

# HEALTHY LIVING FOR TEENS



## HEALTHY SCHOOLS, BETTER LEARNING

The Government of BC has made a commitment to promoting healthy schools across our province. This work is about you, so become a part of it. Share your ideas, experience and energy! Speak up about what matters to you. For more information, visit: [www.healthyschoolsbc.ca](http://www.healthyschoolsbc.ca).



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High school is a busy time. School, friends, work, family, clubs, sports, volunteering—so many things to juggle. Taking care of your physical health and mental well-being will help you stay positive, be strong and feel good about yourself.

We hope the information found in this guide is helpful. The tips on healthy eating, physical activity and mental well-being are great ways to think clearly, feel your best and make the most of your own potential.

Feeling and being healthy is about eating right, being active and having positive mental well-being. Mental well-being is the heart of overall wellness. It helps you learn, mature, develop self-esteem and stay physically healthy.

### Mental well-being is your ability to:

- enjoy life
- deal with challenges
- feel connected to other people
- have a sense of belonging
- be optimistic and self-confident

Being physically active and eating right improves your mental well-being. Good mental well-being helps you make healthy eating choices and stay active. It's a positive cycle.

**DID YOU KNOW THAT...**  
the habits and skills you develop in your teen years will influence your decisions and behaviour for the rest of your life?

**CHANGE YOUR WORLD**  
Passionate about making your school and community a healthier place? Join other like-minded students in the Healthy Living Youth Council.

Learn more.  
Watch the video.

## **HEY PARENTS!**

If you are a parent reading over your teen's shoulder, great! You still have a key role in supporting your teen's health and well-being. For more information on a parent's role in supporting the well-being of children and youth, check out *Healthy Living for Families*



# MENTAL WELL BEING:

## KEY TO A GREAT LIFE

**MENTAL WELL-BEING** is your ability to enjoy life's good times and get through the not-so-good times.

### YOU HAVE A SENSE OF MENTAL WELL-BEING WHEN YOU FEEL:

- connected and included;
- valued for your strengths and talents; and
- empowered to make choices.

### TAKING CARE OF YOUR MENTAL WELL-BEING HELPS YOU:

- create and maintain fulfilling relationships;
- deal with problems and challenges;
- handle stress;
- set goals for positive change; and
- be active and make healthy eating choices.



## BE KIND TO YOURSELF

Each day, practice acknowledging yourself for something that you've done well. Pay attention to your accomplishments – large and small. We're all works in progress. There is no one else like you. Be proud of who you are at this moment in time.

### CHALLENGE THAT NEGATIVE VOICE IN YOUR HEAD

You can't control everything that happens in life, but you can control how you think about it. Here are some tips for challenging that negative voice in your head:

- ▶ Reality-test them: What's the evidence for and against the thoughts? Are you jumping to negative conclusions?
- ▶ Look for an alternate explanation: In what other ways could you look at the situation? If you were being positive, how would this change your outlook on things?
- ▶ Put things into perspective: Is the situation really as bad as you're making it out to be? What's the best/worst thing that could happen, and how likely is it that it will happen?
- ▶ Use goal-directed thinking: Is thinking like this helping you to feel good or achieve your goals? What can you realistically do to help solve the problem?

Looking at the situation from a different perspective can help you solve the problem, or feel good about yourself – in a way that focusing on the negative usually doesn't.

### POSITIVE THINKING IS GOOD FOR YOUR OVERALL HEALTH!

Positive thinking doesn't mean pretending that everything's great when it's not—it means being realistic and approaching problems in a helpful way. Did you know that the benefits from positive thinking include:

- ▶ a longer life;
- ▶ better coping skills during tough and stressful times;
- ▶ lower rates of depression;
- ▶ less distress;
- ▶ more resistance to colds;
- ▶ better mental and physical well-being; and
- ▶ a reduced chance of death from cardiovascular disease?

Who knew that our thoughts could have such an influence!

## KEEP CONNECTED

Good relationships are important to your happiness. It's quality over quantity—how many relationships you have is less important than how good they are. Strong and meaningful relationships contribute to a better, more meaningful life.

**NOTHING BEATS TIME TOGETHER**  
While our technology makes  
it easy to keep in touch,  
nothing beats spending time  
with those we care about.

