



# *Growing Up Healthy*

A resource booklet for First Nations  
and Metis parents in Manitoba

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# How Was This Resource Developed?

This resource is one of a series of four parenting resources for First Nations and Metis parents and caregivers in Manitoba. It was developed in response to expressed interest from Manitoba families and community partners for useful, culturally appropriate parenting information. The resources were first developed by the National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health and the BC First Nations Health Authority, in partnership with Best Start Resource Centre at Health Nexus and Indigenous parents, family members, Elders and community partners in British Columbia.

The booklets in this series include:

- **Growing Up Healthy**  
A resource booklet for First Nations and Metis parents in Manitoba.
- **Parents as First Teachers**  
A resource booklet for First Nations and Metis parents in Manitoba.
- **Fatherhood is Forever**  
A resource booklet for First Nations and Metis parents in Manitoba.
- **Family Connections**  
A resource booklet for First Nations and Metis parents in Manitoba.

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NATIONAL COLLABORATING CENTRE  
FOR ABORIGINAL HEALTH



**Manitoba** 



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness



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***nikawiy***  
*means “mother”*  
*in Cree*



# Introduction

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Historically, Indigenous peoples had close connections to the land, waters and foods it provided. Food that was taken from the natural world was honoured and respected. It was never wasted and always shared. People were active as part of their daily lives.

This booklet will help you learn how your children can grow up in a healthy way. It will help you think about healthy foods and being active. Most of the things you can do to be healthy are low or no cost. Eating well and being active can be fun and budget-friendly. Being healthy also means getting regular check-ups and learning about your body.

This booklet shares stories, culture and knowledge about traditional foods, hearing, dental and eye health, immunizations, sleeping and being safe. Throughout this booklet, you will find highlighted textboxes with links to additional resources that you can check out for more information. At the end of this booklet, there is also a list of organizations that offers a wide range of culturally-appropriate programs, resources and services to help you achieve the best possible outcomes for your children.



*ina*  
*means “mother”*  
*in Dakota*

# Food and You

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What you experienced as a child may impact how you parent. Over time, our ways of life have changed, affecting what we eat and how active we are in our daily lives. Many Indigenous families today do not have places nearby where they can hunt, gather medicines, pick berries or fish. They no longer have this traditional knowledge. Parents and children spend a lot of time sitting throughout the day.

The words parents say and the beliefs they have come from their past experiences. The following questions will help you understand your beliefs about food and what you may be teaching your children.

## What role did food play in your childhood?

- Were you told that you had to eat everything on your plate?
- Did your family sit around the dinner table and share supper together regularly?
- Did you usually have healthy meals?
- Were you taught about healthy food and cooking?
- Did you have enough to eat?
- Were there times when you went hungry?

Think about the differences between your emotions and hunger. Ask yourself:

Am I really hungry? Or am I trying to comfort myself or numb my feelings with food?

Am I giving my children food to make myself feel better?

When you are parenting your children, avoid using food as a reward for good behaviour, as a punishment for negative behaviour, or to comfort or numb your feelings. For example:



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	<b>YOU MAY HEAR OR SEE</b>	<b>TRY INSTEAD</b>
<b>REWARD</b>	Parents tell their children they can have chips or a chocolate bar if they stop yelling and running around the house	Remind your children that yelling and running can be done outside. Give them time for active outdoor play
<b>COMFORT</b>	Parents ease their feelings of pain or distress with a chocolate bar or pop after a bad day	Relax yourself and unwind from a hectic day by listening to your favourite music, talking with a friend or taking a bubble bath
<b>THREAT</b>	Parents tell their children that they won't get pop or candy if they don't pick up their toys.	Let your children know that after they pick up their toys, you will play a game or share a story with them.
<b>NUMB</b>	Parents eat sugary foods to forget about and avoid dealing with painful or stressful situations	Look at what is making you uncomfortable and talk with someone about why you don't want to feel or face the situation

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## Food and You (Cont'd...)

### Food and how you feel

Healthy bodies are an important part of healthy families. What you eat may affect how you feel. Some foods may make you feel grouchy, tired or over excited. Other foods may give you a headache or stomach ache. Think about the foods that make you feel healthy or feel sick. Think about how you feel after you eat. How long does it take for you to feel hungry again? With some foods, like pancakes and bacon, you can feel hungry a short time later. With other foods, like oatmeal and salmon, you may feel full for a lot longer. These foods can have the same impact on your children.

### Being a role model

Family meal time is an important part of a healthy, family routine. It is a time to connect as a family. Turn off the television during meals, so you can talk with your children without any distractions. Listen to the stories they want to share with you. As you focus on your children and talk together, you teach them about social skills, family and caring.

You are a role model for your children. Model healthy eating for them. Provide them with healthy foods that are high in protein, fiber, complex carbohydrates and healthy fats. Serve healthy portions for you and your children. Let them decide when they are full. Remember, our stomachs are the size of our fists, so you and your children may get full after eating a small amount of food.

Dial-a-Dietitian  
Call: 204-788-8248  
Toll Free: 1-877-830-2892



# Traditional Foods

The first traditional food is breast milk. Breast milk contains vitamins and nutrients that babies need for good health. It also contains a large amount of antibodies that protect babies from childhood illnesses. Breastfeeding your babies is like giving them their first immunization. Breastfeeding is healthy for mothers too.

**Breastfeeding: Your Baby's First Food**  
[www.gov.mb.ca/healthyliving/hlp/docs/nutrition/milkbr.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthyliving/hlp/docs/nutrition/milkbr.pdf)

Other traditional foods include fish, wildlife, root vegetables and berries, such as:

- Bison, white-tailed deer (venison), elk, moose, caribou
- Duck, goose, partridge, prairie chicken, muskrat, rabbit
- Bass, jackfish, lake sturgeon, pickerel, walleye
- Blackberries, blueberries, chokecherries, crab apples, cranberries, saskatoon berries
- Beans, carrots, cabbage, green beans, onions, potatoes
- Edible wild plants (i.e., dandelion greens), hazelnuts, mint leaves, weekay root, wild rhubarb, wild rice, 100% pure maple syrup.

To learn about traditional foods and protocols such as feasting, sharing, not saying no to food that is offered, and Elders eating first, talk to Elders and Knowledge Keepers in your community. They will know about plants and animals that are safe or unsafe to eat. They will know the protocols for hunting and gathering, and how to prepare these foods safely.

Today, many Indigenous communities have high rates of obesity, diabetes and other avoidable diseases. Children and families eat a lot of sugary drinks, cereals, pastries and candies. They also eat more unhealthy fats and salt than they did in the past, from fast foods, processed foods and unhealthy snacks. Going back to a more traditional diet with less sugar, fat and salt; more iron, fiber and protein; and a more active daily lifestyle will help to keep you and your children healthy.

**Where to Buy Indigenous Traditional Food in Winnipeg**  
[www.foodmattersmanitoba.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/TradFood-Guide\\_2015\\_online.pdf](http://www.foodmattersmanitoba.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/TradFood-Guide_2015_online.pdf)

**Manitoba Traditional Foods Initiative Planning and Resource Development Project: A traditional Foods Resource for Northern and First Nation Communities**  
[www.foodmattersmanitoba.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/OFOHOC\\_Trad-Foods\\_report-2013-online.pdf](http://www.foodmattersmanitoba.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/OFOHOC_Trad-Foods_report-2013-online.pdf)

**Traditional Food Skills Resources**  
[www.foodmattersmanitoba.ca/2015/05/traditional-food-skillsresources/](http://www.foodmattersmanitoba.ca/2015/05/traditional-food-skillsresources/)

**Métis Cookbook and Guide to Healthy Living**  
[www.naho.ca/documents/metiscentre/english/Cookbook\\_SecondEdition.pdf](http://www.naho.ca/documents/metiscentre/english/Cookbook_SecondEdition.pdf)



# Healthy Food on a Budget

## Feeding your baby

Breastfeeding is cost-free and healthy for both breastfeeding moms and their breastfeeding babies. It is the only food that babies need during their first 6 months of life, and women can continue to breastfeed for up to 2 years or longer. Once your baby is 6 months old, you can begin to feed your baby solid foods. While baby food is available in stores, you do not have to buy them. You can make them yourself.

