



# Move to Healthy Choices Newsletter

May 2009

## Virден is Making the *MOVE*

In the community of Virден, Manitoba the local arena leases the canteen to organizations as part of a fundraising opportunity for community organizations. Currently the canteen menu reflects what we would traditionally see in a rink canteen including hamburgers, cheeseburgers, hot dogs, fries, onion rings, popcorn chicken, coffee, hot chocolate, cappuccino, milk, slushies, juice, sports drinks, water, chocolate bars and chips. The kitchen facilities reflect the menu with coolers, deep fryers, and freezer space. As with most facilities, depending on the organizer and the requests from the athletes, the tournament menus at the Virден arena offer healthier choices such as muffins and homemade soups. These healthy choices have been great sellers.

Virден is moving towards building a new multipurpose Healthy Living Recreation Facility! Consistent with the philosophy of the new complex, developing a nutrition policy is part of the plan. Over the next few months David DeGagne, Manager of Recreation Facility Operations for the town of Virден, with the support of the 'Move to Healthy Choices' Committee, will draft a nutrition policy and present it to the Virден Community Services Board.



### Why Make the *MOVE*?

- Children need a combination of nutritious foods and physical activity for optimal growth. Seven out of 10 children do not get the recommended number of daily servings of vegetables and fruit each day. Twenty-two per cent of Manitoba children are overweight and nine per cent are obese.
- Eating nutritious food has a positive effect on athletes and their exercise performance, but many canteens do not carry nutritious foods.
- The 2007 Westman Region Recreation Canteen Survey showed that most recreation food services in the Westman Region offer primarily non-nutritious food choices. The top three best selling food items (based on a sample of 29 facilities) were chips, burgers and chocolate bars.
- The same survey showed that 86 per cent of respondents were interested in providing healthier food choices in their facilities.



## Why Make the *MOVE* to Nutrition Policy?



A nutrition policy can be a helpful set of guidelines for your staff, vendors and volunteers serving food in your community facilities and at special events. A policy would make a clear statement around what types of food are acceptable to serve and when these foods are acceptable. A policy can ensure that nutritious foods are available for sale particularly when staff, vendors and volunteers can change so frequently.

A healthy eating environment reinforces and supports positive messages about nutrition, sports performance and well-being. By offering nutritious foods in recreation facilities we encourage and create opportunities for people to make healthy choices.

### A Nutrition Policy could cover such areas as:

- Canteens and Concessions
- Vending Machines
- Special Events
- Pricing and Promotion
- Awards and Prizes
- Pleasant Eating Environment
- Meetings
- Food Safety
- Food Allergies
- Food Service Contracts
- Food Packaging and Waste
- Local Food Producers and Suppliers

### Example Policy Statement -

**IT IS THE POLICY** of the City of Prince George that it is in the interest of public health to establish guidelines to provide healthier options for food and beverages sold and served in vending machines and concessions in City owned recreation facilities.



### Questions? Contact us at:

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