Your relationships with family and friends can have a major impact on your mental well-being. They can make you feel loved and cared for, help you handle the stresses of everyday life, become who you want to be, help you solve problems and provide different perspectives. For some teens, their relationships with family and friends don't do any of these things and may actually be harmful to their mental well-being. If this is the case for you, find a person who makes you feel supported and accepted. This could be a friend, extended family member (such as an aunt, uncle or grandparent), or a club or community group to which you feel connected.

You deserve people in your life who believe in you and are there when you need help. Surrounding yourself with good people may take some effort. Here are some tips that may make it seem less like work.

## BE A GOOD FRIEND

Friends are a big part of life. Being a great friend and having friends who support you is important.

Here are some ways that you can build strong friendships:



### LISTEN

Really listening means making the effort to truly hear and understand what is being said.



### SAY IT OUT LOUD

Tell your friends how you feel about them. You don't have to make a big deal about it, but it's nice to hear how important you are to someone, even when you already know.



### TAKE THE HIGH ROAD

Unless it's really obvious that someone meant to hurt you, try not to take it personally when a friend makes a mistake. Give your friend the benefit of the doubt—maybe something is going on for them that you don't know about. Instead of firing back, take a moment to consider the possibilities, and then tell your friend how their actions made you feel. For example "Ouch! That hurt. What's going on—are you having a bad day?"







## KNOW WHEN TO LET GO

All friendships have their ups and downs, but if your friendships consistently stress you out or make you feel bad about yourself, it may be time to start hanging out with different people.

## BUILD POSITIVE FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

There are different types of families. There are two-parent and single-parent families, only-child families, blended families, extended families, foster families and so on. Some families are great, others are not. While we can't choose our families, we can choose how we deal with them.

A healthy family respects and listens to each other, and has realistic expectations. Here are ways to support and manage your family relationships:



## SPEND TIME WITH YOUR FAMILY IN WHATEVER WAY YOU CAN

That may mean walking to the mall with your mom or helping your dad make a salad to go with dinner. Your parents may not seem very "cool" at this particular time in your life, but odds are, they've got your back if and when you need them.



## COOL DOWN

Avoid trying to sort things out when people are stressed, tired or angry. When conflicts arise, see if you can find a time to discuss the issue when you're able to talk calmly and rationally.



## GIVE IT TIME

As you become more independent, it can be a struggle for both you and your family to agree on what that independence should look like. You're growing up but still need the support of your family. Meanwhile, your family is trying to figure out when you need their guidance and when you don't. Make a pact with your family to go easy on yourselves for not getting it right every time.

## BE CONNECTED TO YOUR SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

Feeling connected isn't just about individual relationships. You also need to feel connected to where you spend your time: school, work, the land you live on and the places you hang out.

Getting involved can help you feel more connected to your school and your community. There are lots of ways to get involved, depending on your interests:



## VOLUNTEER

Volunteering lets you learn new things, have new experiences, expand your social network and acquire some new skills. Helping others also makes us feel good about ourselves. There are many ways you can pitch in.

[Click here](#) for some ideas.



## JOIN A TEAM OR CLUB

Doing something with others who share common interests can create a great sense of community and belonging. Have a look at what your school offers in the way of recreational activities, sports, arts, drama, dance, and social clubs. Also check out other schools and community centres, or consider starting something yourself.



## SPEAK OUT

Your voice is a critical part of community life – find a way to make it heard.

**HEY! DID YOU KNOW  
YOU CAN GET CREDIT  
FOR EXTRA-CURRICULAR  
ACTIVITIES?**

Finding time for extra-curricular activities can be difficult when you are balancing school, a social life, and sometimes work.

But what if you could take the extra out of extra-curricular and get school credit for the activities that you're passionate about? Talk to your teacher or school counsellor about the different types of external credentials that are available.

*Click here for details.*



## DE-STRESS

Stress is the body's way of protecting you when you feel threatened, out of control or pushed to your limit. We all experience it and it's not a bad thing—stress can help you get through short, intense situations—but being stressed for too long can seriously hurt your health. Daily stress can upset your mental well-being and cause sleep problems, headaches, stomach pains and other illnesses.

Here are a few tips for managing stress:



### BE GRATEFUL

Research has shown that gratitude helps your brain produce chemicals that can lower your stress levels. Stop for a moment each day and think of 3 positive things you're thankful for. They don't have to be major events, just moments when you felt content—maybe when you took the dog for a walk or helped a friend feel better.