**Making Connections: Your First Two Years With Baby**  
[www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/healthybaby/hb\\_makingconnections.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/healthybaby/hb_makingconnections.pdf)

## Food from the land

Traditional foods are often healthier and can often be less expensive than store bought foods. Obtaining traditional foods can promote physical activity. A traditional diet is low cost if fish and wildlife are available from fishing and hunting. Some fish contain high amounts of mercury, which can affect your children's healthy brain development. There also are diseases you can get when hunting and eating wildlife. It is important to know how to keep healthy when eating foods from the land and waters.



**Mercury in Fish: & Guidelines for the Consumption of Recreationally Angled Fish in Manitoba**  
[www.gov.mb.ca/waterstewardship/fisheries/education/mercury\\_final\\_nov\\_2007.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/waterstewardship/fisheries/education/mercury_final_nov_2007.pdf)

**Manitoba Hunting Guide**  
[www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/wildlife/hunting/pdfs/huntingguide2016\\_web.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/wildlife/hunting/pdfs/huntingguide2016_web.pdf)

**Manitoba Trapping Guide**  
[www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/wildlife/trapping/pdf/2016\\_trapping\\_guide.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/wildlife/trapping/pdf/2016_trapping_guide.pdf)

Picking berries is a great way for children to learn about where food comes from. It helps build their confidence. Young children develop coordination and respect for the land as they pick berries and put them in a pail. They learn patience, since berry picking is a slow process. Sometimes, children pick more berries than adults. Some children eat more berries than they bring home. All children and families can benefit from doing this free and healthy activity together.

Listening to teachings about traditional foods and medicine harvesting is a great way for children to learn about the foods from the land and waters that are safe to eat. They also learn about the value of all plants and animals. Call or drop by your local friendship centre, community health centre, nursing station, parent child coalition or family centres in schools, and ask about Elders or knowledge keepers who can share teachings on traditional foods and medicines.

## Growing your own food

If you have natural lighting from the sun, you can make a garden right inside your home. You can also use your porch, deck or yard to make a garden. You and your children can grow herbs, tomatoes and other vegetables. Dirt, seeds and pots can be low-cost or free. Growing your own food is a great family activity. Children like to see how things grow, and they like to eat foods they have grown themselves.

**A Community Gardener's Guidebook: A Month to Month Guide Covering the Basics in Gardening in Winnipeg**  
[www.gov.mb.ca/ana/pdf/pubs/community\\_gardener\\_guidebook.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/ana/pdf/pubs/community_gardener_guidebook.pdf)

**Basic Gardening Manual for Northern Manitoba**  
[www.gov.mb.ca/ana/pdf/pubs/magri-gmmn.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/ana/pdf/pubs/magri-gmmn.pdf)



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## Canning and freezing

The less food is processed and the closer it is to its whole and natural condition, the healthier it is. Fresh foods do not contain added salt, sugar or other substances that are added to foods to preserve their look and taste. Foods grown locally are usually healthier and cost less than foods grown far away. Buy or pick fresh fruits and vegetables that are in season, and then freeze them to eat later. Children can help. Preserving food is a great way to save money and eat fresh, healthy foods all year round.

Canning is another way to take advantage of foods in season. Tomatoes can be canned with herbs and spices. You can use them in meals that you make over the winter. For example, cilantro, green peppers and jalapeños creates a base for all Mexican dishes. Adding oregano, basil, garlic, marjoram, rosemary and thyme to tomatoes makes a tasty spaghetti sauce.

The Basics of Home Canning  
[www.gov.mb.ca/ana/pdf/pubs/nhfi\\_basics\\_canning.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/ana/pdf/pubs/nhfi_basics_canning.pdf)

## Making your own food

Packaging food costs money and it has a cost to the environment. Making food from scratch, such as burgers, macaroni and cheese, or spaghetti sauce is a good way to save money. Look for healthy recipes for your family that fit your budget, are quick and easy to make, and kids love to eat. Do a search online for healthy and easy to make recipes and healthy family meals on a tight budget. To find meal ideas that work for you, include in your online search the names of the food items that you have on hand. Cookbooks are another place where you can find delicious, nutritious, easy to prepare, family friendly recipes and cooking tips.

Favourite Family Foods: Recipes from the Healthy Baby Program  
[www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/healthybaby/hb\\_cookbook.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/healthybaby/hb_cookbook.pdf)



## Beverages

Pop, fruit juices, slurpees, and other sweetened drinks are high in sugar and low on nutrition. These types of drinks are not healthy choices for you or your children. Children do not need fruit juice. It is much healthier for them to eat fresh fruit. If you must give fruit drinks to your children, look for 100% juice and give your children no more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a cup (175 ml or 6 ounces) of fruit juice on any given day.

Water is the best drink for you and your children. Water does not cause cavities or contain empty calories. Drinking water is also healthy for your body. Role model for your children the healthy choice to drink water. Instead of drinking coffee, tea, pop or fruit juice, drink water.

In some communities, tap water is free and safe to drink. In other communities, there either is no running water or the tap water is not safe to drink. Sometimes, you can boil the water to make it safe to drink it. Other times, you need to drink bottled water. There is information available about boil water advisories and the safety of the water in your community.

Manitoba Water Stewardship  
Toll Free: 1-800-214-6497  
[http://gov.mb.ca/waterstewardship/drinking\\_water/index.html](http://gov.mb.ca/waterstewardship/drinking_water/index.html)

# Active Families




You do not need to be an athlete to live an active lifestyle or provide opportunities for your children to be active. Being active can be a part of your everyday life. For example, walking with your children or pushing them in a stroller is a free activity that can be done either indoors or outside. Everyday chores can include squats, lunges or lifts. Push-ups or sit-ups can be done with your children next to you on the floor.

Living an active lifestyle with your children can be as simple as choosing to walk or bike to the store, instead of driving or getting a ride. It can include playing ball, setting up an obstacle course in your home, or dancing to music on the radio.



The most important thing about being an active family is remembering to have fun and play together. There are many free programs and activities that you and your children can participate in together through your local parent child coalition, friendship centre, community health and recreation centres, nursing station or family rooms at schools. Most of these activities are offered year-round on a drop-in basis.



A decorative floral pattern in the top right corner, featuring stylized flowers and leaves in a light green color against a darker green background.

*“As a grandfather, it has always been a strong priority for me to pass on my knowledge of participating in the pow wow circle. As a small boy of 6 or 7 years old, I still remember sitting under the big top at my dad’s reserve in Pipestone, Manitoba and feeling so proud of watching the dancers, and wishing I had the courage to be on the dance area participating. I had so many older relatives that danced, and whenever I had the opportunity to sit and watch them get into their regalia, I would.*

*I was told that one dancer in particular, who had an arm missing from his time at war, was an uncle of ours. I would try my best to be there while he transformed from this one-armed man into a beautiful men’s grass dancer. This really fascinated me as a young boy, to see him move with such grace.*

*I knew from that time I wanted to be a dancer of some kind. At the age of 25, after I felt I dealt with my own demons from growing up in a family of Residential School Survivors, I set a path to start dancing. That was 35 years ago now.*

*I tell people dancing pow wow was one of the avenues that helped me stop drinking. Today, I have passed on my pow wow dancing to my children, foster children and now my grandchildren. There is nothing more that makes me so proud to be on the pow wow circuit with my family and grandchildren today.”*

*Wopida.*

*– Clayton Sandy, Sioux Valley Dakota First Nation*

# What You Can Do

## DURING PREGNANCY

Every big or small change that you can make toward living a healthier lifestyle will help you have a healthier pregnancy and healthier children. There is a lot to learn about staying healthy during pregnancy, for you and your baby. Pregnancy is a good time to learn about the importance of prenatal care and positive parenting. Think about who can give you support during pregnancy, childbirth and with your new baby. It may be a partner, family or friends. Check to see if there are any prenatal classes or parenting support programs available in your area.

