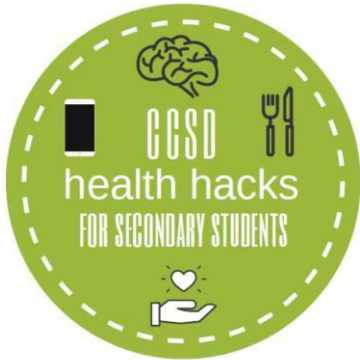


Health Hacks!

A Teacher's Guide to Quick and Convenient
Mini Health/Wellness Lessons

Navigating Health Hacks



Great to use during TA/Homeroom and Health classes for grades 5-12. These Health Hacks offer teachers short (5-10 minutes) but effective lessons on various topics of health and wellness. There is a broad topic for each month, with one lesson per week of school. Each lesson is organized in a similar way to offer consistency and ease of use, while facilitating student learning and

engagement: Overview, Introductory Activity, Facts/Tips/Information, Activity or Challenge, Sources.

September → Healthy Habits

October → Addictions

November → Health Awareness

December → Resiliency

January → Stress Management

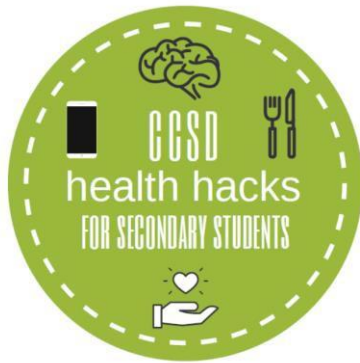
February → Our Futures

March → Nutrition

April → Risky Behaviors

May → Mental Health

June → Service



September Health Hack: Healthy Habits

Topic: Sleep

Overview:

This topic informs on the quantity and quality of sleep recommended for students. It provides practical tips for improving both of these measures. Attached is an information poster for reference and sharing. **Sleep is unconscious downtime that clarifies memory and sharpens skills...sleep is learning.**

Introductory Questions:

- Approximately how many hours of sleep do you currently get?
- Approximately how many hours of sleep do you think you should be getting?
- How many of you feel like you get quality sleep?

True or False Activity:

- 65% of youth aged 6-17 usually have at least one piece of technology in their bedroom. (**False—72%**)
- Youth who have their devices turned off get 42 minutes more sleep nightly, with higher sleep quality, than those whose devices are turned on. (**True**)
- Melatonin, the sleep hormone, is released between 9 and 10pm in adults, and between 11pm and midnight in teens' bodies...therefore, there is a biological reason that teens go to bed later. (**True**)

Sleep Facts:

- **Sleep is critical for effective learning.** "Sleep before learning helps prepare the brain, and sleep after cements the new information." Therefore, "sleeping on it" helps with memory.
- Sleep is necessary for physical and emotional health, processing our day-to-day activities, and allowing the body to rejuvenate.
- Concerns about sleep include not having the best sleeping environment, inability to fall asleep, inability to stay asleep, and staying up too late or waking up too early due to other activities.
- **The sleep recommendation for ages 5-13 years is 9-11 hours/night and for 14-17 years is 8-10 hours/night.**
- If kept short (around 20 minutes), an afternoon nap should not disrupt your normal sleeping pattern and can provide energy for the rest of the day.

Tips for Quality Sleep:

- Create the optimal sleeping environment.
 - Use your bed for rest and avoid activities such as eating in bed.
 - Melatonin is the hormone responsible for sleep. Make sure it is dark enough to ensure its adequate production. Try to avoid bright screens for at least 30 minutes before bed.
 - **Do not have any form of technology in your bedroom...no tv's, computers, cell phones.**
 - Get comfortable--tailor the temperature, bedding, and noise level to your liking.
- Caffeine after 5pm, too much or too little food, nicotine, and alcohol can interrupt sleep.
- Make sure to get regular physical activity during your day and avoid any strenuous exercise at least two hours before bed.

- Establish a bedtime routine. This includes winding down with activities such as reading, taking a bath, writing in your journal, or practicing relaxation techniques. For example, try box breathing. Inhale through the nose for 4 seconds, hold your breath for 4 seconds, slowly exhale through your mouth for 4 seconds, and pause again for 4 seconds before your next breath.
- A natural rhythm wants the body to sleep between 10pm and midnight. Try maintaining a regular bedtime.