### LAUGH

Laughing increases blood flow by more than 20%—about the same as aerobic activity. This lowers the effects of stress and raises levels of endorphins, which have pain-relieving properties.



### EXPRESS YOURSELF

Keep a journal or write poems, stories or songs. Expressing yourself can help you organize your thoughts and feelings, gain perspective and release tension. When you're expressing yourself online, remember that whatever you post can go public and may not be removable—share with care!





## TAKE A BREAK

Use quiet time to slow down your body and mind. Try things like breathing or visualization exercises, going for a walk, taking a bath or listening to calm music.



## FOCUS ON THE NOW

Try to concentrate on what is happening this very moment. Notice things you don't normally notice. Use all your senses: what do you see, hear and smell?



## DOWN-SIZE

If possible, decreasing the number of things you're responsible for, and taking some time out to do something fun, will also help to reduce your stress load.

## MINDFULNESS

Learn about this technique that can help manage stress at Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre's Mindfulness: Youth Voices video and resources.



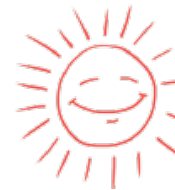
Getting enough sleep helps keep your immune system healthy, your memory sharp and your concentration strong.

Here are some tips to get your body clock on your side:



## GET MOVING

The more physically active you are in the day, the better you sleep at night. But be careful about your timing—working out close to bedtime can have the opposite effect and keep you up even later.




## BRIGHT DAYS, DARK NIGHTS

Get as much natural light as you can throughout the day to set your internal clock. Turn off electronic devices (phone, TV, computer) at least 30 minutes before going to bed. Your body needs darkness to produce melatonin, the hormone that controls your sleeping patterns. Light from lamps and screens can trick your body into thinking it's still daytime.





# EAT FOR HEALTH



**FOOD** is a big part of everyday life. You eat to nourish your body, to celebrate and to connect with friends and family.

Eating healthy food is important for everyone. For teens, healthy eating helps you achieve:

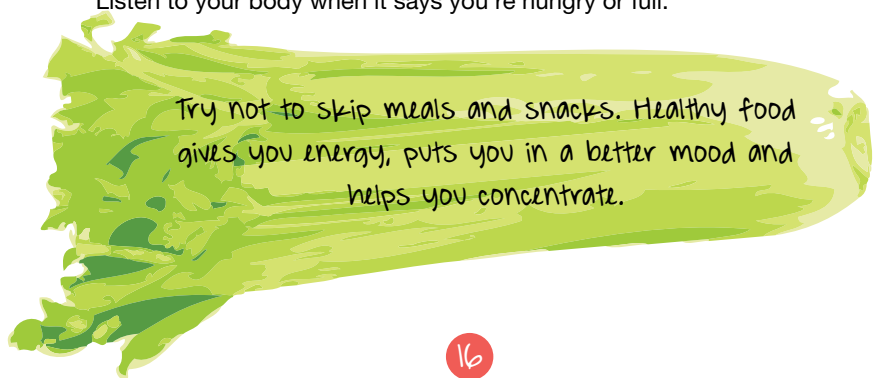
- ▶ *a healthy weight that's right for your body;*
- ▶ *maximum height if you're still growing;*
- ▶ *energy for school, sports, work and recreation;*
- ▶ *healthy hair and skin;*
- ▶ *improved concentration; and*
- ▶ *better self-esteem.*

Life is all about balance, right? Eating a healthy balanced diet means eating healthy food most of the time. The healthiest foods tend to be the least processed and have lower levels of sugar, fat and sodium. It's OK if you don't choose perfectly all of the time—what counts is that you choose healthy food and drinks most of the time.



Need a refresher on **Canada's Food Guide**?  
You can find it *here*.

Eat regular, balanced meals and snacks. Nutrition needs vary depending on things such as your height and how physically active you are. Listen to your body when it says you're hungry or full.



Try not to skip meals and snacks. Healthy food gives you energy, puts you in a better mood and helps you concentrate.

