

Fight off bacteria by following four food safety rules

You can stop bacteria in your food from making you sick by using safe food handling, cooking and storage practices, according to the Halton Region Health Department.

Throughout June, the health department, in partnership with local food retailers, will rotate the FightBAC program display in local food retail outlets throughout the region.

The display will be at A&P, 500 Laurier Ave., in Milton starting next Friday to June 2.

Food-borne illness increases during the warm summer months and many of these cases are from food prepared at home. You can protect yourself and your family from getting sick by following four basic rules for handling food safely at home.

- Always clean your hands, utensils and cooking surfaces thoroughly with hot water and soap before, during and after preparing food. Sanitize countertops, cutting boards and utensils with a mild solution of bleach and water. All produce should be washed under cool running water before eating or cooking.

- Keep raw food and their juices separated from other foods during storage and preparation. Use one cutting board for raw meats and another for your vegetables. Keep foods covered.

- Prepare food quickly and cook them thoroughly and serve immediately. Don't let potentially unsafe foods linger at room temperature as bacteria can grow quickly. The danger zone is between 4 degrees Celsius (40 degrees Fahrenheit) and 60 degrees Celsius (140 degrees Fahrenheit).

- Refrigerate or freeze perishables, prepared food and leftovers within two hours. Make sure the refrigerator is set at 4 degrees Celsius and that the freezer is set at minus 18 degrees Celsius.

For more information about the FightBAC program, call (905) 825-6060, ext. 7501.

Mixed reaction to the provincial government's education funding

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year. That's the comparator they'll (Halton board unions) bring to us," observed Ms Kisko.

As for the opinion of other organizations, the Ontario government's latest funding pronouncement was lauded by Burlington's Conservative MPP, welcomed by the province's Catholic trustees and slammed by the man who represents Ontario's secondary school teachers.

"Education is one of our top priorities," said Burlington's Cam Jackson, minister of tourism.

"The premier has already taken action to put \$65 million in funding for textbooks and learning resources — Halton's share is \$2.1 million — and \$25 million for Early Reading and Early Math programs. (The) throne speech goes even further in restating our commitment to a quality education system," he said.

The Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA) saw the funding news as a positive first step.

"The fundamental principles and structure of the funding model are sound but the costing benchmarks are outdated. More

money needs to be spent to address the real costs of educating students today," said OCSTA president Louise Ervin.

Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation president Earl Manners, who is often critical of the government, continued in that vein.

"This announcement is simply the government pushing the emergency button to halt the free fall of public school funding in place for the past seven years. They are still asking school boards to pay 2002 costs with 1997 dollars."



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