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Excellence in Consumer
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NATIONAL AND REGIONAL AWARD RECIPIENT – Central and Southern Ontario

Healthy Eating in Arenas Project Creating Healthy Environments for Youth Coalition

Challenge: Children’s food preferences and behaviours are often established and influenced by the social environments in which they live, learn and play. With studies indicating that overweight and obesity rates have nearly tripled over the past two decades for Canadian kids, communities need to find ways to create supportive environments that influence and help children to make healthy living choices.

Program: The *Healthy Eating in Arenas Project* is a program developed to help arenas create environments that encourage patrons (specifically adults and children under 15-years-old) to make healthy food choices. Physical activity and healthy eating are key factors in achieving and maintaining healthy weights and while arenas promote physical activity, concessions typically sell foods high in fat, sugar and salt. Recognizing that arenas are a hotspot for youth, the *Healthy Eating in Arenas Project* enables patrons to make wiser food decisions by offering healthy menus alongside traditional concession options. Alternative breakfast menus include oatmeal and cheese slices, while lunch/dinner menus offer hearty soups, veggie burgers on a whole-wheat bun, vegetable sticks and yogurt. In order to reinforce the importance of healthy eating and to promote goals of the program, the *Healthy Eating in Arenas Project* also offers information posters for bulletin boards in arenas and schools, conducts presentations to coaches and parent councils and contributes articles for school newsletters and manuals for parents.

Partners: The *Healthy Eating in Arenas Project* was developed by the Creating Healthy Environments for Youth (CHEY) Coalition. The CHEY coalition is comprised of a number of local community partners including the Canadian Cancer Society; Canadian Diabetes Association; Durham Lives!; Durham Region Health Department; Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario; Municipality of Scugog – Scugog Community Recreation Complex; Municipality of Clarington – Garnet B. Rickard Recreation Complex; and Ontario Recreation Facilities Association.

Results: In September 2006, the *Healthy Eating in Arenas Project* introduced “healthy” menus in two pilot arenas to run until the end of April 2007. Pilot results are currently being compiled and analyzed, and a final report is expected to be available by August 2007. Preliminary feedback obtained through informal evaluations with arena staff indicate that patrons have been very receptive to the healthy food options and these menu items often sellout. Furthermore, the CHEY coalition is in the process of planning the implementation of healthy food choices/menus in 5 new arenas this September, and is developing a toolkit and a “Healthy Food Choices Guidelines” document to help other communities learn from the program.

The Details: To learn more about the program, please visit Durham Region’s website at www.region.durham.on.ca.

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 Dietitians of Canada
Les diététistes du Canada



REGIONAL AWARD RECIPIENT – British Columbia

Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in BC Schools BC Ministry of Health and BC Ministry of Education (*part of ActNowBC*)

Challenge: Good nutrition is a key component of healthy child development. It reduces the risk of health problems such as obesity and other chronic diseases. It minimizes anxiety, depression and hyperactivity and increases cognitive development and academic performance. Students, on an average school day, consume about one-third of their calories at school. A significant amount of the food consumed is purchased on site. Unfortunately, the foods and drinks sold in schools tend to be high in calories and low in nutritional value.

Program: The *Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in BC Schools (Guidelines)* was developed to improve the healthy choices sold to students in all school locations, including vending machines, school stores and cafeterias, at fundraisers and other events. The *Guidelines* are divided into four categories: *not recommended* (e.g., high in fat/salt/sugar and/or low in nutrients, like pop and salty chips); *choose least* (e.g., amount of nutrients doesn't quite compensate for amount of sugar/fat/salt, like fries.); *choose sometimes* (e.g., 100% Juice, and nutritious items that might be moderately fatty, salted, or sweetened like chocolate milk); and, *choose most* (e.g., nutritious, no/low fat/salt/sugar items like whole grain bread and carrot sticks). The goal of the *Guidelines* is to maximize students' access to *Choose Most* (should represent 50% of products available) and *Choose Sometimes* (should represent 40-50% of products available), minimize *Choose Least* (should represent 10% of products available), and phase out *Not Recommended* options. This is consistent with the province's goal to eliminate the sale of unhealthy foods and beverages in BC schools by 2009.

Partners: *Guidelines* was developed by the BC Ministry of Health and the BC Ministry of Education, as part of ActNowBC (BC's comprehensive program to improve the health of British Columbians leading up to the 2010 Olympic Winter Games). BC Ministry of Health, Population Health and Wellness provides leadership and planning in health promotion and disease prevention. BC Ministry of Education has identified student health and physical activity as one of their Five Great Goals. Promoting healthy eating habits is one of the strategies to achieve this goal. The *Guidelines* were developed with input from parents, teachers, school trustees, administrators, doctors, dietitians, dental hygienists and school food and beverage suppliers.