THINK YOUR DRINK

DRINK WATER

Always a Healthy Choice



*Caffeine can hit you harder than you expect! One cup of coffee for an adult can have the effect of four cups of coffee for a younger person.*

### ENERGY DRINKS DON'T REALLY GIVE YOU ENERGY

*The reality is that energy drinks have a lot of sugar—as much as pop—and are high in caffeine. The short burst of energy you might get from the sugar is usually followed by an energy crash. Health Canada cautions that energy drinks are not recommended for kids and teens.*



### WHAT ABOUT SPORTS DRINKS?

*Water is the most important drink when you are exercising. Most people don't need sports drinks, which are high in sugar. Athletes can benefit from a sports drink when they are exercising intensely and consistently for more than 90 minutes, or exercising in higher than usual heat. For more info on eating and drinking for athletic performance, [click here](#).*

## HABITS FOR HEALTHY EATING

Healthy eating isn't just what you eat. It also includes good habits and enjoying your food. Here are some easy ways to improve your eating:

### EAT BREAKFAST

Eating breakfast makes you feel more energetic and alert, improves your memory and boosts your physical and academic performance. But in the rush to get to school, many teens skip breakfast. If you don't have time or feel like eating that early, pack something to eat on the way or at school. Check out the tips on the following page.

*Eating in the morning and then every 3-4 hours keeps your body burning fuel efficiently.*





## HEALTHY BREAKFAST IDEAS

- ▶ Mix plain yogurt with cinnamon, frozen fruit and cereal, granola or muesli.
- ▶ Stuff a whole wheat pita pocket, tortilla or roti with scrambled eggs. Top with salsa and grated cheese.
- ▶ Toast a whole grain English muffin, bagel or slice of bread. Spread it with peanut butter and top with banana slices.
- ▶ What's in the fridge? Grab some leftovers, like last night's pasta or a slice of cold pizza.
- ▶ Try whole grain crackers or a low-fat muffin with cheese and a piece of fresh fruit.
- ▶ Take something easy to carry and eat like pears, apples, berries or sliced oranges.
- ▶ Whip up a smoothie with a combo of fresh or frozen fruit or yogurt and plain milk or unsweetened soy beverage.



## HEALTHY LUNCH IDEAS

Bringing food from home doesn't have to take a lot of time or be complicated. Put some leftovers into a container, cut up some veggies, make a wrap or sandwich and grab a piece of fruit. Making your lunch the night before will save you time in the morning. ( Remember to include an ice pack to keep cold items cold ).

- ▶ a thermos of soup, pasta or other hot item (great for cold days), and raw veggies
- ▶ green salad with a grain like quinoa, vegetables and cheese chunks
- ▶ chili, a whole wheat bun, and raw veggie sticks
- ▶ cold French toast with yogurt or applesauce and handful of almonds
- ▶ curry or daal with chapati, a piece of fruit and milk
- ▶ whole wheat pita bread stuffed with marinated cooked tofu chunks, grated carrot and shredded lettuce
- ▶ whole wheat tortilla wrap with hummus, lettuce, veggies and cheese
- ▶ leftovers:
  - pizza
  - kabobs (meat, cheese, fruit or veggies)
  - burrito with refried beans, cheese and tomato
  - whole wheat steamed Asian bun
  - homemade baked samosas
  - vietnamese salad rolls

There's more information at **Lunches to Go, Healthy Eating at School.**

Try to include 3-4 food groups for lunch; and 1-2 for snacks.

## → FAST FACT

Did you know that 75 % of the sodium we eat comes from processed foods, like deli meat, canned soup and boxed macaroni? Make your lunch from fresh ingredients instead of processed, prepackaged food.



## HEALTHY SNACK IDEAS

- ▶ cheese chunks and sliced apples or applesauce
- ▶ hardboiled egg and sliced avocado or cucumber
- ▶ whole grain muffins with fruit
- ▶ pita and hummus or tzatziki
- ▶ plain yogurt with fruit and granola
- ▶ roti dipped in dal
- ▶ whole grain crackers with cheese and sliced cucumber
- ▶ whole grain cereal and dried unsweetened fruit mix
- ▶ kappa-maki (cucumber) sushi rolls

For more information, visit **Super Snacks at Action Schools! BC**.



## GET TO KNOW YOUR FOOD

Learning more about your food—where it comes from, how it's grown or made and how it gets to you—is an important part of healthy eating. As you learn more about food, you probably want to have more control over what goes into your body. Knowing how to cook and prepare food is an important skill—it means being able to feed yourself and others while eating healthier. There are lots of ways to learn how to cook including from family, friends, cooking websites and shows, and classes at school or in your community.