**Healthy Baby Community Support Programs** help pregnant women and new parents connect with other parents, families and health professionals. The program offers information, support and resources on prenatal and postnatal nutrition and health, breastfeeding, parenting tips and lifestyle choices. See: [www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/healthybaby/csp.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/healthybaby/csp.html)

**Manitoba Prenatal Benefit** is a monthly cheque to help you buy healthy foods that you need during pregnancy. If you are pregnant, live in Manitoba (on or off reserve), and have a take-home yearly family income of \$32,000 or less, you qualify to receive the benefit. See: [www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/healthybaby/mpb.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/healthybaby/mpb.html)

You can learn about pregnancy and positive parenting from your doctor, midwife, community health nurse, family support worker or program workers at your local friendship centre, parent-child coalition, community health centre or family centres in schools.

## Ask questions

Talk with your doctor, midwife, community health nurse or family support worker about any concerns you may have about your pregnancy, your new baby or your planned parenting. Ask for help:

- If you are feeling sad or anxious during pregnancy or after your baby arrives.
- If you are planning to keep your placenta and take it home with you after you deliver your baby. Some Indigenous cultures use the placenta in ceremonies to connect children to the land and keep them grounded in living a good life.
- If it is a struggle for you to not drink alcohol or use drugs. It is safest not to use any alcohol or drugs during pregnancy. Quitting alcohol and drugs as soon as possible and looking after your health are the best ways to lower the risk of harm to you and your unborn baby.
- If you are trying to quit or cut back on smoking. Smoking is not healthy for you or your baby. Quitting smoking is not always easy, but there are places that can help.
- If someone in your life is hurting you physically or emotionally. Learn the signs of an unhealthy relationship and break the silence surrounding family violence and abuse.
- If you are having trouble buying the healthy foods or prenatal vitamins that you need during pregnancy.
- If you have any concerns about your pregnancy or feel worried that something is not right.





Pregnancy is a good time to get ready for your baby. Learn about the importance of breastfeeding, keeping your children safe, and parenting in a healthy way.

ManitobaParentZone  
Toll Free: 1-877-945-4777  
[www.manitobaparentzone.ca](http://www.manitobaparentzone.ca)

Healthy Child Manitoba, Information for Moms to be and Parents  
[www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/healthybaby/useful\\_info.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/healthybaby/useful_info.html)

Motherisk  
Toll Free: 1-877-327-4636  
[www.motherisk.org](http://www.motherisk.org)

Healthy Child Manitoba, FASD Prevention  
[www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/fasd/prevention.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/fasd/prevention.html)  
Safe Kids Canada  
[www.safekidscanada.ca](http://www.safekidscanada.ca)



*semq means  
“mother” in Dené*



*Traditionally when a baby was born, the belly button would be placed or buried somewhere of importance. A girl’s belly button might be placed on an anthill so that she would grow up to be a hard worker. A boy’s belly button might be buried around animal tracks so that he would grow up to be a good hunter.*

# What You Can Do

## BIRTH TO 6 MONTHS

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Breastfeeding is the best food. It is a traditional and natural practice. Breast milk is the only food that your baby needs between birth and 6 months. You can continue to breastfeed for up to 2 years or longer. Breast milk is the healthiest food for your baby. It is always the right temperature, always fresh and available, and saves you money because it is free. The first breast milk, called colostrum, is important for newborn babies to have because it contains antibodies that help protect babies from infections, illnesses and allergies.

Fathers, grandparents and other family members can encourage mothers to breastfeed their children and offer support to breastfeeding mothers by making sure they get enough sleep and have healthy foods to eat and drink. They can help with housework and taking care of older children in the family. They also can help with feeding bottled breast milk to babies.

### Benefits for mothers

For mothers, breastfeeding:

- Helps to control bleeding after your baby is born
- Keeps your bones strong
- Protects against some cancers
- Helps your body burn extra calories and lose your “baby weight”
- Brings you and your baby closer together

### Benefits for babies

For babies, breastfeeding:

- Allows babies to eat on demand, when they are hungry, without waiting
- Lets babies decide when to stop eating, when they have had enough
- Lowers the risk of ear, chest and stomach infections
- Reduces the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
- Decreases the risk of obesity
- Promotes healthy brain development
- Helps with jaw and tooth development

### Don't give up

It is not uncommon for some mothers to have fears and difficulties with starting breastfeeding. Breastfeeding is a trial and error practice that requires patience and persistence. If you have problems or concerns with breastfeeding, talk to your community, health nurse, home support worker or someone else who has experience with breastfeeding. They can provide you with the help, guidance and support you need.

### Breast milk supply

Breast size does not have anything to do with how much breast milk mothers produce. Nursing mothers produce the amount of breast milk that their breastfeeding babies need. Babies help with the supply of breast milk by feeding as often as they need. Each baby is different. Some babies need a lot of breast milk, while other babies need less breast milk. Mothers will produce the right amount of breast milk that their babies need, as long as they feed their babies whenever they want to be fed.

You may worry about whether your breastfeeding baby is getting enough to eat because you cannot measure breast milk the same way you can measure milk in a bottle. As long as your baby is gaining weight and has enough wet and dirty diapers, there is no need to worry about whether your baby is getting enough breast milk. The guidelines for nursing mothers, in the following chart, will help you know if your baby is feeding enough.

If your baby is very sleepy in the first few weeks of life, you may need to wake your baby for breastfeeding. You and your baby will also need Vitamin D, especially during October through May when daylight hours are shorter. Talk to your doctor, midwife, community health nurse or family support worker about the amount of vitamins and other nutrients your baby will need.

### Warming breast milk

To warm up breast milk that has been expressed and saved for later use, put the container of breast milk in a bowl of warm water. Do not use a microwave to heat breast milk, and do not heat breast milk on the stovetop. The breast milk is ready for feeding to your baby when it feels warm on your wrist (not hot).

## Alcohol and breastfeeding

It is best not to drink any alcohol when you are breastfeeding. When you drink alcohol, it gets into your breast milk. The amount of alcohol in breast milk is directly affected by the amount of alcohol you drink. Feeding your baby breast milk that contains alcohol can cause your baby to become drunk. It can also make your baby become addicted to alcohol. Breastfeeding is not recommended if you choose to drink alcohol.

Girls, Women and Alcohol: Making Informed Choices  
[www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/fasd/alcohol\\_women.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/fasd/alcohol_women.pdf)

Baby Friendly Manitoba: Breastfeeding  
[www.gov.mb.ca/health/bfm/index.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/bfm/index.html)



## Formula feeding

Most women can breastfeed their babies. For medical or personal reasons, some women make an informed decision not to breastfeed their baby. Whole, powdered or canned milk is not recommended as an alternative to breast milk. It is not healthy for babies. The only healthy alternative to breast milk

is infant formula. It is important to learn about how to safely prepare, store and use formula. Information about formula feeding your baby is available at your community health centre, nursing station or community support program.

