

REGISTERED LONG LIVE KIDS DIETITIANS



Brought to you by the Team of Registered Dietitians & Nutrition Professionals at Kellogg Canada Inc.

Linda Millar, BA, BEd



As an educator and international writer, developer and facilitator, Linda Millar has over 30 years of classroom experience. Since 1998, Linda has worked for Concerned Children's Advertisers (CCA) on secondment from the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, and continues to do so full time as Vice President, Education after her retirement from teaching in 2004. In this capacity she operates as managing director, writer and

workshop facilitator for the Long Live Kids campaign. Linda has also authored and delivered TV&ME, a national educational initiative that brings discussions about real life and television into Canadian classrooms and homes, and serves as educational advisor to CCA member companies. Before joining CCA, Linda was a seconded professor for the University of Ottawa, teaching curriculum design, social studies and media literacy. She is a graduate of Carleton University and the Ottawa Teacher's College.

Concerned Children's Advertisers (CCA) is a non-profit organization that creates social marketing and educational programs to address the challenges children face in their everyday lives, and to ensure a continuing responsible approach to advertising to children in Canada.

"Children learn what they live"

This familiar adage is a reminder that we are the sum of all of our experiences. It is equally true to say that "children live what they learn," and that is where parents, educators, health care workers and other supportive adults can help children to be healthy now and in the future.



After spending 33 years in the field, my experience is that educators and health care professionals have similar goals. We both want children to grow to be healthy, contributing citizens and we both know that there are certain variables that we can influence to help make this happen.

The issue

It seems that one cannot pick up a newspaper, read an article in a magazine or watch the daily news without seeing something about childhood overweight and obesity. We are constantly reminded that¹:

- Over one in three children in Canada is overweight or obese
- 80% of these children may remain overweight or obese into adulthood
- Childhood obesity significantly increases the incidence of type 2 diabetes

Other "at risk" factors include:

- Cardiovascular problems
- Increased risk of cancer
- Orthopedic concerns
- Psychological and neurological consequences



In fact, recent research has led us to believe that if present trends continue, we may in fact be the first generation of parents whose life expectancy is greater than our children's.

The recommended approach

The Canadian Cochrane Network, which fosters evidence-based, systematic reviews of healthcare interventions, recently reviewed the literature relating to interventions to treat childhood obesity and released the following findings²:

- Multifactorial interventions prove to be the most successful
- Those interventions that combine dietary modification, physical activity and some form of behavioural change result in the most positive effects in all settings, including school, clinic and family
- The greater the number of and foci of the interventions used together, the more favourable the results
- School and family are the preferred settings for long-term change

We know that schools in Canada are primary environments for growth and development of children and youth. In fact, children will spend an average of 2,300 hours at school between grade one and the end of high school.³ Since children spend a great deal of their most influential growing years in a school setting, there is a need for quality programming that is credible, research-based, action-oriented, solution-oriented and fun!

Long Live Kids: a one-of-a-kind-Canadian initiative

Faced with the sobering statistics on childhood obesity and its long-term consequences, Concerned Children's Advertisers (CCA) has highlighted children's health as an area in which it could help children "stop, think and act appropriately." As a result, CCA developed Long Live Kids, a one-of-a-kind program to help children "eat smart, move more and be media wise." Like other CCA initiatives (visit www.cca-kids.ca), the goal is to engage children in a way that will help them to gain additional knowledge and to affect change in their own lives. In order to focus on this task, CCA created the Children's Healthy Active Living Program, a group of 13 member companies and associations who partnered with government and 12 other issue experts and NGO partners to produce a program that would simultaneously be grounded in the latest research, and reach out and really engage children.



The focus of the Long Live Kids program is to provide children with tools for healthy eating, active living and improved media literacy in order to support a balanced lifestyle and achieve optimal health and development. The Long Live Kids message is delivered through two powerful vehicles: a series of child-directed public service messages and an education program delivered to educators, parents and community leaders across Canada.

Teaching children about healthy eating and physical activity is not something new. Children have learned through school programs that they should follow the suggestions for healthy eating found in *Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating*. Many children over seven years of age can even tell you what the four major food groups are and can cite examples of foods in each group. They have also been told about the importance of keeping active through physical education classes and while participating in organized sport and active play.

What it seems they have not learned is the connection that exists between the two. In the school system, health and physical education have traditionally been taught in isolation, often appearing days apart on the class timetable. Children and adults alike have not grasped the concept of the importance of looking at their lifestyles in terms of balance, moderation and variety.

