

Are we doing enough to make sure kids eat right?

Research shows that well-nourished kids do better in school than those who don't eat right or don't get enough to eat. Their concentration and memory are better, they have more energy to be active and maybe most importantly, they feel well.

But far too many kids receive a failing grade when it comes to their eating habits, which can include not eating enough vegetables, fruit, and other healthy food choices.

Because kids spend a lot of time at school, we need to do more to ensure that making the healthy food choice is the easy choice for kids, recommends Carol Harrison, a Toronto-based registered dietitian and mom with yummyslunchclub.ca. For schools, she says this means ensuring that high-quality, nourishing food and drinks are served wherever kids eat, whether that's in vending machines, cafeterias, class parties, or fundraisers. And adults at school should model good eating habits too.

When it comes to homemade meals, Harrison says parents are looking for quick and healthy meal ideas that won't break the

bank and Canadian farmers are part of that solution. A recent Canadian study has shown that modern agricultural tools like biotechnology help save Canadian families more than \$4,400 a year in food costs.

Biotechnologies, for example, let us produce more food on less land, which helps keep our food costs down. And with more wiggle-room in our budget, we can afford to buy a greater variety of food too, says Harrison. That's not only a cornerstone of good nutrition, but research shows us that kids eat better when they're offered up to six different colours in their meals that's a lot of variety, she adds.

Another way families can save is by curbing food waste at lunch. According to Harrison, cutting fruit up is a good way to ensure it will get eaten at lunch instead of being discarded. But without adding a bit of lemon juice to apple slices, they quickly turn brown. Fortunately, a new non-browning apple variety called the Arctic apple has been developed and is now being grown in Canada.



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