Healthy Eating for Infants and Children  
[www.gov.mb.ca/healthyliving/hlp/nutrition/children.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthyliving/hlp/nutrition/children.html)

GUIDELINES FOR NURSING MOTHERS									
YOUR BABY'S AGE	1 WEEK							2 WEEKS	3 WEEKS
	1 DAY	2 DAYS	3 DAYS	4 DAYS	5 DAYS	6 DAYS	7 DAYS		
<b>HOW OFTEN SHOULD YOU BREASTFEED?</b> Per day, on average over 24 hours	At least 8 feeds per day (every 1 to 3 hours). Your baby is sucking strongly, steadily and swallowing often.								
<b>YOUR BABY'S TUMMY SIZE</b>	 Size of a cherry		 Size of a walnut		 Size of an apricot		 Size of an egg		
<b>WET DIAPERS: HOW MANY, HOW WET</b> Per day, on average over 24 hours	 At least 1 WET	 At least 2 WET	 At least 3 WET	 At least 4 WET	 At least 6 HEAVY WET WITH PALE YELLOW OR CLEAR URINE				
<b>SOILED DIAPERS: NUMBER AND COLOUR OF STOOLS</b> Per day, on average over 24 hours	 At least 1 to 2 BLACK OR DARK GREEN		 At least 3 BROWN, GREEN, OR YELLOW		 At least 3 large, SOFT AND SEEDY YELLOW				
<b>YOUR BABY'S WEIGHT</b>	Babies lose an average of 7% of their birth weight in the first 3 days after birth.			From Day 4 onward your baby should gain 20 to 35 g per day (2/3 to 1 1/2 oz) and regain his or her birth weight by 10 to 14 days.					
<b>OTHER SIGNS</b>	Your baby should have a strong cry, move actively and wake easily. Your breasts feel softer and less full after breastfeeding.								

# What You Can Do (Cont'd...)

## BIRTH TO 6 MONTHS

### Hearing and talking

Babies can hear both loud and soft sounds. By 2 months, they should turn toward a sound. If you whisper in your baby's ear, your baby should turn toward you. You also can stand behind your baby, out of sight, and softly say your baby's name. Your baby should look to see where the sound is coming from. If your baby does not turn toward you when you make sounds, there may be a problem with your baby's hearing.

Hearing loss can be caused by family history of hearing loss or diseases during pregnancy. It can also happen if your baby is very sick, has ear infections, or experiences a head injury. To make sure you get appropriate support for your baby and your family, it is best if hearing loss is identified as early as possible.

Central Speech and Hearing Clinic Inc.  
Call: 204-275-7436  
[www.centralspeech.ca](http://www.centralspeech.ca)

### Healthy teeth

Healthy teeth are important for children's health. Baby teeth help babies learn to eat and talk. Early childhood tooth decay happens when food and other cavity-causing germs are left on babies' teeth. Caring for your children's teeth begins before they get their first teeth. Even before your children have teeth, you can clean their gums with a soft wet cloth wrapped around your finger, twice a day.

Early Childhood and Tooth Decay  
[www.nccah-ccnsa.ca/en/publications.aspx?sortcode=2.8.10&publication=95](http://www.nccah-ccnsa.ca/en/publications.aspx?sortcode=2.8.10&publication=95)

### Healthy eyes

At birth, babies cannot see very far, but they can see light, shapes and movement. Your face is one of the most interesting things that will catch your baby's attention. It is normal for babies' eyes to roll away from each other every now and then, especially when they are very young.

Vision is one of the most important senses for children. It affects every aspect of their learning and development. Eye exams are an important part of making sure your children have healthy eyes that are developing properly. In Manitoba, there is no cost for children (birth to 18 years) to get their eyes examined. Arrange to have your children's eyes examined at 6 months.

Children and Their Vision: What Parents and Teachers Need to Know  
[www.nccah-ccnsa.ca/en/publications.aspx?sortcode=2.8.10&publication=126](http://www.nccah-ccnsa.ca/en/publications.aspx?sortcode=2.8.10&publication=126)

Manitoba Association of Optometrists  
Call: 204-943-9811  
[www.optometrists.mb.ca/patients/childrens-vision/babys-eyesfirst-exam](http://www.optometrists.mb.ca/patients/childrens-vision/babys-eyesfirst-exam)





## Health check-up

Your doctor, midwife or community health nurse will check your baby when he/she is about 1 week old. Babies also should visit a doctor or community health nurse at 2 months, 4 months and 6 months for a check-up. These visits give you an opportunity to ask questions and find out how your baby is doing.

At each check-up, your baby will be weighed and measured and receive an immunization (needle). Immunizations are important because they help to keep your children – and you – from getting sick from serious illnesses, and they help to prevent spreading diseases.

Manitoba Routine Immunization Schedules  
[www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/div/schedules.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/div/schedules.html)

## Sleeping

For the first month, babies may sleep for about 15 hours of every 24 hours, but not for longer than 2 to 3 hours at a time. Getting enough sleep can be hard for parents during this time because babies usually wake up several times throughout the night. Breastfeeding is the best way to get babies back to sleep.

Safe Sleep Spaces for Babies  
[www.childrensadvocate.mb.ca/wp-content/uploads/Megaphone-13-Safe-Sleep-for-Babies-WEB-VERSION2.pdf](http://www.childrensadvocate.mb.ca/wp-content/uploads/Megaphone-13-Safe-Sleep-for-Babies-WEB-VERSION2.pdf)



## Being active

Find time to be active for your own good health and model healthy ways of living for your children. Here are some ideas for being active with your baby:

- Dance with your baby.
- Do yoga with your baby.
- Pick berries with your baby in a carrier, swing, or tikinagan – moss bag.
- Walk or run with your baby in a stroller.
- Do physical activities with other members of the family.



**koopije means**

*“great-grandmother” in Anishinaabe*

# What You Can Do (Cont'd...)

## BIRTH TO 6 MONTHS

### Keeping safe

There are many ways children can be harmed. Some examples are animal bites, things falling on them, an unsafe sleeping place, drowning and burns. In order to keep your children safe, think about what they can reach and what they can do, as they grow. The most important things you can do to keep your children safe are to make your home and vehicle as safe as possible, and stay close to your children, especially when in, on or around water.



Stop accidents before they happen.

- Stay near your children when they are in the tub, even if they are in a tub chair or support.
- If you have to do chores or are busy doing something that may take your attention away from your children, put them in a safe place, such as the crib or playpen.
- Many children are hurt every year by animal bites. Stay with your children if there is an animal nearby. Keep animals away from sleeping babies. When outdoors, take a repellent if there are problems with animals.
- Tables, couches and beds are not safe for babies. Even small babies can move and fall.
- Pads, pillows, comforters and toys are not safe in a baby's bed. Babies can suffocate on soft things.
- Babies should be placed on their backs to sleep. This is very important.
- Do not share a bed with your children for at least the first year of life.
- Keep your babies in the same room with you at night, but in their own cribs.

#### Give Your Child a Safe Start

[www.wrha.mb.ca/community/publichealth/files/GYCSSe.pdf](http://www.wrha.mb.ca/community/publichealth/files/GYCSSe.pdf)



*When a baby is in a moss bag, it is like being back in the safety, security and warmth of the womb.*

## 7 TO 12 MONTHS

### Starting solid foods

For the first 6 months, the only food your baby needed was breast milk. At around 6 months, your baby is ready to begin eating solid foods, but you can still continue to breastfeed your baby, for up to 2 years or longer. You will know that your baby is ready for solid food when your baby:

- can lift his/her head and sit up without help, in order to eat safely.
- can pick things up and put things in his/her mouth.
- seems interested in the foods eaten by other children and adults.

Start your baby with foods that are rich in iron, such as iron fortified infant cereal that can be mixed with breast milk or formula. You can also feed your baby mashed fruits and vegetables that you are eating as a first food. Rabbit soup or fish broth is another common first food for babies.