This key finding has been instrumental in helping to guide the creative process and the educational support materials for Long Live Kids, making the program unique and engaging in its connections between these daily factors in children's lives.

Introducing "Health Rock"

Getting children to pay attention to a concept, then internalize it and finally use it to change their lives is a challenge. Research and practice have shown that you have greater success when applying an integrated approach. Most children will first encounter the Long Live Kids program through television PSAs. Long Live Kids' first energetic "call to action" is entitled "Health Rock." This 60-second spot, produced in English and French, has a likeable blue, animated character who comes to life on a boy's t-shirt and morphs through various stages of digestion. Health Rock's unique approach, catchy tune and lyrics grabs children's attention, getting them to stop and think about balance and energy.

Long Live Kids in the classroom and community

In addition to these child-centered commercials that are aired free of charge by major networks across the country, CCA has always recognized the importance of extending the learning opportunities beyond television and into the classrooms and homes of Canadian children and families.

For every issue explored and every public service message that is aired there are complementary comprehensive lesson plans for educators and tips, tools and strategies for parents, health care workers and community leaders that will help adults to guide children to help themselves by making wise choices now and in the future.

Using the Long Live Kids public service message as a springboard for further learning, the comprehensive educational program steps in to guide children's thinking through a series of stages designed to help them make healthy, informed choices.

Long Live Kids provides curriculum for children in Kindergarten to grade 8. In order that teachers can seamlessly insert Long Live Kids into their classroom schedules, the program also meets provincial curriculum requirements.

The objectives for the Long Live Kids educational program are:

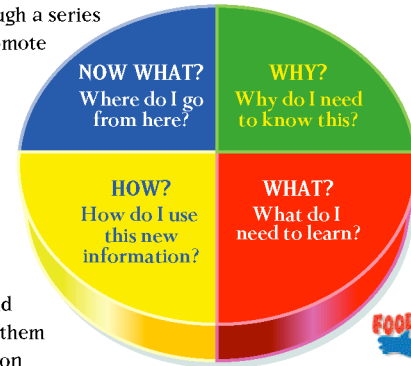
- To draw attention to the existing programs and resources available in the areas of healthy eating and physical activity, and to promote them as exemplary in this field.

- To provide comprehensive lesson plans that help children to make important connections between physical activity, healthy eating and media literacy.
- To provide actionable, solution-oriented strategies to help children feel empowered about the issue and to promote positive change in their everyday lives.

The Wheel of Learning

The educational component of Long Live Kids is based on a model that is essentially a combination of several learning theories, designed to help adults work through a series of stages that promote and facilitate learning.

The first segment of the CCA Wheel of Learning, "Why?" asks the learner to think about why the information would be important for them to learn. The lesson plans attached to this section explore what children already know about healthy eating and physical activity, encouraging them to think in terms of what a healthy lifestyle means to them.

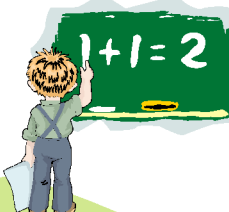


Recognizing that young children have varying levels of ability in terms of abstract thinking capabilities, these sessions promote open discussion, encourage questions and initiate the learning process by getting children to think about what they are currently doing to stay healthy.

Once children have "bought in" to the idea of learning more about ways to feel good and stay healthy, they move into the second quadrant "What?". Here students are provided with opportunities to explore what they need to know in order to improve their health now and in the future. This section of the program gets the children thinking about ways to "eat smart and move more." By providing us with accurate, reliable and current information on nutrition and physical activity, our esteemed issue expert partners have worked with us to develop the content that children need to know in order to ultimately affect a change in behaviour.

The third quadrant answers the question "How?" and provides children with the actionable tools to use the new information they have learned to positively affect change in their lifestyle. This section includes simple ideas for children to incorporate more movement and a balanced diet into their day in ways that can also be fun. In an effort to encourage children to take responsibility for their own health, this section involves the children in a series of hands-on activities to work with their peers in finding new and creative ways to balance their food choices and their levels and types of activities, as well as to achieve a healthy balance between the two. The objective is to not only introduce new ideas, but to help children to actually incorporate these changes into their lives, moving them in a positive direction along a continuum to a healthy active lifestyle.

In order to actually affect a change in behaviour, learners need to first see relevance and application in their own lives; then develop the new skills and information to make positive changes; followed by practice in a safe setting and developing a comfort level with the changes they are making to their everyday routines.