Five fact sheets accompany the *Guidelines*, giving schools additional information on dental health, caffeine, sugar and sweeteners, fat, and healthy meals. The *Guidelines* are also complemented by other programs, including: Action Schools! BC (a framework for promoting physical activity and healthy eating in schools), Making it Happen (a media-based resource to inspire and enable schools communities to take action on nutrition policy and practice) and Feeding the Minds and Bodies of BC Students (a resource for decision makers in schools regarding nutrition and learning).

Results: The *Guidelines* are in use throughout BC. They have been lauded by the Government of Canada, and others across the country. An evaluation was conducted in Spring 2007. Results will be released by Fall 2007.

The Details: For more information on the *Guidelines*, please visit www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/health_publications.htm.

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REGIONAL AWARD RECIPIENT – Alberta and the Territories

The Big Cook You Can 2 Publishing

Challenge: Canadians are often on the lookout for new ideas to help them fit healthy meals into their fast-paced schedules. Canadians also tell us they want to have more control over their food decisions and want to prepare healthier and more wholesome meals for themselves and their families.

Program: *The Big Cook* is a cookbook and a cooking concept that works to help busy singles, couples and families get organized with their meal preparation and increase their intake of healthy homemade meals. Rather than undergo the stress of having to cook nutritious and delicious meals with limited time on a daily basis, the cookbook encourages readers to avoid this frustration by devoting one day to meal preparation to be used over the next few months. *The Big Cook* encourages readers to gather a group of three to four friends for a “big cook” day and prepare over 200 meals in one session. The meals are then frozen in zip-locked bags and stored compactly in the freezer. When required, Canadians “on-the-go” can then cook their home-cooked meals in the oven, slow cooker, barbecued or stir-fried. *The Big Cook* also encourages people to be more efficient in the kitchen and take more time to sit down with family and friends to enjoy their meals together.

The cookbook includes 73 main course meal recipes that serve four to six people (or this can be divided into four to six separate meals for one). *The Big Cook* also explains the necessary steps to complete a “big cook” including choosing the recipes, making the grocery list, shopping for the food, cooking preparation tips and activities for the “big cook” day.

Partners: *The Big Cook* was developed by You Can 2 Publishing, which is a publishing company established by Joanne Smith (a Registered Dietitian), Deanna Siemens (a retired Registered Nurse) and Lorelei Thomas (Masters in Education, high school teacher) in 2006 in order to self-publish the cookbook.

Results: The cookbook was well received when it debuted in April 2006 in Medicine Hat, Alberta. The following September it was distributed in stores throughout Alberta and the first print of 5,000 sold out after four short months. *The Big Cook* is now a National Best Seller and is available across Canada, with hopes to move into the United States next year. The cookbook has also gone to second print and upcoming editions are currently being planned for the future.

The Details: To learn more about the program and/or purchase a copy of *The Big Cookbook*, please visit www.thebigcook.com.

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REGIONAL AWARD RECIPIENT – Saskatchewan, Manitoba and North Western Ontario

Livin' it Up! A Wellness Program For Seniors Transcona Council for Seniors Inc.

Challenge: Healthy eating and active living both play an important role in helping seniors stay healthy. However, many seniors are not meeting their daily nutritional requirements. Furthermore, a significant number of older Canadians are inactive. As one of the fastest growing age groups in the country, effective methods are required to help older Canadians integrate healthy living principles into their everyday lives.

Program: *Livin' it Up!* is an interactive six-week wellness program for older adults that was created by four Human Nutritional Sciences students from the University of Manitoba. The program focuses on healthy eating, physical well-being and social interaction. The program targets seniors living independently who are able to perform daily tasks such as cooking, housekeeping and shopping.

Livin' it Up! keeps participants engaged by delivering an entertaining and informative program that focuses on the needs and interests of its participants. Each two-hour session includes a lively discussion on a senior-focused nutrition topic, a nutrition-themed game, a mystery food challenge and a food demonstration for a simple, economical and delicious recipe. Each session also includes a low-impact physical activity component such as Tai Chi to show seniors that exercise can be fun and achieved by people in various states of mobility. Participants are also given easy-to-understand healthy recipes as well as nutrition and exercise resources after every session to help them make healthy living practices a part of their daily routines.

Partners: *Livin' it Up!* was developed in partnership with the Transcona Council For Seniors Inc. (a community seniors resource council that assists area seniors in living independently), the Winnipeg Regional Healthy Authority (a governing body for healthcare regulation that provides services that promote independence, wellness, treatment and care), the Youville Centre (a community-based, accessible health resource for the communities of St. Vital and St. Boniface, as well as a provider of select services for the Winnipeg region) and Kerri Irvin-Ross (Minister of Healthy Living, MLA for Winnipeg Fort Garry).