When you start feeding your baby solid foods, begin with one kind of food at a time, and feed the same food for several days before giving your baby something new to eat. That way, you will know how your baby responds to each new food.

You may worry that your baby is not getting enough to eat. Babies eat at their own pace. They should never be forced to eat when they are not ready or when they feel full. Babies stop eating when they are full. They tell you that they are full by turning their heads away from you or by closing their mouths. Babies may eat only a few teaspoons of food at a time. Between 6 and 12 months, most of your baby's food still comes from breastfeeding.

Baby food does not have to be bought at the store. It costs less to make your own baby food. Vegetables that you make for your own meals can be cooked and mashed for your babies. Homemade baby foods have less salt, sugar and preservatives than ready-made baby foods bought from the store. You do not need to add sugar, salt or spices to the baby foods you make at home. Plain food is best for babies.

**Feeding Your Baby: 6 Months to 1 Year**  
[www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/healthybaby/hb\\_solidfoods.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/healthybaby/hb_solidfoods.pdf)

### Choking

Children can choke on food, coins, toys or any other small things that can get stuck in their throats and block their breathing. There are things you should know or do to keep your babies from choking:

- Babies should never be left alone when they are eating.
- Toys and other items that fit inside a toilet paper tube are too small for your baby to play with.
- Balloons are not safe for babies.
- Babies should not eat nuts, popcorn or candy.
- Bones should be carefully removed from fish and chicken.
- Remove pits and seeds from fruit.
- Dice or slice round foods into small pieces, such as grapes and wieners.
- Grate raw vegetables, such as carrots.
- Cook fruits and vegetables to make them soft.
- Spread a thin layer of sticky foods like peanut butter on a cracker or toast (not on bread).
- Cut meat into small pieces and add broth or breast milk.

Learn what to do if your baby chokes. It could save your baby's life. Contact your local community health centre, nursing station, friendship centre, parent child coalition or family centre in schools and ask about any upcoming Emergency First Aid and CPR training opportunities.

**Prevent Choking in Babies and Young Children:  
For Child Care Providers**  
[www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/prevent-choking-baby-child](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/prevent-choking-baby-child)



# What You Can Do (Cont'd...)

## 7 TO 12 MONTHS

### Allergies and intolerance

Food allergies and food intolerances may be different for different people.

A **food allergy** is a bodily reaction to a food protein. Foods that may result in allergic reactions in some children (such as eggs, milk and soy, fish or nuts) can be offered at 6 months. An allergic reaction can be mild, like watery or itchy eyes, stuffy nose or a skin rash. It also can be more serious, such as stomach pains, cramps, diarrhea or vomiting. The most severe reaction is swelling of the throat, difficulty breathing and shock. Luckily, this is very rare. Talk to your doctor or community health nurse if you think your baby has a food allergy. Call 911 or get medical help right away if your baby is having trouble breathing.

A **food intolerance** is a digestive reaction to a food. For example, lactose intolerance is a reaction to the milk sugar, lactose (this generally does not happen in babies). An intolerance can lead to diarrhea, stomach cramps, runny nose or rash. If you notice your baby has these signs, talk to your doctor or community health nurse.

### Healthy teeth

After your children grow their first teeth, it is important to brush their teeth, two times, every day. You can use a soft bristle toothbrush and a rice-size amount of fluoride toothpaste to clean your children's teeth. When your children have teeth that touch each other, start flossing between them at least once every day.

Help your children to have healthy teeth. Candy, cake, cookies and sweetened drinks are not healthy food choices for your children. Putting sweetened drinks such as juice, pop or sweetened tea in your children's bottles or sippy cups is not good for your children's healthy teeth development. Sweet foods and drinks can result in tooth decay. Tooth decay may result in your children's teeth having to be pulled out. Pulling children's teeth can be a painful experience, for both parents and children. In some cases, children need to be put to sleep to get their teeth pulled.

At most, sweets should be a treat. If you give your children juice, use a sippy cup, not a bottle. Limit juice to no more than 3/4 of a cup each day (175 ml or 6 ounces). Children should not be put to bed without a bottle that contains anything other than water. When your children eat candy or other sweet treats, be sure to brush their teeth.

Taking your children for regular dental check-ups also helps to keep their teeth healthy. In Manitoba, there are places where you can go to get free dental services.

Manitoba Dental Association

Call: 204-988-5830

[www.manitobadentist.ca](http://www.manitobadentist.ca)

Manitoba Health Dental Consultant

Call: 204-788-6729

[www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/environmentalhealth/dental.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/environmentalhealth/dental.html)



## Hearing and talking

Your children will practice talking, even before you understand their words. They start talking by hearing others talk and learn to make sounds, then words.

## Healthy eyes

By 1 year, your children's vision is almost as good as an adult's vision. They can tell the difference between near and far. They will be able to recognize people from a distance.

## Health check-up

Children should visit their doctor or community health nurse at 9 months and 12 months of age for a check-up. During the 12-month visit, your children should receive an immunization to protect them and others around them from certain diseases.

## Sleeping

Sleep affects children's moods, behaviour and learning abilities. It also helps children's bodies heal and grow. Your children should begin sleeping through the night when they are about 7 to 12 months. Most children need about 10 to 13 hours of uninterrupted sleep, each night. In addition to night-time sleep, children under 12 months need between 1 and 4 naps throughout each day. Each nap should last between 30 minutes and 2 ½ hours.

### Is Your Child Safe? Sleep Time

[www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/pubs/cons/child-enfant/sleep-coucher-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/pubs/cons/child-enfant/sleep-coucher-eng.php)

## Active play

Children should be active several times each day. Find time to be active with your children. Play with them every day.

- Have crawl races or play catch me if you can. You can crawl around the house racing your young children. Take turns trying to catch each other or race to a place. Let your children win. Cheer for them. Clap your hands. Teach your children to clap and cheer.



- Make music with your children by using rattles, drums, pots and plastic serving spoons. Choose objects that can be safely chewed on.
- Listen to music and dance together. This is a great time to share cultural music and teachings with your children.
- Have your children put toys in a container. Take the toys out of the container, and then put them back in the container. Speak your First Nations or Metis language to say the names of the toys. Cheer when all the items are in or out of the container.

Television, computers and electronic games are not recommended for children under the age of 2 years. Limit sitting to no more than 1 hour at a time. When possible, limit the amount of time your children spend in a stroller, high chair or car seat.

### Is Your Child Safe? Play Time

[www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/pubs/cons/child-enfant/play-jeu-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/pubs/cons/child-enfant/play-jeu-eng.php)

# What You Can Do (Cont'd...)

## 7 TO 12 MONTHS



*maama means  
mother in Michif*



### Keeping safe

Avoid accidents before they happen.

- Children put everything in their mouths. Clear the area of anything that young children shouldn't have.
- Store all household chemicals, medicines, knives, beading supplies and other harmful items where your children can't get them.
- Be careful of electric cords, wires and things that dangle. As children start to move, they will reach and grab and try to pull things off tables or other high places.
- Use a word like danger to tell your children to keep away from things that may be harmful to them. Always use the same word and sound alarmed.
- Keep your children away from cooking and hot foods. Many children are burned by hot food or drinks, such as a cup of hot coffee.
- When walking with your children, leave your headphones at home and put away your electronic devices. Be aware of things around you.
- Keep your home tidy and clean your children's toys and their play areas regularly to help them stay healthy.