### LEARN TO COOK!

Jamie's Ministry of Food

Videos and recipes for healthy, everyday food.

Have you ever forgotten what you just ate for lunch because you were doing a million other things at the same time? Slow down and focus on your food - you will eat better and feel better.







## ALL SHAPES AND SIZES

Don't judge yourself or others based on physical appearance. Everyone's body develops uniquely and at different ages.

- ▶ Focus on the positive in yourself and others.
- ▶ Reflect on people you see in the media. Real people aren't perfect, and perfect people aren't real. Don't compare yourself to these unrealistic images or pressure yourself to look like them.

**DIETS DON'T WORK** in the long term. Skipping meals, eliminating entire food groups or going on a crash diet to lose weight can make you feel tired, weak and less able to do things you enjoy. You might find it hard to concentrate or think clearly. It's better to focus on eating a variety of healthy foods, creating a good relationship with food, enjoying physical activity and maintaining positive connections with your friends and family.

## HEALTHY EATING AT SCHOOL

Think about what you and your friends really care about when it comes to healthy eating. What can you change? If you have time, start working with other students, teachers, staff or parents to promote healthy eating at your school.

- ▶ *Didn't pack a lunch? Healthy options should be available in your cafeteria, school store or vending machines. All BC schools have to follow the provincial **Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in BC Schools**. Talk to school staff if you have concerns about the foods that are offered at your school.*
- ▶ *Are you interested in having more fresh local fruit and vegetables available? Look into the **Farm to School Program**, start a **school garden** or sign up for the **BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program**.*
- ▶ *Be a role model. Look for mentorship opportunities in your school and community where you can teach other students about making healthy choices. Check out **Action Schools! BC**.*

## HEALTHY EATING IN YOUR COMMUNITY

There are many ways to connect with food in your community.

- ▶ *Check out a local farmers market, grow fruit or veggies at home, or sign up with a community garden.*
- ▶ *Check out what kinds of cooking, gardening or nutrition courses are available through your local recreation and community centres.*



## EATING IN RESTAURANTS

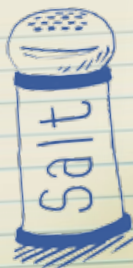
Eating out can be a lot of fun and the time for a little indulgence, but if you go to restaurants a lot, consider these tips for healthier eating:

- ▶ Look for roasted, baked or steamed foods rather than fried.
- ▶ Choose vegetable side dishes.
- ▶ Sauces and dressings are often high in sodium. Ask for them on the side and use just a little.
- ▶ Choose healthy drinks such as water, milk or unsweetened soy beverage instead of sugary drinks.
- ▶ Ask for whole grain products.
- ▶ Portions in restaurants can be large. Share a meal or take the leftovers home for lunch tomorrow.
- ▶ Ask for nutrition information.

To learn more about restaurant programs available in your community, visit [www.informedining.ca](http://www.informedining.ca) and [www.healthcheck.org](http://www.healthcheck.org).

### FAST FACT

Sodium can show up in surprising places. An entrée sized chicken spinach salad can have almost double the amount of sodium than a burger and fries! By all means, choose a salad but limit the sauces, dressings and added ingredients that boost the sodium content.



## How Are Your Eating Habits?

- ☐ I eat regular meals and snacks (3 meals a day with snacks in between).
- ☐ I eat breakfast every day.
- ☐ I choose water most often.
- ☐ I limit sugary drinks including pop, ice tea, fruit drinks and hot drinks.
- ☐ I try to bring my lunch and snacks from home and limit how often I eat out.
- ☐ I eat a variety of foods from all 4 food groups and try to eat unprocessed foods most of the time.
- ☐ I try to eat with friends or family members once a day.
- ☐ I avoid diets and concentrate on healthy eating.
- ☐ I'm aware of how advertising influences my food choices and the way I feel about myself. I look at commercials with a critical lens.
- ☐ I focus on abilities and qualities rather than looks. (I remember that bodies come in all shapes and sizes.)

# MOVE FOR HEALTH



**ALONG WITH EATING WELL** and getting the sleep you need, the best way to feel healthy and perform well is to keep moving and stay active.

## CANADA'S PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

say that teens should do moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity for at least 60 minutes each day. This should include:

- ▶ vigorous-intensity activities at least 3 days per week, like running and swimming and;
- ▶ activities that strengthen muscle and bone at least 3 days a week, like climbing and lifting weights.