For most educational programs this is where the teaching and learning stops. The fourth quadrant of the Long Live Kids Wheel of Learning "Now What?" is an essential part of the program that extends the learning as the children bring the information learned into their circles of influence in a way that creates an ongoing connection with the classroom lessons in everyday life. In this section children are encouraged to reflect and evaluate the changes they have embraced and make suitable adjustments that work for them. What happens next is what educators refer to as the "transfer" or "application" of the knowledge and skills they have acquired.

From this quadrant the program reaches out to the community. Through a unique network of community organizations such as YMCA Canada, YWCA Canada and the Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada, the benefits of the Long Live Kids program transfer into action. Having these partners as part of the strategy enables children to work and play with what they have learned and to share it with others. Children learn most when they teach others and the lesson plans in this quadrant are designed to empower the learner to do that. Children work through the planning, organizing and delivery of a community service event that promotes "eating smart and moving more." It is crucial to note that the more often children use these skills in their own lives and in an effort to influence others, the greater the likelihood that their attitudes towards the issue will change, and we hope over time affect positive changes in their lifestyle behaviours.

The role of media literacy in developing a healthy lifestyle

Today's children have embraced the wonders of media and incorporate it into their lives on a daily basis. Although the daily average hours that children spend watching television has remained relatively stable over the past 15 years, the influx of new media has led to more time engaged in surfing the Internet, exploring chat rooms, playing computer games and mastering hand held video games.⁴ Often, children are shutting out movement-oriented activities in favour of sedentary ones instead of taking a more moderate and healthy approach by learning how to manage their leisure time, incorporating it into their day as part of a balanced healthy active lifestyle.

Establishing a balance is not the same as attempting to eliminate time spent at media play and exploration. Recognizing that media plays a very significant role in the lives of today's children and youth, CCA has always incorporated a media literacy element to both the Educator and Parent/Community Programs.

In Long Live Kids, as in TV&ME (CCA's national media and life skills education program), educators are provided with comprehensive lesson plans that direct children to stop, think and ask questions about how they spend their leisure time. They are engaged in active and fun activities that help them to understand and interpret what goes on behind the scenes to produce media of all kinds. They learn about the principles of media literacy, the first and most important of which is "All media is constructed by a team of specialists and directed at a particular group, for a particular reason."

By learning how to deconstruct and construct their own media presentations, students participating in Long Live Kids are simultaneously meeting the educational requirements to address media literacy while learning to become informed viewers who can make wise media choices for themselves and their families.

In addition, the Long Live Kids program provides an introduction to Canada's highly regarded pre-clearance system for advertising to children which ensures that all advertising to children adheres to a strictly regulated code. That information, combined with an extensive set of lesson plans on the elements of advertising, helps young people to understand the various components of an advertisement.

Hence, media literacy became the third pillar in the Long Live Kids Educator and Parent/Community Program, with a focus on teaching children to "watch carefully, think critically and navigate safely" in an effort to make the most of their media time.

The importance of parents, caregivers and community youth leaders

In addition to the amount of hours children spend at school, CCA recognizes that the home and community environment is instrumental in helping children to make wise choices concerning their health. As a result, interactions that take place between family members and other community role models are important influencers for children.

Along with the curriculum available to classrooms, Long Live Kids provides information and activities for parents and communities as well, via comprehensive workshops delivered across Canada and on the CCA web site. Assisting caregivers with tools to create a healthy balanced lifestyle is all-important, as research shows that children model parental behaviour and their eating habits are largely determined in the family setting.

Summary

In summary, it is important to first recognize that childhood obesity and related chronic disease exists all around us and then to work in collaboration to find effective ways to address the issue. Providing children and adults with statistics heightens awareness, but what leads to changes in attitudes - and ultimately changes in behaviour - is a comprehensive educational approach. Helping individuals young and old to "buy in" to the need for change, giving them the information, skills and strategies to make those changes in their everyday lives, and empowering them to find creative ways to sustain these changes in their environments is the only way that we will truly see a positive difference in the way children eat, move and spend their leisure time. We have the resources and the ability to be change agents. Let's get moving!



The Strength of Partnerships

With Concerned Children's Advertisers (CCA) new healthy active living strategy, the importance of partnerships has played a major role in ensuring that all educational materials are grounded in the most current research and are solution-oriented. CCA is honoured to have the following partners on the Long Live Kids Initiative:

Health Canada, Canadian Teacher's Federation, Canadian Home and School Federation, Dietitians of Canada, Dr. Rena Mendelson (Ryerson University, School of Nutrition), Canadian Diabetes Association, Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (CAHPERD), Coalition for Active Living, Active Healthy Kids Canada, Active Living Alliance for Canadians with a Disability, YMCA Canada, YWCA Canada, The Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada, Kid's Help Phone.



