

Healthy Start Sampler

Growing happier, healthier
children in early learning
environments

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Meet a Healthy Start Community Trainer - Brigitte Chassé

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Brigitte Chassé, Community Trainer and Early Years Coordinator at the Conseil des écoles fransaskoises (Francophone School Division), has been with Healthy Start since the beginning of the program in 2006. We thought we would ask her to share her experience being a community trainer and implementing Départ Santé with the francophone preschools in Saskatchewan.

HS: What is your experience with Healthy Start?

BC: Currently 8 out of 11 schools have been trained representing around 200 children. The parents provide the children's meals, so the focus during training and program delivery has been more on physical activity.



HS: What would you say are Healthy Start successes in your schools?

BC: The resources offered by the program are very useful to the staff. Healthy Opportunities for Preschoolers (HOP - LEAP™) is a resource used every day by early childhood educators. Training allows staff to be more alert and creative around the variety of physical activities to offer. In some schools we have observed a "Healthy Start Corner" to promote activities offered by the program. Particular emphasis is placed on children having access to physical and gross motor skill activities.

HS: Have you experienced any challenges?

BC: It is more difficult to have a direct influence on children's nutrition since it is the parents who provide the meals and snacks.

HS: Have parents been influenced by Healthy Start?

BC: Parents are influenced indirectly. At school, children still learn some principles of healthy eating and talk about it at home with their parents.

Literacy Corner



Veggie Soup Game

How to:

1. Sit/Stand in a circle.
2. Each child chooses the name of a vegetable.
3. The leader then pretends to be stirring a large pot in the centre of the circle.
4. Each child calls out the name of a vegetable as he/she adds to the pot.
5. The child with that vegetable name joins in stirring the pot.
6. Continue until all vegetables are in the pot.
7. Keep stirring and moving and making sounds to show the soup is boiling.

Try this: have the children make **Stone Soup** for lunch or a snack! See the recipe in the Let's Make section.

(LEAP™ Food Flair, page 104)



Photo credit: LEAP™ Food Flair



Let's Make

Stone Soup (LEAP™ Food Flair, page 146)

Ingredients

- 1 Quartz stone (optional)
- 2 cups Assorted fresh or frozen vegetables: potatoes, carrots, tomatoes, peppers, zucchini, corn, green beans, peas, shredded cabbage, etc.
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- Dash salt and pepper
- 4 cups chicken or vegetable broth
- 1 cup cooked rice
- 1/3 cup Parmesan cheese (optional)

Directions

1. Place stone in a pot (optional)
2. Slice fresh vegetables
3. Add oil to a fry pan and sauté vegetables for 2-3 minutes on medium-high heat
4. Add sautéed vegetables to pot
5. Add broth to pot and bring to boil
6. Lower heat and simmer soup
7. Add rice and fresh/frozen vegetables and cook until tender. Season with salt and pepper if needed
8. Use slotted spoon to remove stone if used
9. Allow soup to cool
10. Ladle soup into bowls
11. Sprinkle with cheese over each bowl of soup



Healthy Stars

Healthy Start centres have been doing such great things to increase healthy eating and physical activity over the past few months. Here is what we heard on the ground.

Top marks for **Healthy Eating** in the early years!

- ✓ Day after training, the staff started sitting at the table with the children at mealtimes. The children really liked it.
- ✓ Children started to serve themselves at mealtimes which resulted in less food waste, more willing to try new foods, especially vegetables.
- ✓ Started "Taste it Tuesday" to try new foods or foods that weren't popular the first time it was served.
- ✓ Added spaghetti squash to the pasta noodles when making spaghetti
- ✓ Children are given the choice if they want to eat something and how much.
- ✓ "Children are enjoying serving themselves at meal time. They feel grown up. It helps build their self-esteem."

More **Active Play** in childcare centres!

- ✓ Spent time practicing fundamental movement skills during outside time.
- ✓ Children are now not required to sit in a chair at the table for craft or sensory play. Educators are encouraging them to stand to do their activity.
- ✓ Teaching a fundamental movement skill during activity times for some structured play.
- ✓ Dance parties, tag games and active circuits have been added to vary play during children's busy day!
- ✓ Scheduled more physical activity into the daily schedule.