#### Is Your Child Safe?

[www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/pubs/cons/child-enfant/safe-secure-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/pubs/cons/child-enfant/safe-secure-eng.php)

## *Over-zealous parenting comes in the color of Orange*

*“When the boys were babies I was what you can call an overzealous and yes first time parent. The twins were about 7 months old when we were driving back to Peguis from the city. I was only about 10 kilometers south of one of the local towns when I looked for what seemed the millionth time to check on the boys in the rearview mirror. This time as I glanced into the mirror something appeared out of place. As I looked at Kane I thought he appeared to be well...orange. I angled the mirror so I could look at my other son Kelsey and sure enough he appeared to be the same color. Was I imagining it? Was the sun shining directly on them so it only appeared there skin was orange?*

*I remember pulling over the car and opening up the door to look at them more closely. Sure enough their skin was an orange hue. As a first time parent I wanted to do everything just right, I wanted to make sure they were well fed and had a proper nutritional diet. As I looked at both of them sitting there eyes peering back at me, I started to feel a sense of panic. What was happening to my boys? Was this a medical emergency? I felt a sense of horror, what was wrong with them and why didn't I see this before?*

*With fright filling my heart I got back into the car and drove straight to the nearest hospital emergency room. I entered the hospital and explained to emergency staff that I needed a doctor to have a look at my babies.*

*The doctor finally came and looked closely at both babies. He squinted looking intensely. He took their temperature and found they had no fever and were otherwise in good temperament and in good health. Without saying a word he left to gather up more medical staff, which also came to peer at the babies. Suddenly I can see the look on their faces; some were smiling and talking animatedly among one another.*

*Finally the doctor approached me and asked me if I fed the boys carrots. I said yes...well that's the only thing they would eat so I would give them whenever they wanted. The doctor explained that there was carotene in the baby food; as a result [it] turned my children a bright orange!*

*This occurrence is one I will always remember. From then on I tried to be more aware of a balanced diet for both boys. A friend of mine is an instructor of early childhood education in the city and she told me she uses this story as an example from time to time on over-zealous parenting as the need calls for it. The boys were fine, they were healthy and I tried to remember from then on not to feed them to much of a good thing.”*

*Mindy Sinclair – Peguis First Nation*

# What You Can Do

## 1 TO 3 YEARS

### Healthy eating

Give your children a variety of healthy foods. Meals should include foods from 3 or 4 food groups in Canada's Food Guide. Snacks should include foods from 2 food groups. The following chart shows the number of servings of food toddlers need from each of the food groups each day.

Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide – First Nations, Inuit and Métis  
[www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/pubs/fnim-pnim/index-eng.php#a\\_2](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/pubs/fnim-pnim/index-eng.php#a_2)

Healthy Eating for Infants and Children  
[www.gov.mb.ca/healthyliving/hlp/nutrition/children.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthyliving/hlp/nutrition/children.html)

FOOD GROUP	SERVINGS PER DAY
Vegetables and Fruit (for example, berries, apples, carrots, spinach)	4
Grain Products (for example, bread, cereal, bannock, rice, pasta)	3
Milk and Alternatives (for example, milk, yogurt, cheese, soy milk)	2
Meat and Alternatives (for example, fish, meat, eggs, nuts, beans)	1







Children’s stomachs are the size of one of their fists. They have small stomachs, so portion sizes for food need to be small. They need to eat often. Most children between 1 and 3 years will eat a 1 tablespoon-sized serving of a food group, for each year of age. For example:

- A 1 year old would eat 1 tablespoon of cooked peas.
- A 2 year old would eat 2 tablespoons of cooked peas.
- A 3 year old would eat 3 tablespoons of cooked peas.

Every child is different, and at times, your children may be hungrier or less hungry than usual. Let your children decide how much to eat.

When they are hungry, provide healthy finger foods for them, such as cut up fruit, slices of pita bread with hummus, or cut up vegetables. You and your children will eat healthy foods if you always have them ready to eat. For a healthy alternative to sweetened drinks, add a few berries or a slice of lemon or cucumber to naturally flavour the water in their sippy cup. Just be careful about choking. Carrots can be cut into long thin slices or grated to help prevent choking. Grapes can be cut in quarters or sliced. Wieners can be diced.

Help your child eat well  
[www.manitobaparentzone.ca/tips-news/pdf/body-help-child-eat-well.pdf](http://www.manitobaparentzone.ca/tips-news/pdf/body-help-child-eat-well.pdf)



*Your job is to decide what, when and where to offer food. Your toddler’s job is to decide if they want to eat and how much to eat.*

## Healthy teeth

Brush and floss your toddler’s teeth each day with a rice-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste to clean and protect their teeth. Your toddler should start regular visits to the dentist at 1 year of age.

Oral Health and Hygiene  
[www.nccah-ccnsa.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/96/Oral\\_Hygiene\\_EN\\_web.pdf](http://www.nccah-ccnsa.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/96/Oral_Hygiene_EN_web.pdf)

## Hearing and talking

Your children should start combining words into sentences as they grow and develop. The skills that children gain at different stages are called developmental milestones. Children may have a developmental delay if they do not develop skills within the same age range as other children. Talk to your children’s doctor or community health nurse if you are concerned about your children’s development. The Child Development Clinic also provides assessment and referral support for preschool aged children who may have developmental concerns.

Child Development Clinic  
Call: 204-787-2423 or 204-787-4379  
[www.gov.mb.ca/fs/imd/young\\_child\\_assess.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/imd/young_child_assess.html)

## Healthy eyes

It is estimated that 80% of learning is based on vision. Children develop, explore and learn about the world by using their eyes. One way to protect your children’s eyes and vision is through healthy foods. Feed your children dark green and orange vegetables, fresh fruits and regular servings of fish to help their eye health.

As your toddler grows and starts to explore his/her world, serious eye injuries can occur. This can happen when toddlers play with sharp objects like scissors, pens and sticks. Tell your toddler not to run with sharp objects. Arrange to have your toddler’s eyes examined by an optometrist around 3 years of age.

# What You Can Do (Cont'd...)

## 1 TO 3 YEARS

### Health check-up

Remember to take your children to their doctor or community health nurse for a check-up, when they are 18 months, 2 and 3 years old. At 18 months, your children also will receive an immunization.

**Manitoba Routine Immunization Schedules**  
[www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/div/schedules.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/div/schedules.html)

### Sleeping

Toddlers need 10 to 13 hours of sleep, as well as an afternoon nap for about 1 to 3 hours. They get grumpy and begin having tantrums when they are tired. Toddlers may be afraid they will miss something exciting if they sleep. They want to learn and explore as much as they can. You can help your toddlers settle down to sleep by doing something peaceful with them, like reading a book or listening to calm music together. Getting your toddlers into a nightly bedtime routine will help them know when it is time to sleep. This will help them develop healthy sleep patterns.

### Being active

Toddlers need at least 3 hours of physical activity every day. Playing games and going outside to play are great ways to have active minds and bodies. Activities can focus on movement.

- Do the hokey pokey. Teach toddlers about right, left, up, down and getting their bodies moving.
- Play outside in the snow, sand or water to learn about fluids, solids, changing shapes and volumes.
- Pretend to be different animals. For example, fly like an eagle high in the sky, pretend to be a salmon swimming in the water, or a moose walking through the forest. Help your toddler build hand-eye coordination and grasping skills:
  - String large beads on a shoelace.
  - Use a large crayon to draw large circles or vertical and horizontal lines.
  - Kick or roll a large ball to each other.

Another great way for your toddler to learn through play is by attending parent-child programs at your local friendship centre, community health and recreation centres, parent child coalitions and family centres in schools.

**Manitoba Parent Zone**  
Toll Free: 1-877-945-4777  
[www.manitobaparentzone.ca](http://www.manitobaparentzone.ca)

Toddlers should not be expected to sit more than 1 hour at a time, such as in a stroller, high chair or car seat. Television, computers and electronic games are not recommended for children aged 2 years and under. For children over two years, screen time should be limited to less than 1 hour per day.

