are small and their energy needs are high, children should be offered a snack between meals. Many people think of snacks as “treats” or foods that are not nutritious, but snacks must be healthy in order to provide the vitamins, minerals and energy needed each day.

Tips for healthy snacking

Make it easy

When children race home hungry for a snack, chances are they will grab the most convenient item. Keep vegetables and fruit handy by placing them where kids will see them first. For example, a bowl of fresh fruit on the table or containers of washed and chopped vegetables stored in the fridge. Have whole grain crackers on hand to offer with slices of cheddar cheese.

Offer choice

Offering food from two or more food groups at snack time is a smart idea as it offers a variety of choice as well as a variety of nutrients. For example, a serving of grapes and yogurt represents two food groups from Canada’s Food Guide. Ask your children to take part in planning snacks. This allows them to choose their favourites or suggest new foods to try.

Eat what you make

Children are more likely to try something they have helped prepare. Visit the library and find child-friendly cookbooks - pick a few recipes together. Enjoy preparing fall favourites such as fruit crisps, muffins and homemade applesauce.

Share the responsibility

Parents are responsible for what food is offered for snacks. Allow your child the responsibility of choosing how much they will eat or whether they will eat at all from the foods you have offered. Never force a child to eat. When children notice and respond to their feelings of fullness, they are less likely to overeat.

Seeing is believing

Remember you are a role model for your children. Making healthy food choices is a great way to make sure your children develop healthy eating habits too.

November’s Nutrition Nibbler was written by Rupinder Ghai, a candidate with Ryerson’s Internationally Educated Dietitians Pre-Registration Program (IDPP).

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The ABCs of Healthy Eating



A - All foods can fit. Eating is one of life's greatest pleasures! Enjoy all foods but serve some more often than others. Serve healthy foods that provide the nutrients that young children need to grow and develop every day. Offer foods that are more processed or higher in fat, salt and/or sugar or lower in nutrients sometimes or limit intake.*

B - Balance food choices with activity. Encourage your preschooler to be active. Skate, hike or walk as a family. Dress warmly and make a snow man or snow angels.

C - Choose a variety of foods every day. Follow the rainbow of Canada's Food Guide and enjoy different flavours, textures and colours. Choose a variety of foods so that your children get all of the nutrients needed to grow up as healthy as possible. For a variety of vegetables & fruit, try this tasty soup which will help your family feel warm and cosy on a frosty winter day.

* For examples: See the booklet *Eat Right, Be Active*: a guide for parents and caregivers ages 3-5 available from [Eat Right Ontario](#).

Squash, Apple & Bean Soup (Serves 8)

2 large butternut or other winter squash (about 4 pounds), halved and seeds removed
2 Tbsp (30mL) canola oil
2 cups (500mL) onion, chopped
4 teaspoons (20mL) curry powder
¼ teaspoon (2mL) allspice, ground
1 can (19 oz or 540mL) chick peas (garbanzo beans), drained and rinsed
4 apples, peeled, cored and diced
6 cups (1500mL) water
a few drops of hot pepper sauce to taste (optional)
green onion slices for garnish

Method:

1). Preheat oven to 350°F. Put squash, cut side down, on a foil lined baking sheet. Bake for 50 minutes or until soft. Alternatively, cook squash in the microwave (pierce in several places with a knife to let steam escape) until soft inside, about 10-15 minutes, turning and checking every 5 minutes.

2). Heat canola oil in a soup pot at medium heat. Add onion and cook until soft.

- 3). Stir in curry powder and allspice, then add beans, apples and water. Simmer for 10 minutes.
- 3). Remove squash pulp and add to soup mixture.
- 4). Blend with a hand blender, food processor or blender.
- 5). Reheat if desired. Add pepper sauce to taste and garnish with chopped green onion.

Nutrient Analysis (1/8 recipe about 1 1/2 cups): Energy 225cal; Fat 5g; Protein 6g; CHO 43g; Fibre 6g; Sodium 10mg.

Written by Elizabeth Shaver-Heeney, Public Health Nutritionist, Family Health Division, City of Hamilton Public Health Services.

Update from the City of Hamilton, Best Start Initiative & Child Care Systems Management

The Child Care Fee Subsidy Wait List

History

A wait list for access to child care fee subsidy was introduced in the City of Hamilton on June 2, 2008. The Province of Ontario changed the financial testing process to qualify for child care fee subsidy. Financial eligibility is now determined based on income. This change makes more families eligible for child care fee subsidy.

From January 2007 to January 2008, the fee subsidy caseload increased by 18% causing the demand for fee subsidy to be greater than the available funding. This demand has created the need for a wait list for access to child care fee subsidy. Subsequently, the caseload increased a further 10% from January 2008 to June 2008.

By June 2008 we were subsidizing more children than our funding could sustain and a wait list was implemented. When the wait list was implemented we continued to serve Priority 1 families who were identified as financially eligible applicants with a child who requires special needs resources and / or those vulnerable families in high risk situations. All remaining applicants were put into a priority queue based on the Stats Canada Low Income Cut-Off (LICO) levels. Priority 2 applicants were those below LICO and Priority 3 applicants were those above LICO.

With a wait list in place we were able to reduce the number of children receiving subsidy to a sustainable level by September 2008. At that time we were able to begin to provide services to the families in the Priority 2 queue on a first come first serve basis.

Although we do have a wait list for subsidy we are continuing to provide subsidies for over 3,500 children monthly. The wait list allows us to maintain this level of service, while providing service to an average of 290 new children a month.

Impacts

At the time of the implementation of the wait list there was concern over how the wait list strategy would impact the nature of the children and families being served. Would this cause demographic changes to the caseload?

When comparing the caseload from September 2009 to September 2008 there are not any significant changes to the mix of the caseload based on the approved reason for service. Particularly, we continue to serve the same number of Priority 1 families as were served before the wait list was fully implemented. Smaller impacts that are being seen are a decrease in the number of people working full-time and an increase in the number of students and people working part-time. These trends are consistent with what would be expected in the current economic conditions.

The fee subsidy caseload is divided into three geographic areas based on postal code: Hamilton West, Hamilton East, and Hamilton Mountain. The trends that have been seen across the City have been consistently mirrored in the smaller geographic areas.

The wait list process has not had the negative impact on the caseload make-up that was feared but has given us a well-informed picture of who we serve. We continue to serve the families of Hamilton in a consistent manner as we did prior to the wait list. The wait list is not a "freeze" on fee subsidies but a controlled intake of fee subsidy applications.

For further information about the wait list strategy please visit www.hamilton.ca/childcare.

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