Sleep Challenge:

- Track your sleep for a week (hours and quality rating out of ten) and notice if any of your activities during the day contribute to a better/worse sleep.
- Utilize one of the tips to help improve your sleep. For example, put your phone away earlier to wind down.

Sources:

- <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/health/pages/conditions.aspx?hwid=aa131396&>
- <https://www.participaction.com/en-ca/thought-leadership/report-card/2016>
- Brain Science for Principals: What School Leaders Need to Know, 2016, edited by Linda L. Lyman; Chapters 6 and 10



HEALTHY SLEEP FOR STUDENTS

Healthy sleep improves:

- Problem solving, learning and memory
- Control of emotional ups and downs
- Focus and decision making

How much sleep is needed?



9-11 hours a night
(5-13 year olds)



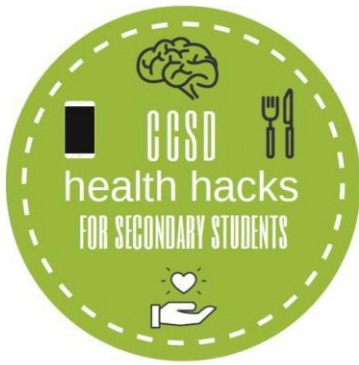
8-10 hours a night
(14-17 year olds)

Sleep Checklist:

- Increase daytime physical activity
- Keep the bedroom tech-free at night
- Maintain a regular sleep-and-wake schedule
- Keep the bedroom cool and dark
- Avoid large meals or caffeine before bed
- Relax for 30-60 minutes before lights out

Too little sleep can lead to:

- Getting sick more often
- Lower scores on school exams
- Feeling sad, anxious or grumpy



September Health Hack: Healthy Habits

Topic: Healthy Hydration

Overview:

Hydration is part of a healthy, balanced diet, and impacts how well we learn. This topic aims to provide awareness about the quantity and ingredients of chosen drinks. It addresses hydration for day-to-day activities and hydration for sports performance.

Introductory Game: "How much sugar is in the drink?"

- List the following beverages in order from the least amount to the greatest amount of sugar: Vitamin Water, Energy Drink, Starbucks Grande Mocha Frappuccino, can of Coca-Cola, Glass of Milk, Medium Coca-Cola Slurpee

Answer: Glass of Milk, Vitamin Water, Monster Energy Drink, Coca-Cola, Starbucks Grande Mocha Frappuccino, Slurpee

Fill-in-the-Blank Activity: (4g of sugar = 1 tsp of sugar)

White milk (250 ml) has _____ tsp of sugar in it (13g = 3+ tsp naturally occurring)

Vitamin Water (591 ml) has _____ tsp of sugar in it (32g = 8 tsp)

Monster Energy Drink (500 mL) has _____ tsp of sugar in it (55g = 14 tsp)

A can of Coca-Cola (355 mL) has _____ tsp of sugar in it (39g = 10 tsp) (55g = 14 tsp in 500 mL)

Starbucks Grande Mocha Frappuccino (473 mL) has _____ tsp of sugar in it (54g = 13.5 tsp) (57g in 500 mL)

A medium, 7-11 Coca-Cola Slurpee (650 mL) has _____ tsp of sugar in it (78g = almost 20 tsp)

How much total **added sugar** from food and drink is the maximum limit that the World Health Organization recommends? (25g or 6 tsp for all ages)

Did you know how much sugar is in the following drinks?



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Day-to-Day Hydration Information:

- The recommended amount of fluid to drink for ages 14-18 can be anywhere from **7-10 cups a day**.
- Since the brain is made up of approximately 80% water, **water intake is critical for learning**. During a night of sleep, a person can lose significant amounts of water...so stay hydrated for better concentration, more energy, and sharper cognitive abilities.
- Fluids can be categorized into 'anytime drinks', 'occasional drinks', and 'drinks to limit' based on their sugar and nutritional content.