**Starting Early, Starting Strong: A Guide for Play-Based Early Learning in Manitoba, Birth to Six**  
[www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/ecd/ecd\\_birhtto6\\_playbased.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/ecd/ecd_birhtto6_playbased.pdf)

### Keeping safe

Toddlers are very active and curious. They move quickly. It is important to keep a close eye on your toddler at all times.



## 4 TO 6 YEARS

### Healthy eating

Continue to serve a variety of healthy foods from all 4 food groups of Canada's Food Guide for First Nations, Inuit and Metis. Children may need to be offered a new food several times before they eat it. So keep trying!

Children will make healthy food choices if you have healthy food in your home. Children love to help in the kitchen and will eat food that they help to pick out and prepare. They also love to help with grocery shopping. Take your children with you to the grocery store and let them help you with meal planning.

- Choose a recipe, buy the ingredients you need, and make it together.
- Try something new. Lettuce roll ups are a fun way to eat tuna.
- Show your children healthy foods. Have them pick out 1 new fruit and vegetable. Choose a different colour each time. Talk with your children about the new foods you are trying with them.

**Manitoba Fruits and Vegetables**  
[www.localfoods.about.com/od/CanadianProduceGuides/a/Manitoba-Fruits-And-Vegetables.htm](http://www.localfoods.about.com/od/CanadianProduceGuides/a/Manitoba-Fruits-And-Vegetables.htm)

Young children have high energy levels and need to eat often. Children are all different. Let your children decide how much food to eat from the healthy choices you offer. Most young children will eat a ½ cup serving of a food group, for example, ½ cup of sliced banana. The following table shows the number of servings of food young children need from each of the food groups, each day.

FOOD GROUP	SERVINGS PER DAY
Vegetables and Fruit (for example, berries, apples, carrots, spinach)	5
Grain Products (for example, bread, cereal, bannock, rice, pasta)	4
Milk and Alternatives (for example, milk, yogurt, cheese, soy milk)	2
Meat and Alternatives (for example, fish, meat, eggs, nuts, beans)	1

### Keeping safe

Teach your children safety rules for their new skills, such as riding their bike, crossing a street, getting off the school bus or playing outdoors.

### Healthy teeth

Help your children to start brushing their teeth on their own, twice a day, for at least 2 minutes each time. Continue to use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste, and teach them to spit the toothpaste out instead of swallowing it. You can finish up when they are done brushing, to make sure their teeth are clean. Floss your children's teeth at least once, every day.

Sealants are most often recommended once the adult teeth start coming in, around age 6. Ask your dental professional if you want sealant applied to your children's teeth. In Manitoba, fluoride varnish can be put on your children's teeth, at no cost to you.

### Hearing and talking

Your children may know 1,500 or more words and may be able to speak in sentences of 6 to 8 words. Most children speak clearly enough to be understood by strangers.

### Healthy eyes

Arrange to have your children's eyes examined before they start school.

### Sleeping

Young children need 10 to 13 hours of uninterrupted sleep each night. Developing a healthy sleep pattern for your children is important for their learning and healthy development. The most important part of creating a healthy sleep pattern for your children is having a bedtime routine that is the same, every day. For example, their bedtime routine could include a warm bath, getting into pyjamas, reading or telling one story, then dimming or turning off the lights for sleep. Take electronic devices away from your children an hour before their bedtime.

# What You Can Do (Cont'd...)

## 4 TO 6 YEARS

### Health check-up

Your children should see their doctor or community health nurse for a regular checkup, each year. Remember to have your children immunized at 4 to 6 years of age.



*Make healthy eating fun  
and you build a lifetime  
of good eating habits.*

### Being active

Make time to be active with your children. Teach them new skills and build their imaginations while you engage in play-based activities together:

- Put on plays or puppet shows from books or traditional stories. They are a lot of fun for both children and parents.
- Choose games that focus on cooperation and sharing. Taking turns and waiting are important things to learn.
- Play freeze tag. The only way that someone can get unfrozen is if someone crawls under their legs.
- Play outdoors in the summer and winter, when it is safe to do so.

Starting Early, Starting Strong: A Guide for Play-Based Early Learning in Manitoba, Birth to Six  
[www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/eecd/eecd\\_birthto6\\_playbased.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/eecd/eecd_birthto6_playbased.pdf)



*Parenting never ends.  
You will always be  
someone's mother, father,  
grandparent, auntie or  
uncle from the day your  
loved one is born.*

# How You Can Learn More

There are several organizations that offer a range of culturally-appropriate programs, resources and services to help parents and families throughout Manitoba achieve the best possible outcomes for their children. Some of these organizations are listed below.

**Aboriginal Head Start On Reserve – Manitoba** helps prepare First Nations children (0-6 years) for school and strengthen parenting skills that contribute to children's healthy development.

Phone: 204-983-4605 or 204-984-5173  
[www.ahsormb.ca](http://www.ahsormb.ca)

**Aboriginal Health & Wellness Centre of Winnipeg** provides a range of cultural-based health and social programs and supports for women, men and families living in Winnipeg.

Phone: 204-925-7504  
[www.ahwc.ca](http://www.ahwc.ca)

**Adult Learning and Literacy** supports adult-focused literacy programs in Manitoba.

Phone: 204-945-8247  
Toll Free: 1-800-282-8069 ext. 8247  
[www.gov.mb.ca/mal/all](http://www.gov.mb.ca/mal/all)

**Attachment Network of Manitoba** offers a variety of on-line parenting supports and downloadable resources for enhancing secure attachment across the lifespan.

[www.attachmentnetwork.ca](http://www.attachmentnetwork.ca)

**Autism Society of Manitoba** is dedicated to advancing the quality of life for people with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families.

Phone: 204-783-9563  
[www.autismmanitoba.com](http://www.autismmanitoba.com)

**Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program** provides support to improve the health and well-being of pregnant women, new mothers and babies facing challenging life circumstances.

[www.cpn-pcnp.phac-aspc.gc.ca](http://www.cpn-pcnp.phac-aspc.gc.ca)

**Canadian Partnership for Children's Health and Environment** has many on-line resources to help protect children's health from environmental contaminants.

[www.healthyenvironmentforkids.ca](http://www.healthyenvironmentforkids.ca)

**Child and Family All Nations Coordinated Response Network** provides information about programs and services to help families keep their children safe from abuse and neglect.

Phone: 204-944-4200  
Toll Free: 1-888-945-2627  
[www.ancr.ca](http://www.ancr.ca)

**Children's disABILITY Services** offers a variety of resources to help parents with caring for children with developmental or physical disabilities at home, in their own communities.

Phone: 204-945-5898  
[www.gov.mb.ca/fs/cds](http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/cds)

**Children's Therapy Initiative** provides coordinated, regionally-based services to help children and youth with disabilities and additional needs to reach their full potential.

Phone: 204-452-4311  
[www.sscy.ca/caregivers-families/childrens-therapy-initiative](http://www.sscy.ca/caregivers-families/childrens-therapy-initiative)

**Community Action Program for Children** promotes the healthy development of young children (0-6 years) who are living in conditions of risk.

[www.capc-pace.phac-aspc.gc.ca](http://www.capc-pace.phac-aspc.gc.ca)

**CONTACT Community Information** is an on-line database of programs and services for parents, children and families in Manitoba.

Phone: 204-287-8827  
Toll Free: 1-866-266-4636  
[www.contactmb.org](http://www.contactmb.org)

**Dial-a-Dietitian of Manitoba** connects callers to a registered dietitian who will listen and offer tips and suggestions about food, nutrition and healthy eating.

