Healthy Start Model Menu

Westcoast Child Care
Resource Centre

Costed Menu Project
November 2006
Funded by the City of Vancouver
Healthy Start Model Menu

Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre
Costed Menu Project

Background

Research indicates that the foods preschoolers and young children are exposed to and recognize are the foods they are more likely to eat and learn to enjoy. Since children’s early food choices are predictive of their adult food preferences, it is important to offer them a variety of healthy foods to promote lifelong healthy eating habits.

Little is known about the current nutritional status of preschooler and young children. In Canada, rates of obesity in this age group have tripled in the past 2 decades. Children who are overweight are more likely to go on to be overweight as adults. Overweight in adulthood is associated with higher risk for diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure. Experts are concerned that the quality of food consumed by children is less than optimal in nutritional density and includes too much sugar and inappropriate fats (such as trans fat). Canada’s Food Guide to Healthy Eating provides important guidance on feeding children.

The City of Vancouver Social Planning Department subsidizes selected childcare provider’s food budgets with the aim of augmenting the quality and quantity of food available to children in care. There is a lack of data on the current cost of a nutritious childcare menu in Vancouver. This project aimed to provide some information to fill this gap.

Goals and Objectives of the Healthy Start Model Menu

1. To provide a peer-reviewed menu for 1 month that considers children’s food preferences, provides foods from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, minimizes potentially life-threatening allergens, considers the skills and time constraints of childcare cooks, considers the equipment and facilities available for food storage and preparation and meets Canada’s Food Guide to Healthy Eating with nutritionally dense foods.

2. To calculate the cost of the childcare menu.
Acknowledgements
The Healthy Start Model Menu and costing was initiated through a grant from the City of Vancouver Social Planning Department to Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre. Thank you to Coralys Cuthbert, Social Planner, City of Vancouver and Dianne Liscumb, Executive Director, Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre for initiating and coordinating the project. Funding was provided by the City of Vancouver.

Menu developed and costed by: Margaret Broughton MSc, RD

Environmental Scan
Staff from St. Michael’s Daycare, Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House Child Care Programs, Sunset Daycare, and Mt. Pleasant Neighbourhood House generously shared information about their food programs.

Menu Production
Barb Kemp of Recipes to the Rescue assisted with recommending and choosing recipes, most of which she had tested. Good recipes are hard to find and Barb was key in assembling this menu.

Menu Reviewers:
Helen Yeung MHSc., RD and Barbara Crocker MA, RD, Community Nutritionists, Vancouver Coastal Health, and Nadia Vidas, RD, provided expert menu review.

Child care providers/cooks Zosima Espino of Ray Cam Preschool and Helen Neufeld of St Michael’s Day Care Centre attended the focus group and reviewed the menu. Thank you for your cost-saving suggestions.

Professional cook Barbara Hone of Sunset Daycare reviewed every recipe and provided detailed feedback.

Desktop Publishing:
Dawn Lavender provided formatting and professional desktop publishing.
Included in This Resource

Four-Week Healthy Start Model Menu

The menu provides breakfast, morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack for four weeks. The menu is designed for children aged 3-5 years old but can be modified for older age groups, as needed. Substantial afternoon snacks are included most days in consideration of children who are in care until 5 or 6pm. The menu emphasizes whole foods which are high in iron, zinc, fibre, vitamins A and C and healthier fats. Fat is not restricted in this menu as children in the 3-5 age group require higher fat diets than do adults.

Recipes

There are 77 recipes included in this document and that are organized alphabetically by recipe name (found in the menu).

Costing

The costing provided represents a baseline for preschoolers. The portion sizes used are listed in this document and they represent a minimum from which to adjust for older children. The Cost of Eating Report from Dietitians of Canada for 2006 indicates that, within a family of 4, the cost of feeding a 2-3 year old child a basic full diet was $80.93 and for a 4-6 year old was $108.23.

The costs provided in this menu are for small portion sizes. For 5-year-old children, the cost may need to be adjusted by a factor of 1.5. For 6-8 years old the cost needs to be adjusted by a factor of 2. The costs in this menu reflect the cost savings that come from producing food in bulk. The recipes were costed for 16 portions and then the per-portion cost was calculated from the total cost.

Resources

Links to reliable nutrition resources. Please check these links for an updated version of Canada’s Food Guide to Healthy Eating which is to be released in January 2007.