Daily Drinks	Occasional Drinks	Drinks to Limit
-Water -Milk or Soy Fortified Beverages (2 cups/day)	-Flavored milk or soy fortified beverages -Juice (fruit and vegetable without added sugar) -Coconut water -Plant based beverages (almond, rice, coconut milk)	-Pop -Slurpee -Iced Tea -Sweetened Juices -Energy Drinks -Specialty Coffee and Tea Drinks

- A few quick tips on choosing healthy hydration:
 - Read the label when picking beverages and pick ones without hidden forms of sugar (corn syrup, fructose, dextrose, glucose, cane juice).
 - Do a quick sugar content scan: translate grams of sugar into teaspoons (4g of sugar = 1 tsp of sugar).
 - Although caffeine should be avoided, the maximum recommended amount for those 13 years or older is 2.5 mg/kg body weight/day.
 - **Carry a water bottle with you throughout the day...if it's there, you are more likely to drink it.**

Sport Related Hydration Information:

- Water should be the drink of choice during and after physical activity, especially if under 60 minutes. However, sport drinks (which contain sugar, sodium, and potassium to fuel muscles and the brain) ensure adequate hydration for athletes doing **intense** activity for over 60 minutes.
- Remember sports drinks are not the same as energy drinks, as energy drinks contain caffeine.
- Individuals need to be proactive and not wait for thirst as a sign of dehydration (symptoms can include: dizziness, nausea, chills, cramps, headache).
- Attached below is a recipe for a homemade sports drink you can share with students.

Sources:

- <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/nutrition/if-nfs-choosing-healthy-drinks-module.pdf>
- Brain Science for Principals: What School Leaders Need to Know, 2016, edited by Linda L. Lyman; Chapter 7

Homemade Citrus Sports Drink

Yield: 500 mL (2 cups)

2 Tbsp sugar
 1/8 tsp salt
 2 Tbsp boiling water
 2 Tbsp orange juice
 1 Tbsp lemon juice
 1 3/4 cup cold water

Combine the sugar and salt in a bowl or pitcher. Add boiling water to the salt and sugar mixture and stir until sugar and salt dissolve. Stir in remaining ingredients and chill in fridge until needed.

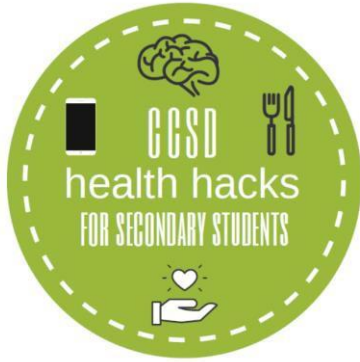
Tip: Other unsweetened fruit juices can be used instead of orange juice.

*Nutrition information per 250 mL/1 cup: 58 calories, 0 g fat, 155 mg sodium, 42 mg potassium, 15 g carbohydrate, 15 g sugars, 0 g fibre, 0 g protein.

Source: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/nutrition/if-nfs-choosing-healthy-drinks-module.pdf>

September Health Hack: Healthy Habits

Topic: Physical Activity



Overview:

Physical activity is defined as an expenditure of energy above a resting state. Exercise not only makes us feel better, but enhances our learning too.

Information:

The Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology (CSEP) guidelines recommend youth accumulate **at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity**

physical activity daily. Physical activity and exercise help students feel better about themselves, feel less depressed and anxious, and be more attentive. Studies show that exercise programs can significantly reduce depressive symptoms. **But did you know...exercise also helps create new brain cells, keeps us alert, and supports better academics and achievement.**

For a healthy 24 hours, students should aim for the recommended 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity and supplement it with several hours of unstructured light activity. As well, students should also be mindful to avoid sedentary activities for more than 2 hours a day and sitting for longer periods of time.

Video:

Hidden Risks of Sitting: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wUEl8KrMz14>

Activity:

- Any form of exercise and physical activity is better than none at all. Brainstorm some activities you can do throughout the day that is realistic for your level and interest in exercise, but totals at least 45 minutes.

Sources:

- https://www.physio-pedia.com/Canadian_Physical_Activity_and_Sedentary_Behaviour_Guidelines
- <https://www.participaction.com/sites/default/files/downloads/participaction-24hguidelines-05-17en.pdf>
- <https://www.centre4activeliving.ca/news/2019/09/exercise-depression-toolkit/>
- Brain Science for Principals: What School Leaders Need to Know, 2016, edited by Linda L. Lyman; Chapter 8