



Healthy Bites

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Winter 2018

Time to Power Off

To mark the 10 year anniversary of the smartphone, an article recently appeared in the Globe and Mail outlining the impact that smart phones have had on our brains and attention spans: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/technology/your-smartphone-is-making-you-stupid/article37511900/>

While the title of the article is provocative, it raises some interesting (and alarming!) points. Did you know that the average smartphone user looks at their phone up to 150 times per day? That adds up to nearly seven years over our lifetime!



Here are some simple steps you can take to reduce everyone's smartphone usage in the family:

1. Have a "no devices" rule at the dinner table.
2. Have a designated hour (or two!) each evening where no one is on their smartphone. Use this time productively (homework, chores) or use it to do something fun as a family (play a board game, go for a walk). Try to increase this time to 2-3 hours on the weekends.
3. Put everyone's smartphone in a basket in the kitchen one hour before bedtime. There is lots of research showing that being on a screen one hour before bed impacts both the amount and quality of our sleep. If you use your smartphone as an alarm clock, buy one at the dollar store to keep in your bedroom. This should be a rule for parents as well, not just for children and teens!

The most important thing as parents is to be aware of what you are modeling for your children. If you show your children that you are able and willing work on reducing your smartphone usage, they will be more likely to do so as well.

Active Families

Physical activity is often included as a strategy for losing weight and the best evidence of this is watching the January spike of people using their gym membership in hopes of, once and for all, meeting their New Year's Resolution...

When studies have targeted physical activity as a method for losing weight the results have been mixed. That is why focusing on the other health benefits a person can gain by regular physical activity instead of paying attention to the number on the scale is a better use of energy. . .

Benefits of Physical Activity:

- Increases good cholesterol (high-density lipoproteins or HDLs).
- Decreases bad cholesterol (low-density lipoproteins or LDLs).
- Improves blood glucose balance and your body's ability to use insulin.
- Reduces blood pressure.
- Improves heart function and blood flow.
- Improves psychological well-being (less stress, anxiety and depression).
- Promotes better sleep quality.
- Can provide an opportunity for positive social engagement.





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Silky Roasted Butternut Squash Soup with Apples & Sage

Makes about 7 cups of soup.

Ingredients:

- 1 large or 2 small butternut squash (about 3 lb)
- 2 tsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 ½c chopped sweet onions
- 1 large sweet apple, peeled & coarsely chopped
- 1 tbsp minced fresh sage
- ¼ tsp each ground cinnamon & ground ginger
- 4c reduced-sodium vegetable broth
- 1c cooked navy beans or white kidney beans
- ½ tsp each sea salt & freshly ground black pepper
- 1/3c half-and-half (10%) cream – optional



Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 425F. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil or parchment paper; set aside.
2. Using a large sharp knife, carefully cut the squash in half lengthwise. Scoop and discard the seeds.
3. Brush the cut sides of the squash with olive oil. Place squash, cut-side up on prepared baking sheet. Roast for 45 minutes or until squash is tender, lightly browned, and slightly caramelized. Remove from oven and let cool.
4. Melt butter in large soup pot over medium heat. Add onions and apples. Cook slowly, stirring often, until onions and apples are softened (about 5 minutes). Stir in sage, cinnamon and ginger. Mix well. Add broth, beans, salt and pepper.
5. Scoop out the flesh from the roasted squash and add to the pot. Bring soup to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer, covered, for 15 min. Using an immersion blender, puree soup until smooth. Stir in cream if using.

*Adapted from "Yum and Yummer" cookbook by
Greta Podleski*

Mindfulness for Teens

In recent years there has been increased attention on becoming more mindful in how we interact with the world around us and how this can positively impact our health. Mindfulness requires continuous practice and in the beginning can feel overwhelming. So why not take advantage of community programs focused on the development and practice of daily mindfulness.



For families living in the lower mainland check out the **Winter 2018 Youth Mindfulness Groups information sessions:**

Surrey

Location: Tong Louie YMCA (14988 57 Ave, Surrey)

Dates: February 22nd & March 1st from 5-7:30 pm

*** Please note that interested youth are required to attend 1 information session for the location they are interested in. Registration for an information session is required by emailing: youth-mindfulness@gv.ymca.ca***

For families in other parts of the province contact your local Shapedown BC program or community centre to inquire about similar programs.