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## HEALTHY SCHOOLS

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FAMILY-FOCUSED MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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## The Joy of Eating (and saving money!)

March is [Nutrition Month](#) and the Dietitians of Canada are sharing some practical [tips and resources](#) for helping us all eat well – and cheaper. Here's a sampling:

- [10 Tips for Meal Planning on a Budget](#)
- [Quick and Easy Snack Ideas](#)
- [Say Goodbye to Picky Eating](#)

Four healthy eating strategies shared by the First Nations Health Authority, also offer some helpful [guidance](#) that BC First Nations Peoples have long known, when it comes to healthy eating: balance; moderation, close to nature and variety, are important.

## Super fun (and affordable!) Spring Break

No need to break the bank to have a great Spring break. Here's some fun and affordable ideas:

- Libraries have [books full of fun](#) ideas and so much more! Check out [gvpl.ca](#) or [virl.bc.ca](#) for more details!
- Get outside and play or take a hike. CRD has tons of [maps](#) that help.
- Get cracking – eggs or whatever you want to cook up and build skills. Try these [kid friendly awarding winning recipes](#) – and some great [skill building videos](#) to help.
- Puzzle it – Start with the edges first and together the family can create a masterpiece. Check out more cheap and cheerful ideas [here](#).



### TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Sooke School District acknowledges the traditional territories of the Coast Salish: T'Sou-ke Nation and Scia'new Nation and Nuu-chah-nulth: Pacheedaht Nation. We also recognize some of our schools reside on the traditional territory of the Esquimalt Nation and Songhees Nation.



COAST SALISH MOON: PEXSISEN – Moon of the Opening Hands the Blossoming out. Credit to: Claxton, E. Senior & Elliot, J. (1993). *The Saanich Year*

## Play is more than fun and games.

Above all, outdoor play – with the risks that come with it – can bring many benefits for children. For example, outdoor play, such as independent exploration, rough-and-tumble play, climbing, chasing, building, and so on, can promote children's social and physical development, emotional well-being, self-confidence, risk management and physical activity. Worrying comes with parenting – but evidence reminds us that over-protecting our kids might rob them of exactly what they need. This [series of podcasts](#), featuring a Canadian leader on this topic, reminds us that “popping the bubble wrap” can be a really great thing – and features some practical

strategies on letting go so your kids can grow and flourish. The days are getting longer and warmer – no better time to get outside and play (and that goes for us adults too!). Need more inspiration? “Wild about nature” is the theme for [this great line-up of books](#) available from our local libraries.

## Getting Enough Zs?

March 17th is World Sleep Day - and just like eating well and exercising, sleep is a behavior that is foundational to one's physical, mental, and social well-being. According to Health Canada, 1 in 4 children are not getting enough sleep. Here are some [tips](#) that can help your child get enough Zs – and you too!

### WHY PLAY?

Children don't move enough and sit too much

- 9% get the recommended 60 minutes per day of heart pumping physical activity
- 76% exceed the recommended 2 hour per day maximum amount of screen time, increasing the risk of obesity, poorer relationships and worse academic performance
- 20% are overweight and 13% have obesity - up 3x since the 1980s

Children face more limits placed on their play in and out of school

- child independence and the distances they roam without supervision
- child perceptions that play spaces are boring

Children are having a harder time focusing in the classroom

- conduct disorders and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) especially among males under 15 years old

Child and youth anxiety, depression, suicide, and feelings of helplessness have increased

- stress from increasing academic pressures and extra-curricular activities
- poor mental health which has been linked to declining free play ...and can lead to trouble forming/maintaining relationships with peers

Increasing access to outdoor, unstructured play benefits children

- ✓ Promotes physical health
- ✓ Promotes mental and emotional health and wellbeing
- ✓ Improves social skills, creativity and team work
- ✓ Improves learning and attention at school
- ✓ Improves resilience and risk management skills

Play is embedded in Article 31 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Children need space and time to engage in quality play. This project is funded with the generous support of the Lawson Foundation.

CANADIAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION / ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DE SANTÉ PUBLIQUE  
The Voice of Public Health / La voix de la santé publique

Photo credit: cpha.ca

# From our partners

## The Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society

Provides a range of BC Settlement and Integration Services including free adult English lessons at the JDF library for those who qualify. See their [web site](#) for more information.

## The Vancouver Island Counseling Centre for Immigrants and Refugees

Have a [team of multilingual interpreters and counselors](#), an community coaches who are fluent in Ukrainian and Russian to help support transition and settlement of new Ukrainian families

## Community Partners

With the price of groceries continuing to grow, these [community partners](#) are here to help.

## Victoria Literacy Connection

Have a variety of [free and paid programs](#) available to support your child or youth with reading, writing, math and other school subjects.

## Take home Naloxone free training

[Is available to all interested](#). Take the short training course and you can then pick up your free naloxone kit participating sites, including local [Health Units](#) and [Youth Clinics](#).

## "In The Know" online session

A Conversation for Families About Digital Wellbeing & Mental Health. Various dates available. Registration required: [www.familysmart.ca/events](http://www.familysmart.ca/events)



## GOT FEEDBACK FOR US?

Health is key to learning (and vice versa), so as part of the district's commitment to promoting health and learning for all, we'll share monthly bulletins full of tips and resources we hope you find helpful. Got feedback? We'd love to hear it! Email [vrwhite@sd62.bc.ca](mailto:vrwhite@sd62.bc.ca)



READ THE ENHANCED VERSION ONLINE [bit.ly/3i2rvWq](http://bit.ly/3i2rvWq)