Other resources related to allergies and food safety are included.
## Healthy Start Model Menu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Breakfast** | High fiber cold cereal<sup>8</sup>  
Sliced fresh fruit orange<sup>3</sup>  
1% or 2% Milk<sup>1</sup> | **Pumpkin Waffle**  
**Cottage Cheese Waffle Topping**  
1% or 2% Milk | **Hot cereal<sup>6</sup>**  
Toasted ground almond sprinkle (optional)  
1% or 2% Milk  
Canned fruit (peach)<sup>4</sup> | **Tasty Granola or Granola**  
Sliced Banana  
1% or 2% Milk | **Make-ahead French toast**  
Apple sauce  
1% or 2% Milk |
| **Snack** | **Bean Dip Pita chips**  
Water | Whole grain crackers  
Fruit slices (apple)  
Cheese<sup>2</sup>  
Water | **Apple Crisp**  
Vanilla/Plain Yogurt<sup>2</sup> or Orange Cream  
Water | Cheese<sup>2</sup>  
2 Fig Bars (purchased)  
Water | **Graham Cookies<sup>9</sup>**  
Fruit slices (grapes)  
Water |
| **Lunch** | **Honey Curry Chicken**  
Brown Rice<sup>7</sup>  
Green beans  
Water | **Hamburger Soup**  
**Bannock**  
1% or 2% Milk  
(or **Hearty Minestrone and Bun**) | **Chicken pita pockets**  
**Grate salad**  
1% or 2% Milk | **Tasty Salmon Noodle Casserole**  
Cooked peas and carrots  
1% or 2% Milk | **Black Bean Burrito**  
Salsa  
Lettuce  
Tomato  
Canned/fresh mandarin oranges  
1% or 2% Milk |
| **Snack** | Pudding<sup>2</sup>  
Canned fruit (apricots in juice)  
Water | **Potato and egg salad**  
Vegetable sticks<sup>5</sup>  
**Thousand Island Dip**  
Water | **Grilled cheese sandwich**  
Water | **Fruity spread**  
Whole grain bread sticks or crackers  
Water | **Fruit yogurt popsicles**  
Water |
### Healthy Start Model Menu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 2</th>
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<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **Breakfast** | • High Fibre Cold cereal\(^8\)  
  • Canned fruit (apricot)  
  • 1% or 2% Milk | • Breakfast sausage  
  • Whole wheat toast  
  • Canned fruit (pear)  
  • 1% or 2% Milk | • **Tofu Scrambled Eggs**  
  • Whole wheat toast  
  • 1% or 2% Milk  
  • Jam | • **Breakfast Cheese Melts**  
  • 00% juice | • Hot cereal\(^6\)  
  • Whole wheat toasted Ground almond sprinkle (optional)  
  • Fruit slices (banana)  
  • 1% or 2% Milk |
| **Snack** | • **Pumpkin Loaf**\(^9\)  
  • Fresh fruit slices (banana)  
  • Water | • Whole grain crackers  
  • -Cheese  
  • -Fruit slices (melon)  
  • -Water | • **Cheddar Cheese Cornbread**  
  • Water | • **Banana-Berry Shake**  
  • Water | • Yogurt  
  • Canned fruit (peach)  
  • Water |
| **Lunch** | • **Hamburger BBQ cups**  
  • Carrot Apple Salad  
  • 1% or 2% Milk | • **Salmon Cakes**  
  • **Broccoli Salad**  
  • 1% or 2% Milk | • **Chicken Noodle Soup**  
  • Whole wheat bagel  
  • Vegetable sticks + **Cucumber and Dill Dipping Sauce**  
  • 1% or 2% Milk | • **Sheppard’s Pie**  
  • Cooked frozen vegetable  
  • 1% or 2% Milk | • **Comforting Lentil Soup**  
  • Roti  
  • 1% or 2% Milk |
| **Snack** | • **Pizza Pals**  
  • Water | • **Egg Salad Sandwich**  
  • Whole grain bread  
  • Water | • **Potato Pockets**  
  • Water | • **Vietnamese Salad Roll**  
  • 1% or 2% Milk | • **Chocolate Tapioca Pudding**  
  • Carrot sticks  
  • Water  
  • Or Perogies |
# Healthy Start Model Menu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 3</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Breakfast** | • High fiber cold cereal\(^6\)  
• 1% or 2% Milk  