References

1. Bazinet RP, Di Buono M, Sievenpiper JL, Kendall CWC. Obesity in Canadian Children: A Review of the Literature. 2003. Prepared by BDSK Consulting Inc. on behalf of Concerned Children's Advertisers.
2. Summerhill C, Ashton V, Campbell K, Edmonds L, Kelly S, waters E. Interventions for treating obesity in children (Cochrane Review). Cochrane Database Syst Rev 2002;(2):CD001872.
3. Campaign 2000. Poverty Amidst Prosperity Toronto, Ontario (2001).
4. Canadian Teacher's Federation, Kid's Take on the Media Study, 2003.



FROM RESEARCH TO PRACTICE



Brought to you by the Team of Registered Dietitians & Nutrition Professionals at Kellogg Canada Inc.

Helping Kids Get Active

Canadian dietitians have engaged in a number of initiatives to help create a healthy future for Canada's children. A healthy balanced lifestyle is essential for children to achieve their full physical, social, emotional and intellectual potential. There's no disputing that kids who establish and maintain healthy eating and activity patterns as they grow and develop can enjoy the health benefits throughout their lives.

A healthy diet and regular physical activity have independent and synergistic roles in health promotion and disease prevention. With reports showing that over one in three Canadian children is overweight or obese^{1,2} and that over half of children and youth are not active enough for optimal growth and development³, it's clear that Canadians would benefit from comprehensive healthy lifestyle strategies which include reliable information about both nutrition and physical activity.

A recent study showed that Canadian dietitians recognize their role in promoting physical activity; however, they need access to fitness information, active living tip sheets and how-to materials to effectively incorporate activity into their nutrition counselling.⁴ These national organizations and programs provide a wealth of practical information and active living resources to help you encourage children and their families to get moving!

Active Healthy Kids Canada

Active Healthy Kids Canada is a national charitable organization focused on making physical activity a priority in the everyday lives of Canadians families. Initiatives include *readysotgo.org*, which provides sports information and tips, as well as off-line activities for children aged 3 months to 12 years, and *active8*, a curriculum-based physical activity challenge program to help students of all abilities develop their fitness and skill levels. For more information visit: www.activehealthykids.ca



The Power to Move Kids-

Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (CAHPERD)

CAHPERD is a national, charitable, voluntary-sector organization that advocates and educates for quality school-based physical and health education. In addition to quality daily physical education and quality school health resources, the CAHPERD web site includes a physical literacy and activity online store where teachers, health professionals, parents and coaches can purchase teaching and health education resources and handbooks. For more information visit: www.cahperd.ca

Long Live Kids Program

Concerned Children's Advertisers (CCA) Long Live Kids Program is an initiative that encourages children to eat smart, move more and be media wise. Resources include cross-curricular lesson plans for Kindergarten to grade 8, as well as tips and tools for parent, educators and community leaders. For more information visit: www.cca-kids.ca



Health Canada

Health Canada's Physical Activity Guides for Children and Youth provide national guidelines to improve the physical activity levels of kids aged 6-9 and 10-14. Guides are available for both families and teachers that include easy activity ideas and helpful tips to help children and youth increase their physical activity.

For more information visit: www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide/child_youth/index.html

Go for Green

Go for Green is a national non-profit, charitable organization that encourages Canadians to pursue healthy outdoor physical activities that protect, enhance or restore the environment. Go for Green produces brochures, fact sheets, case studies and reports that support a number of initiatives, including the Active & Safe Routes to School program. For more information visit: www.goforgreen.ca

Mission Nutrition* Program

A joint initiative of Dietitians of Canada and Kellogg Canada, the *Mission Nutrition** program provides easy-to-use, curriculum-based resources and lesson plans to promote healthy eating, active living and positive self-esteem in children aged 5 to 14. The fun, interactive learning activities can be used in the classroom and at home to get children excited about healthy living. For more information visit: www.missionnutrition.ca



References:

1. Tremblay MS, Willms JD. Secular trends in the body mass index of Canadian children. *CMAJ* 2000;163(11):1429-33. Erratum 2001;164(7):970.
2. Statistics Canada. The Daily. Friday October 18, 2002.
3. Craig CL, Cameron C, Russell SJ, Beaulieu A. Increasing physical activity: Supporting children's participation. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute, 2001.
4. Spidel MA, Paquette, MC, Marshall JD, et al. Linking active living and nutrition counselling: Dietitians' perceptions. *Can J Diet Prac Res* 2004;65:154-60.



Kids