Results: The first three pilot programs had a total participation of 36 seniors, with each successive pilot more than doubling in attendance. Since August 2006, 86 facilitator manuals have been purchased by community organizations throughout Manitoba and the program continues to grow and reach wider audiences.

The Details: For more information and to download a free copy of the manual, please visit http://www.wrha.mb.ca/healthinfo/prohealth/nutrition/files/LivinItUp_Jan07.pdf.

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REGIONAL AWARD RECIPIENT – Quebec and Northeastern Ontario

Top Fuel for Top Performance Canadian Forces Health Services

Challenge: Physical activities, sports and fitness have always been emphasized in the military. Unfortunately, nutrition and healthy eating has not been given the same priority. Recognizing that eating well can help to enhance physical performance, many military members have expressed an interest in improving their eating habits.

Program: *Top Fuel for Top Performance* is a skill-building nutrition education program designed specifically for the Canadian Forces. Five workshops cover a variety of topics, including: everyday eating, timing of food and fluid to support physical training, body composition and weight, dietary supplements, and fine tuning for nutritional quality. The workshops are delivered on military bases and wings across Canada by trained facilitators. The facilitators help military personnel assess their eating practices, plan nutrition strategies for good health and physical activity, and build skills to encourage food choices to support physical performance, reduce risks for chronic disease and enhance healthy weights.

Partners: Guided by an Advisory Committee of Canadian Forces members, the program was developed by Marilyn Booth, a dietitian with expertise in sport nutrition, and a national multi-disciplinary team of nurses, fitness and exercise specialists and dietitians. Pilot testing included military personnel from Land, Air and Sea. The program facilitates collaboration between health promotion personnel and others in the Canadian Forces community such as fitness instructors, varsity coaches, health service professionals and military leadership, including the Royal Military College.

Results: To date, almost 60 health promotion facilitators have been trained and the English and French workshops have reached almost 1,100 Canadian Forces members. The program has received a tremendous amount of positive feedback. An outcome evaluation of the program is planned for 2008, along with another Health and Lifestyle Information Survey that will capture physical activity levels, performance supplement use, Body Mass Index (BMI), recent behaviour changes, motivation for improvements to diet, and vegetable and fruit intake.

The Details: For more information on *Top Fuel for Top Performance*, please contact: Strengthening the Forces, Canadian Forces Health Services (see below).

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REGIONAL AWARD RECIPIENT – Atlantic

Thought About Food? A Workbook and DVD on Food Security and Influencing Policy Nova Scotia Food Security Network Steering Committee

Challenge: Canadians face significant barriers to healthy eating. Availability of low-cost healthy options. Accessibility to nutritious choices in communities. The sustainability of our food supply. Safety of food products in the marketplace. And much more. Helping Canadians overcome these barriers often require systematic and policy changes.

Program: *Thought About Food? A Workbook and DVD on Food Security and Influencing Policy* is a program designed to build the capacities of dietitians and others to influence policy change. The workbook and DVD work to first raise awareness at the community level on issues of food security (e.g. an individual's accessibility to healthy foods, ability to enjoy these foods with friends and family and making sure future generations will have healthy foods available to them). After helping readers/viewers recognize that there is a food security need to address, the *Thought About Food* workbook and DVD help to identify existing policy concerns in the community and explain how to develop effective methods of influencing positive systematic change. *Thought About Food?* encourages readers/viewers to locate key stakeholders, connect with policy makers, form collaborations across health and other sectors and create action plans. The tools include facilitator's notes, and works through the steps for policy change, including understanding the issue, organizing a group for discussion, creating and circulating a petition.

Partners: *Thought About Food?* was developed by the partners of the Participatory Food Security Projects including the Nova Scotia Nutrition Council, Atlantic Health Promotion Research Centre, Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP) and Community Action Program for Children (CAPC) projects and CPNP/CAPC Food Security Mentors under the guidance of the Nova Scotia Food Security Network Steering Committee and National Advisory Committees (assembled specifically for these projects).

Results: The evaluations of the program show the utility of the workbook and the DVD in different settings with groups from diverse backgrounds including participants and staff of Community Action for Children (CAPC) and Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP) projects, aboriginal communities, public health professionals, and youth. Findings strongly suggest that project outcomes have strengthened collaborative capacities at local, provincial/territorial and national levels for taking action on food insecurity through policy change.

The Details: To learn more about the program and download a copy a free copy of the workbook and DVD, please visit www.foodthoughtful.ca.

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