Physical activity is a great way to have fun, get together with friends and meet new people. It also increases confidence, happiness, focus, concentration and energy. Physical activity is linked to decreased stress and better academic performance.

Regular physical activity can help you:

- ▶ *build strong bones and muscles;*
- ▶ *keep your heart healthy;*
- ▶ *have better posture, balance and flexibility; and*
- ▶ *maintain a healthy weight.*

## HABITS FOR BEING ACTIVE

Sports and recreational activities are great ways to be physically active, but they aren't the only way. When you are deciding on how to keep active, think about what you enjoy doing. If an activity makes you feel good, you're more likely to make it part of your routine and to stick with it.

### FIND THE BEST FIT

There are lots of ways to be active. Many of them, like walking or biking to school, can fit into your everyday routine. Even if you're already active it can be fun to explore new activities.

Start by considering your interests. For example, would you like to:

- ▶ *work out solo or with others;*
- ▶ *participate in a recreational or competitive environment;*
- ▶ *join a group or team activity; or*
- ▶ *go to a recreation center, be active at home, or out in nature?*

Shop around for the activity, instructor and environment that are right for you:

- ▶ *gather information about different activities you would like to try;*
- ▶ *talk to a teacher, personal trainer, coach or instructor;*
- ▶ *drop into a class to try it out.*

Participate for fun, work towards *specific goals*, or both. If you aren't used to regular physical activity be sure to work up to it slowly. Aim for 10–15 minutes at a time in the beginning, and add about 10 minutes each month until you're up to the recommended time.

### NEED ADVICE?

Speak to a qualified physical activity expert from the **Physical Activity Line (PAL)** for free by email or phone.  
Email: [info@physicalactivityline.com](mailto:info@physicalactivityline.com)  
Toll Free Number: 1-877-725 1149 or  
Lower Mainland: 604-241-2266.





## STAY ACTIVE AND SAFE

An activity-related injury can be painful and sideline you for a while. Here are some tips on staying safe:

- ▶ *Before your activity, be sure to start slow and ease into what you are doing. This will allow your muscles to warm up and help prevent injuries.*
- ▶ *After an activity, cool down by slowing the pace, and then stretch the muscles that you used.*
- ▶ *Start slowly and build up your activity level over time. Too much too soon can lead to an injury.*
- ▶ *Drink lots of water before, during and after physical activity.*
- ▶ *Look first, wear the gear and get trained. Always be aware of your surrounding environment and scan the area for potential hazards. Wear the appropriate protective gear and make sure that it is in good working condition. If you are starting a new activity or using equipment that you aren't familiar with, ask somebody who knows to show you how to do it properly.*



## TIPS FOR BEING ACTIVE

Making physical activity fun helps you maintain a healthy lifestyle. Here are some tips for having fun while being active:



### BUDDY UP

Be active with friends. If you prefer being active on your own you can still ask for support from friends, family, teachers or coaches. Share your goals, challenges and strategies with your support crew.



### MIX IT UP

Prevent boredom by adding variety and trying new things. Rediscover your favourite childhood activities. Which ones hold good memories? If you loved climbing trees, try rock climbing. If you preferred quieter activities, maybe yoga is right for you.



### TUNE UP

Music can be a great motivator. Download your favourite songs to get you moving.





## BREAK IT UP

You don't have to do it all at once. Being active for 15-20 minutes at a time is fine and helps you build up your strength and endurance.



## LOOSEN UP

Setting goals is important, but so is being realistic. Be flexible as you take on new challenges. When you need a break, change your activity. Or change where, when or how intensively you do it. Keep checking in with yourself: **am I still having fun?**

## LIMIT SCREEN TIME

Aim to limit your screen time outside of school to 2 hours or less per day.

## BEING OUTDOORS!

Spending time outdoors can reduce stress and improve your mood. It's also easier to be physically active outside. Here are a few ideas to spend more time outside:



### MOVE THE CHORES OUTDOORS

Volunteer to weed the garden or walk the dog. Play your favourite music while washing the car. Have a snowball fight after shoveling the driveway.



### BRANCH OUT

Exploring new interests and hobbies is a great way to explore outdoors. Try camping, gardening or photography.



### FREE FOR ALL

Lots of outdoor activities don't cost much. Try walking, hiking local trails, rollerblading, biking, skateboarding, swimming, shooting hoops or playing road hockey.