• Fresh fruit slices (orange) | • **Baked Vegetable Frittata**  
• 1% or 2% Milk  
• **Fluffy Cottage Cheese Pancakes**  
• 1% or 2% Milk  
• Fresh fruit slices (orange) | • Sausage  
• Whole wheat toast  
• Frozen fruit (blueberries)  
• 1% or 2% Milk | • Hot cereal\(^6\)  
• Canned fruit toast (pear)  
• 1% or 2% Milk |
| **Snack** | • **Bean Dip**  
• Whole grain bread sticks/Vegetable sticks  
• Water | • Whole grain cracker  
• Cheese  
• Fruit slice (melon)  
• Water | • **Carrot Apple Muffin**\(^5\)  
• 100% fruit/vegetable juice | • **Instant Banana Pudding**  
• Water | • **Pumpkin Raisin Bars**\(^9\)  
• Fresh fruit slices (apple)  
• Water |
| **Lunch** | • **Stir-fry Chicken Chow Mein**  
• Brown Rice\(^8\)  
• 1% or 2% Milk | • **Baked Spaghetti and Meat Sauce**  
• Romaine and dark greens for salad  
• Basic Salad Dressing  
• -1% or 2% Milk  
• (or **Spaghetti and Bolognese Sauce**) | • **Chicken Drumsticks**  
• Cooked frozen vegetable  
• Whole wheat roll  
• 1% or 2% Milk | • **Fish Sticks with Pickle Mayo**  
• **Oven Baked French Fries**  
• Bun-% or 2% Milk | • **Lentil Chili**  
• Roti or biscuit  
• Vegetable sticks  
• 1% or 2% Milk |
| **Snack** | • **Devilled Tofu Sandwiches**  
• Water  
• Or -Nut butter and bun | • **Baked Apple**  
• Graham cracker  
• Water  
• (or **Pear with Raspberry Sauce**) | • **Cabbage Roll Casserole**\(^5\)  
• Water | • **Macaroni Salad**  
• Frozen fruit (grapes sliced)  
• Water | • **Kermit’s Dip**  
• Whole grain bread sticks or **Pita chips**  
• Water |
## Healthy Start Model Menu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 4</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Breakfast** | • High fiber cold cereal<sup>8</sup>  
• Fresh fruit slices (oranges)  
• 1% or 2% Milk | • French toast  
• Canned fruit (peach)  
• 1% or 2% Milk | • **Cheese Strata**  
• Frozen fruit (blueberries)  
• 1% or 2% Milk | • Hot cereal<sup>6</sup>  
• Canned fruit (apricots)  
• Toasted ground almond sprinkle (optional)  
• 1% or 2% Milk | • **Rice<sup>7</sup> and Beef Meatball Congee**  
• Fresh fruit slices (oranges)  
• -% or 2% Milk |
| **Snack** | • **Banana Cake<sup>9</sup>**  
• Yogurt  
• Water | • Whole wheat toast  
• Melted Cheese (grated cheese sprinkled on toast)  
• Water | • **Pineapple Tofu Smoothie**  
• Water | • **Kid-Friendly Hummus Dip**  
• Pita chips  
• Water | • **Applesauce with Granola**  
• Water |
| **Lunch** | • **Meatloaf**  
• Caesar salad with Spinach and Romaine  
• Bun  
• 1% or 2% Milk  
• (Or **Indian Dal with Brown Rice**) | • **Morrocan Squash and Lentil Stew**  
• Couscous  
• -1% or 2% Milk | • **Teriyaki Chicken Bits**  
• Cooked green beans  
• Brown rice<sup>7</sup>  
• -1% or 2% Milk | • **Tuna Melts**  
• Vegetable sticks  
• **Cucumber Dill Dip**  
• 1% or 2% Milk | • **Chili in a Baked Potato**  
• Frozen corn (or other vegetable)  
• 1% or 2% Milk |
| **Snack** | • **Apple Cheddar Quesadillas**  
• Water | • **Tasty Granola<sup>9</sup>**  
• Fresh/frozen/canned Fruit  
• -Water  
• (Or **Homemade Granola**) | • **California Rolls**  
• 100% fruit/vegetable juice | • Baked beans (from can)  
• Whole grain bread  
• Water | • **Butterscotch Pudding**  
• Fresh fruit: melon  
• Graham crackers  
• Water |
Guidelines for Food Choices and Portion Sizes for for 3-5 Year Old Children in the Healthy Start Model Menu