Phone: 204-788-8248  
Toll Free: 1-877-830-2892  
[www.wrha.mb.ca/prog/nutrition/dietitian.php](http://www.wrha.mb.ca/prog/nutrition/dietitian.php)

**Early Learning and Child Care** supports quality, licensed, play-based early learning and child care programs for children in Manitoba aged 12 weeks to 12 years.

Phone: 204-945-0776  
Toll Free: 1-888-213-4754  
[www.gov.mb.ca/fs/childcare](http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/childcare)

## How You Can Learn More (Cont'd...)

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**Families First** is a community-based, intensive home visiting program offering information and support to families, prenatally and with children (0-6 years).

Phone: 204-945-2266

Toll Free: 1-888-848-0140

[www.manitoba.ca/healthychild/familiesfirst](http://www.manitoba.ca/healthychild/familiesfirst)

**First Nations and Inuit Health Branch of Health Canada**

works to improve First Nations and Inuit health outcomes through a range of quality health services and supports.

Phone: 204-983-4199

Toll Free: 1-866-225-0709

[www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/index-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/index-eng.php)

**First Nations Health and Social Secretariat of Manitoba** offers programs and services to support the health and social well-being of First Nations families and communities in Manitoba.

Phone: 204-942-9400

[www.fnhssm.com](http://www.fnhssm.com)

**Healthlinks Manitoba** is a province-wide telephone health information service that individuals and families can call – 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – to talk about their health-related concerns.

Phone: 204-788-8200

Toll Free: 1-888-315-9257

[www.sites.google.com/site/healthlinksmanitoba](http://www.sites.google.com/site/healthlinksmanitoba)

**Healthy Baby Community Support Programs** connect pregnant women and new parents with other parents, families and health professionals for information, support and resources on prenatal and postnatal nutrition and health, breastfeeding, parenting tips and lifestyle choices.

Phone: 204-945-1301

Toll Free: 1-888-848-0140

[www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/healthybaby/csp](http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/healthybaby/csp)

**Healthy Baby, Healthy Brain** is a parent website to support healthy early brain development.

[www.healthybabyhealthybrain.ca](http://www.healthybabyhealthybrain.ca)

**Healthy Child Manitoba** offers a continuum of programs, services and resources to achieve the best possible outcomes for children, families and communities in Manitoba.

Phone: 204-945-2266

Toll Free: 1-888-848-0140

[www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild](http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild)

**Indigenous Languages of Manitoba Inc.** provides a wide range of services and supports to promote the retention of Manitoba Indigenous languages.

Phone: 204-989-6392

Toll Free: 1-866-429-0606

[www.indigenoulanguagesofmb.com](http://www.indigenoulanguagesofmb.com)

**Manitoba Aboriginal Head Start – Urban & Northern**

**Communities** supports early childhood development, school readiness and family health and wellness for children aged birth to six years.

[www.mbaboriginalheadstart.ca](http://www.mbaboriginalheadstart.ca)

**Manitoba Association of Friendship Centres** provides information about the programs and services that are offered at local friendship centres for pregnant women, children and their families.

Phone: 204-942-6299

[www.friendshipcentres.ca](http://www.friendshipcentres.ca)

**Manitoba Communicable Disease Control** works to identify, manage and prevent the spread of communicable diseases in Manitoba. Routine Immunization Schedules are available online.

Phone: 204-788-6737

[www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc)

[www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/div/schedules.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/div/schedules.html)

**Manitoba FASD Strategy** offers a range of specific programs and services for women with addictions and parents of children born with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder.

Phone: 204-945-2266

Toll Free: 1-888 848 0140

[www.manitoba.ca/healthychild/fasd](http://www.manitoba.ca/healthychild/fasd)

**Manitoba in Motion** helps Manitoba families make physical activity part of their daily lives, for health and enjoyment.

Resources offered include physical activity guidelines for children.

Phone: 204-945-3648

Toll Free: 1-866-788-3648

[www.manitobainmotion.ca](http://www.manitobainmotion.ca)

**Manitoba Parent Child Coalitions** offer a variety of local early childhood development and positive parenting programs, resources and supports for families with children aged prenatal to six years.

Phone: 204-945-2266

Toll Free: 1-800-848-0140

[www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/parentchild](http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/parentchild)

[www.mbpentchild.com](http://www.mbpentchild.com)

**Manitoba Parent Line** connects callers with parent education counselors who provide confidential assistance, information, service referrals, and support for child development issues and common parenting concerns.

Toll Free: 1-877-945-4777

**Manitoba ParentZone** is an on-line resource for dependable, current parenting and child development information, programs and support for parents.

[www.manitobaparentzone.ca](http://www.manitobaparentzone.ca)

**Manitoba Poison Centre** provides immediate help to parents and families who think their child has been exposed to chemical, biological, pharmaceutical or environmental poison.

Toll Free: 1-855-776-4766

[www.hsc.mb.ca/emergencyPoison.html](http://www.hsc.mb.ca/emergencyPoison.html)

**Manitoba Prenatal Benefit** is a monthly cheque to help pregnant women buy healthy foods during pregnancy. The benefit is available to all women, regardless of where they live in Manitoba.

Phone: 204-945-1301

Toll Free: 1-888-848-0140

[www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/healthybaby/mpb](http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/healthybaby/mpb)

**Manitoba Public Library System** is an online directory of all public libraries throughout Manitoba. Local libraries may have books about parenting and healthy child development.

[https://mb.countingopinions.com/memberlist\\_details.php](https://mb.countingopinions.com/memberlist_details.php)

**Metis Child, Family and Community Services** works to strengthen the capacity of families to care for children through culturally appropriate, community-based programs and parenting supports.

Phone: 204-927-6960

Toll Free: 1-800-821-8793

[www.metiscfs.mb.ca](http://www.metiscfs.mb.ca)

**Metis Community Liaison Department at the Manitoba Metis Federation** offers support services, resources, advocacy and referrals to Metis individuals, families, Elders and communities.

Phone: 204-586-8474

[www.mmf.mb.ca](http://www.mmf.mb.ca)

**National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health** is a source for a wide range of reliable, current and culturally-appropriate information on First Nations, Inuit and Métis child, youth and family health.

[www.nccah-ccnsa.ca/34/Publications.nccah](http://www.nccah-ccnsa.ca/34/Publications.nccah)

**Public Health Agency of Canada** provides a range of quality health services to support emergency preparedness and the prevention and control of infectious and chronic diseases.

Toll Free: 1-844-280-5020

[www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/index-eng.php](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/index-eng.php)

**Specialized Services for Children and Youth** provides services for Manitoba children and youth with disabilities and special needs.

Phone: 204-452-4311

[www.sscy.ca](http://www.sscy.ca)

**Strengthening Families Maternal Child Health Program** is a community-based, intensive home visiting program for families with children (0-6 years), living in First Nations communities.

Phone: 204-946-9724

[www.fnhssm.com/index.php/policy-areas/maternal-child-health](http://www.fnhssm.com/index.php/policy-areas/maternal-child-health)

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The booklets in this series include:



## Fatherhood is Forever

This booklet about fathering is for First Nations and Metis parents in Manitoba.



## Growing Up Healthy

This booklet about healthy children is for First Nations and Metis parents in Manitoba.



## Family Connections

This booklet about bonding with your child is for First Nations and Metis parents in Manitoba.



## Parents as First Teachers

This booklet about how children learn is for First Nations and Metis parents in Manitoba.

Available in alternate formats, on request. You can view all of the English booklets online at [www.nccah-ccnsa.ca](http://www.nccah-ccnsa.ca) or at [www.fnha.ca](http://www.fnha.ca)

Aussi disponibles en français: [www.nccah-ccnsa.ca](http://www.nccah-ccnsa.ca)

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