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Canada's new Food Guide will bolster efforts to curb Canada's Childhood Obesity Epidemic

Canada, like many nations, is in the midst of an epidemic of childhood overweight and obesity. Canada's new Food Guide will strengthen efforts curb this epidemic.

Childhood overweight and obesity have been rising steadily in Canada in recent decades. Over 30% of Canadian children are overweight or obese placing them at risk for type 2 diabetes, heart disease and 13 different cancers.

The current childhood obesity epidemic is primarily due to unhealthy diets. Canada's new Food Guide is addressing unhealthy diets, providing evidence based-guidance on what to eat and how. The Childhood Obesity Foundation commends Canada's new Food Guide for:

- Encouraging water and limiting sugary drinks
- Encouraging plant-based proteins
- Limiting highly processed foods
- Building a healthier plate at meals with half of the plate covered with fruit and vegetables
- Enjoying meals together
- Cooking more often
- Involving kids in planning meals, shopping for food and cooking

One of the factors driving consumption of unhealthy food and beverages is marketing to children. The new Food Guide also recommends that Canadians be aware of food marketing when making food choices.

"Food advertising works and 90% of the food marketed to Canadian children is unhealthy," says Dr. Tom Warshawski, pediatrician and Chair of the Childhood Obesity Foundation. "We applaud Health Canada and the new Canada Food Guide for encouraging Canadians to be aware of how their food choices are affected by advertising."

Highlighting awareness of food and beverage marketing in the Food Guide bolsters efforts for nutritional policy change in Canada. This includes the passage of Bill S-228, landmark legislation to prohibit food and beverage marketing directed at children, which currently sits before the Senate for final approval

About the Childhood Obesity Foundation

The mission of the Childhood Obesity Foundation is to lead a societal shift toward healthy eating and active lifestyles to promote childhood healthy weights and the resulting physical and emotional benefits. The vision of the Childhood Obesity Foundation is children and youth of Canada free of chronic disease that ensue from unhealthy weights. childhoodobesityfoundation.ca

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