1. 1% or 2% Milk-based beverages
   Where 1% or 2% Milk is the beverage, fortified soy 1% or 2% Milk can be substituted. 1% or 2% 1% or 2% Milk is recommended. Plain, unflavoured 1% or 2% Milk is recommended. Homo (3.25% M.F.) milk is recommended for children up to age 2.
   • Portion size: 125 mL (1/2 cup)

2. 1% or 2% Milk-based foods
   Cheese choices include regular cheddar or other block cheese. Puddings must have 1% or 2% Milk as the first ingredient and contain 20g or less of sugar per 175 mL and less than 15g fat per serving listed on the package.
   • Cheese portion size: 28 g (1 oz) at meals and 15g (1/2 oz) at snack
   • Pudding/yogurt portion size: 50 -65 mL (1/4-1/3 cup)

3. Fresh fruit
   Offer fruit in season such as berries, apples, pears, plums or sliced melon, orange sections, sliced grapes or banana slices.
   Frozen fruit such as berries or sliced peaches may be substituted for fresh fruit.
   • Portion size: approximately 40g or 50 mL (1/4 cup)

4. Canned or frozen fruit and fruit juice
   Use fruit canned in juice, no sugar added. Canned and frozen fruits are a good nutritional choices. Use them often. Limit juice offered to no more than once per week. Offer only 100% fruit or 100% low sodium vegetable juice (or a combination fruit/vegetable juice).
   • Portion size for frozen/canned fruit: 50 mL (1/4 cup)
   • Portion size for juice: 125 mL (1/2 cup)

5. Vegetable sticks
   Try carrot, celery, turnip, broccoli, cucumber,etc. Always cut thinly in match-stick style as raw vegetables are a choking hazard. Do not offer raw vegetables to children under 3 years of age.
   • Portion size: 50 mL (1/4 cup, approximately 40g)
6. **Hot cereal**
   Try oatmeal, cream of wheat, Red River cereal or another hot cereal or a mixture of several types that need a similar cooking time.
   - Portion size: 75 mL (1/3 cup)

7. **Cold cereal**
   Choose a cereal made from whole grain wheat or oats with at least 2 grams (and preferably 4 grams) of fibre per serving listed on the package.
   - Portion size: 75 mL (1/3 cup, approximately 8 grams)

8. **Bread, buns, rice, crackers and baked goods**
   Whole grains must be the first or second ingredient (not counting water). Grain ingredients may include: flours made from wheat, rye, rice, potato, soy, or millet. Grains also include rice, pasta, amaranth, corn, quinoa, etc.

   Use quick cooking brown rice, such as basmati, or use a mixture of white and brown rice until children adapt to eating only brown rice.
   - Portion size: 75 mL (1/3 cup)

   Small portions of baked items with whole grains such as sliced loaves, muffins, cookies and crackers are acceptable.

   Grain products **must** have at least 2 grams of fibre and 2.6 mg iron per serving listed on the package.
   They must **not** have any of the following per serving listed on the package:
   - 10g or more of fat
   - 5g or more of saturated fat
   - 0.2g or more of trans fat
   - more than 450 mg sodium

   Menu Portion sizes:
   - 3 crackers
   - 75 mL (1/3 cup) rice or cooked grains
   - ½-1 slice bread
   - ¼-1/2 bagel or English muffin

9. **Meat, chicken and fish**
   Use lean ground meat.
   - Portion size: 1-2 ounces (25-50 grams)
## Healthy Start Model Menu Costing

### Cost Per Portion for a 3-5 Year Old Child*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
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<tr>
<td>Breakfast</td>
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<tr>
<td>Breakfast</td>
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<td>0.90</td>
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<td>$2.69</td>
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<td>$2.28</td>
<td>$2.24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Breakfast</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.76</td>
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*The costs of food associated with the Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre Menu Project, November 2006. Prices were gathered at Super Store in November, 2006.

The average costs were:

- Breakfast - $0.52
- Snacks – $0.34
- Lunch - $0.90
## Healthy Start Model Menu Costing

<table>
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<th></th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
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<td>PM Snack</td>
<td>9.76</td>
<td>9.76</td>
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<tr>
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<td>11.52</td>
<td>9.60</td>
<td>7.20</td>
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<tr>
<td>AM Snack</td>
<td>7.52</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>3.68</td>
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<tr>
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<td>$40.16</td>
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<tr>
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<td>8.00</td>
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<td>12.16</td>
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<tr>
<td>PM Snack</td>
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The average meal/snack cost is $33.76.
Cost Saving Ideas from Child Care Cooks

- Buy whole chicken, cook, remove from the bones and freeze for use over the week.
- Grate and sprinkle cheese rather than slicing
- Serve meatless and dairy-free dishes more often
- If you have storage space, buy in larger quantities (eg. ground beef, block cheddar cheese at Costco). Block cheese such as cheddar can be cut or grated into smaller amounts and frozen. The texture of the cheese changes slightly but it can be stored for up to 3 months.
- Labour-saving equipment and quality cookware are essential. Accumulate a food processor, blender, large electric griddle, large soup pot and quality knives.
- Develop a purchasing relationship with a local store. A corner grocery market may be willing to order your milk, eggs and fresh produce. You may get lower pricing and more timely delivery of fresh food.