## BEING ACTIVE AT SCHOOL

You aren't in this alone. Your school and community play an important role in supporting regular physical activity. Here are some fresh ideas for being active at school, and for meeting your **DPA requirement**:



### GET ORGANIZED

If you enjoy organized activities, join a club, program, intramurals or sports team that will keep you moving. If the activities that you enjoy are not offered, work with your school to make them available.



### LEAD THE WAY

Take on a leadership role as a referee, coach, instructor or mentor.

Action Schools! BC offers tri-mentor leadership training that gives grade 9-12 students opportunities to lead playground games at nearby elementary schools.



### MAKE THE JOURNEY COUNT

Walk, bike or wheel to school. (Remember your helmet!) Take a walk at lunch or during breaks.



## TAKE CREDIT

Participating as an athlete or coach in recognized sport and recreation programs could gain you credits towards graduation. Talk to your school counsellor or [check it out here](#).

Physical activity can earn you credit for certifications, strengthen your leadership and mentoring skills and give you community volunteer and work experience. These can go on your resume and may help you get scholarships, bursaries and jobs.



## KIDSPORT

Are finances keeping you from participating in your dream - or favourite - sport? Check out KidSports grants for teens 18 and under that can help you participate in a sport season of your choice.





## BEING ACTIVE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Physical activity is a great way to get involved in your community. Here are some ideas:



### SIGN UP OR DROP IN

Visit your local community or recreation centre. Join a community sport team, sign up for classes or just drop in for a family skate or swim.



### GET BACK TO NATURE

Explore municipal or regional parks. Many of them post information about community and nature programs on their websites.



### BRING BACK PLAY

Get together with friends and family regularly for an informal soccer, football, rugby, baseball, volleyball, frisbee, hockey or tennis game.



### MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Challenge your family and friends to get involved in local charity runs or events. Make up a fun team name, choose a theme or even have special t-shirts made to celebrate your efforts. You can also participate in neighbourhood park or beach clean-ups.



### GET CERTIFIED

Complete a certificate program to become a lifeguard, fitness instructor, dance teacher or first aid attendant.



### FUN AT WORK

Seek out an active job like mowing lawns, delivering papers or leading activities at summer day camps. Volunteer as an activity leader for a group or club; they may even let you use their equipment or facilities for free in return for volunteering.



Active video games are not recommended as a way to be more physically active. They:

- ▶ are a good way to break up inactive time and are fun to play with your friends, but are not as good as playing real active games or sports outdoors;
- ▶ don't offer the fresh air, vitamin D, connection with nature and social interactions that come with outdoor physical activity.



## NEED HELP?

Sometimes we need to reach out and get help. Here are places you can turn to.

### YOU ALWAYS HAVE THE RIGHT TO FEEL SAFE

If you don't, seek help. Visit [www.safekidsbc.ca](http://www.safekidsbc.ca) or call 310-1234 from anywhere in BC (no area code required).



## ERASE BULLYING

If you are being bullied or know someone who is being bullied, visit [www.erasebullying.ca](http://www.erasebullying.ca) for information on what you can do to stop it. The site includes a confidential online reporting tool to report bullying.

## KIDS HELP PHONE

Provides free, anonymous phone and web counselling 24/7.

1-800-688-6868 or [kidshelpphone.ca/Teens](http://kidshelpphone.ca/Teens).



If you are having thoughts of suicide or of hurting yourself or others, please reach out immediately for help. Call 9-1-1, your local police or authorities for assistance. Talk to your parents or a trusted friend or adult. Or, if you want to talk to someone who doesn't know you, reach out to one of the youth crisis lines in BC. Please reach out to someone for help.



## YOUTH CRISIS LINES

**1-800-SUICIDE (784-2433)**

available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

**1-800-668-6868** Kids Help Phone

**1-866-661-3311** Youth in BC

## MIND YOUR MIND

A place to access info, resources and tools during tough times. Help yourself. Help each other. Share what you live and know.

## MINDCHECK

Mental health information, videos, and the personal stories of BC youth and young adults experiencing mental health challenges.



**Healthy  
FamiliesBC** 

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[www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca](http://www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca)

[www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/healthy\\_eating/helthy\\_living\\_for\\_families\\_youth.pdf](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/healthy_eating/helthy_living_for_families_youth.pdf)