



Ontario Society of Nutrition
Professionals in Public Health

La société ontarienne des professionnel(le)s
de la nutrition en santé publique



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Provincial Nutrition Society agrees new School Food and Beverage Policy is a positive step

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The Ontario Society of Nutrition Professionals in Public Health (OSNPPH) and the Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA) applaud the Ministry of Education for the release of the School Food and Beverage Policy. OSNPPH members, Registered Dietitians working within Ontario's 36 public health units, have been on the forefront urging the government to establish mandatory provincial nutrition standards for all foods and beverages offered and sold in schools.

The new policy will provide direction for schools when deciding which foods and beverages can be sold to students. However, by only addressing the food and beverages sold in school, this policy falls short of having a greater impact on transforming the eating habits of Ontario students. To further benefit the nutritional and overall health of Ontario's children and youth, OSNPPH supports a whole school approach which ensures that students get the same messages about food, nutrition and healthy eating wherever and whenever food is used in school, in addition to when it is sold.

"We encourage schools to take the next step and apply these nutrition standards at other opportunities to create a supportive environment where the healthy choice is the easy choice", says Kathy Page, Co-chair, OSNPPH. This environment is achieved when school community members are positive role models for healthy eating behaviours, avoid the use of food to reward good behaviour, and ensure their classroom activities, school celebrations and community events offer food choices that adhere to the policy. "When nutrition standards are comprehensive, consistently applied and regularly monitored, they can be the essential foundation on which schools can improve their nutrition environment", says Page. "OSNPPH members look forward to more details on how we can support school boards with monitoring compliance and implementation of these standards."

OSNPPH and OPHA have long supported the creation of healthy school nutrition environments. Using their Nutrition Tools for Schools© resource, OSNPPH members across the province have been partnering with local school committees to assess the school nutrition environment and implement action plans to make the healthy choice the easy choice. "Registered Dietitians from public health departments look forward to continuing these partnerships with school boards and local school communities in their efforts to implement the new policy and create healthy school nutrition environments", says Page.

"School Food and Beverage Policy is one important policy in creating a health promoting school" says Liz Haugh, OPHA President. "Our Association has been a long time supporter of comprehensive policies that lead to improved student health."

For more information about OSNPPH visit www.osnpph.on.ca, or to learn more about Nutrition Tools for Schools© contact your local public health department.

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