

TOGETHER
for a Healthy Québec



Québec
ENFORME

Did you know . . .

Québec en Forme and its partners completed a status report on lifestyle habits of Québec youths aged 6 to 17 years and the environments that influence their behaviours. The results, while not catastrophic, are nonetheless a call to timely, concerted action.

Physical activity

Disappointing findings

- Only 33% of youth get the recommended amount of daily physical activity for their optimal development.
- Girls do 15% to 30% less physical activity than boys.
- Among both girls and boys, physical activity levels drop significantly from age 13 or 14.
- Children in low-income areas have less motor skill proficiency than those in higher-income areas.
- Many teens say it's mainly a lack of time that prevents them from engaging in physical activities. However, 67% spend more than two hours a day in front of a screen.
- Only 36% of elementary-age children walk or ride their bike to school. Active transportation from home to school has dropped by 50% in less than 30 years.

Eating habits

Cause for concern

- Close to half (43%) of young people consume more than one sugar-sweetened or soft drink per day.
- Only a quarter of young people consume the three to four daily servings of milk recommended by Health Canada.
- Fewer than one in two eat at least five fruit and vegetable servings a day.
- Close to one in five eat food purchased at a snack-bar or fast-food restaurant three or more times a week.
- Just over 50% of young people eat in front of a screen at least three times a week.
- Only 39% of youth are happy with their body image.

Sedentary lifestyles and poor eating habits are negatively impacting the development, health and academic success of young people.

Québec en Forme's mission is to . . .

Mobilize people from all of Québec's society to favour and maintain active living and healthy eating, essential to the full development of Québec's youths.

Mobilizing all stakeholders means . . .

Working together to bring about lasting change in communities, so that all young people have the opportunity to develop and maintain healthy behaviours.

Conditions for success:

- solid, stable and unifying leadership;
- a development vision that will allow us to set targets and identify desired changes on a medium and long term basis;
- a community diagnosis to identify the causes of behaviours, as well as strengths, issues and development potential;
- a commitment on the part of organizations in different networks and intervention areas to contribute their skills and resources, work together and take action according to their capacity;
- awareness-raising among decision-makers and the general public regarding healthy eating choices and active living.



Simultaneous action on several fronts: individuals, social norms and environments

Young people's behaviour is not only determined by what they know or what their parents think they should do. Just as important are the daily settings and environments to which they are exposed (family, school, recreation centre, sports facility) and opportunities to adopt healthy behaviours.

ENVIRONMENTS MAY BE SEEN FROM FOUR PERSPECTIVES:

- *Socio-cultural* – Beliefs and behaviours regarding food and physical activity that young people are regularly exposed to and consider “normal”;
- *Physical* – the built environment, facilities, equipment and healthy food offerings;
- *Economic* – financial accessibility of food and services, as well as business practices;
- *Political* – measures, policies and foundational strategies adopted by organizations to promote and encourage healthy lifestyle habits.



To have an impact . . .

Daycare centres, schools, municipalities, health care facilities, companies, sports associations, community-based organizations, elected officials, decision-makers, professionals and numerous stakeholders must pool and coordinate their resources, knowledge and skills in order to:

- Develop young people's skills by:
 - offering children and parents opportunities to learn and try out new activities;
 - implementing quality initiatives.
- Promote healthy, active living by increasing access to quality resources:
 - a variety of affordable services;
 - a built environment conducive to physical activity and sports (green spaces, parks, safe public areas, etc.).
- Create positive social norms through:
 - communication and awareness campaigns targeting young people and their parents;
 - interventions encouraging organizations, networks and decision-makers to apply measures and policies promoting healthy lifestyle habits.

SO THAT YOUNG QUEBECERS CAN . . .

- develop basic motor skills during early childhood;
- be physically active every day;
- get into the habit of walking or riding a bike;
- eat their meals in convivial settings;
- eat more fruits and vegetables (at least five servings per day) and cut down on fast-food;
- drink more water, milk and dairy alternatives as well as cut down on sugar-sweetened and energy drinks;
- have a positive body image and resist the temptation to attain unrealistic standards of thinness.

For more information and ideas for action, see Québec en Forme's themed fact sheets www.quebecenforme.org

A valuable opportunity

There is a growing movement in Québec to improve young people's lifestyle habits by transforming local environments and social norms.

Thousands of local, regional and national players in different sectors — daycare centres, schools, municipalities, health care facilities, agri-food businesses, community groups and associations — are working together to reverse negative trends and create environments that will encourage youth to adopt and maintain healthy habits.

To attain these results, Québec en Forme interacts with local, regional and national partners who are helping Québec youth adopt and maintain a healthy diet and physically active lifestyle. While these partners take direct action, Québec en Forme:

- supports them with strategies adapted to different levels of intervention;
- encourages them to form partnerships around concerted, complementary plans and actions;
- manages a Fund and ensures that allocated monies are used for purposes for which they were granted in order to help reach targeted goals.

A FUND THAT'S MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

- In 2007, the Québec Government and the Lucie and André Chagnon Foundation entered into a \$400 million partnership agreement to promote healthy lifestyle habits over a ten-year period. Québec en Forme was put in charge of administering the funds contributed by both parties. Thus, Québec en Forme provides financial support to partners, project proponents and communities across Québec, helping to put in place the necessary conditions for young people aged 0 to 17 years to be more active and eat a healthier diet.
- Québec en Forme and its partners particularly target youth from disadvantaged backgrounds.



Québec en Forme's support strategies

Québec en Forme is committed to entering into cooperative agreements with regional and national partners as well as local communities, and to help them by:

1. sharing information on young people's lifestyle habits, community development, the creation of supportive environments, the evolution of social norms, and factors preventing young people from adopting and maintaining healthy lifestyle habits;
2. making sure that partner groups, regions and project proponents have appropriate resources and knowledge to mobilize and implement initiatives;
3. sharing knowledge so that lessons learned, best practices, and information from local communities and project proponents can be publicized, disseminated and used;
4. encouraging innovative projects by giving project proponents the necessary tools and support;
5. organizing promotional and communication activities for the general public in order to highlight health-promoting behaviours and decision-makers' initiatives.

ARE YOU ALREADY TAKING ACTION?

- In what area?
- Are you involved in a collective, concerted effort to improve young people's lifestyle habits?
- Have you developed strategies and initiatives designed to bring about lasting changes in young people's living environments? If so, what are they?
- Do you accept our invitation to propose and implement further changes that will have an impact on young people's behaviours, health and academic success?

“Let's work together . . . For a healthy, active Québec”

Contact us: _____

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