Further information:

Watch the Ministry of Health website for an updated Food Flair for Childcare resource manual.

How to incorporate food and nutrition into your childcare program:
See the Vancouver Coastal Health website for the manual Healthy Start for Life at www.vch.ca
Reliable Nutrition Websites

- [www.dietitians.ca](http://www.dietitians.ca) - Dietitians of Canada: Go to Eat Well, Live Well
- [www.canadian-health-network.ca](http://www.canadian-health-network.ca) - Canadian Health Network
- [www.healthcanada.ca](http://www.healthcanada.ca) - Health Canada
- [www.heartandstroke.ca](http://www.heartandstroke.ca) - Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada
- [www.dialadietitian.org](http://www.dialadietitian.org) - Dial-A-Dietitian, or call the free hotline at 604-732-9191 or 1-800-667-3438
- [http://actnowbc.gov.bc.ca/](http://actnowbc.gov.bc.ca/) - ActNow BC
- [http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/tools.htm#eat](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/tools.htm#eat) - BC Ministry of Education
- [www.knowledgenetwork.ca/makingithappen](http://www.knowledgenetwork.ca/makingithappen) - Knowledge Network - information on creating a healthy school environment

Information for Parents on Healthy Lunch Ideas

- [http://www.dietitians.ca/public/content/eat_well_live_well/english/faqs_tips_facts/fact_sheets/index.asp](http://www.dietitians.ca/public/content/eat_well_live_well/english/faqs_tips_facts/fact_sheets/index.asp) - “Thanks for the Great Lunch” and “Eat Well, Play Well at School”
- [www.canadian-health-network.ca](http://www.canadian-health-network.ca) - search the word “lunch” and find all kinds of information
- [http://www.fraserhealth.ca/HealthInfo/PublicHealth/FoodAndNutrition/School+Handouts.htm](http://www.fraserhealth.ca/HealthInfo/PublicHealth/FoodAndNutrition/School+Handouts.htm) - “Lunches to Go” and “Smart Snacks”

Allergy resources

Dial-a-Dietitian 604-732-9191. The allergy dietitian is available Wednesday to Friday to provide help with more complex food allergy questions. See our flyer for more information: [http://www.dialadietitian.org/nutrition/ANS%20Flyer1.pdf](http://www.dialadietitian.org/nutrition/ANS%20Flyer1.pdf)

- [http://www.foodalergyinitiative.org](http://www.foodalergyinitiative.org) “No Nuts for Me” storybook.
- [http://www.allergysafecommunities.ca](http://www.allergysafecommunities.ca)
- [http://www.safe4kids.ca/](http://www.safe4kids.ca/)
- [Anaphylaxis Canada](http://www.anaphylaxis.org/) - Helping people live with deadly allergies. [www.anaphylaxis.org/](http://www.anaphylaxis.org/)
- [www.caringforkids.cps.ca/eating/FoodAllergies.htm](http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/eating/FoodAllergies.htm)

Food Safety

- [http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/securit/index_e.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/securit/index_e.html)
Bibliography and Recommended Recipe Books

100 Meals Under a Loonie, Per Serving
by Nanaimo Community Kitchens
copyright 1994

Better Food for Kids
Your Essential Guide to Nutrition for all Children from ages 2 to 6
Joanne Saab, RD and Daina Kalnins, RD
copyright 2002
Published by Robert Rose Inc.,

Meals For Good Health
Low-Calorie Recipes with Meal Plans
by Karen Graham, R.D., C.D.E.
Copyright 1998, 2001 by Durand & Graham, Ltd.
Paper Birch Publishing

The New Canadian Basics Cookbook
by Carol Ferguson with Murray McMillan
Copy Right 1999
Published by the Penguin Group

The Quick Recipe
by The Editors of Cook's Illustrated magazine
Copyright 2003
Boston Common Press

Food To Grow On
by Susan Mendelson and Rena Mendelson
Copyright 1994
Toronto : HarperPerennial

Everyday Food Monthly (magazine)
by Martha Stewart

Cook Great Food
Dietitians of Canada
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Toronto, Robert Rose

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Victoria, B.C. Big Ideas Publishing

Recipes To The Rescue
By Barb Kemp
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