



Move to Healthy Choices Newsletter

September - October 2013

Making the *Move* at the Riverdale Gardens Community Complex

Submitted by: Georgine Mann, Canteen Coordinator at Riverdale Gardens Community Complex, Rivers, MB

I feel strongly that a recreation complex needs to have a large portion of their menu as healthy options. When my older (now 21 and 18) children played hockey healthy choices in rink canteens were almost non-existent. Rushing three young children out the door early Saturday mornings I often didn't get a chance for breakfast. On arriving at most rinks I had a couple choices, hotdog, hamburger or wait until I got home. Tournaments usually meant soup and a sandwich or chili!

When I received an email that our rink was looking for someone to chair the canteen, I thought this would be a perfect opportunity to make some changes. New canteen, new menu! Now I could quit complaining and start doing something about this issue!

I have brought white and chocolate milk in, and WOW I can't believe how many cases we go through a week! It was asked of me one day near the end of the season, "Do you have any idea why we aren't selling as much Gatorade?" I had to laugh, it's the fact we now have the choice of milk!

"I feel strongly that a recreation complex needs to have a large portion of their menu as healthy options."

I have also added the choice of white or whole wheat breads and buns; it is hilarious to see people's faces when you ask which they would like. Breakfast sandwiches, toast and bagels have been added for breakfast. Yogurt and berries are available all day. I think the biggest hit has been the chicken Caesar wraps and buffalo chicken wraps. These are made to order, not made ahead of time. They are made with all white meat fresh chicken breast, baked in the oven. One gentleman even went to the store on his way home after working in the canteen to buy the supplies to make them for his wife! Now that is success!

Half way through the season I switched to smaller bags of potato chips, charge half the price as the regular size and sold way more and had a larger profit per bag! During tournaments and bonspiels we have homemade soup, chili, sandwiches and pies. On Saturday mornings I go in and make cinnamon buns, kind of healthy, they have no added preservatives. Granola bars, small bags of nuts, puddings and fruit cups have been added as well.

I tried tossed salad and carrots and dip on the menu but found that the volunteers didn't put them out for the patrons to see what was being offered. So, a countertop fridge with a clear glass door was recently purchased which will hopefully make these items a more popular seller this fall.



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Making the *Move* at the Riverdale Gardens Community Complex (*continued*)

I have priced healthy options as low as possible and other choices priced a little higher.

This "project" has been a lot of work and some long hours but I can say that I am glad that I have made a change at one rink, even if it is for my family having the options of a healthy meal well watching our 8 year old son play hockey. My hope is that others coming to our rink will take back some inspiration to their rink and follow suit as I have many years of watching hockey at many other rinks left!



Planning ahead – Tips for making use of frozen foods:

Frozen Vegetables:

- Serve on the side and heat as needed in the microwave
- Use broccoli as a baked potato topper
- Add to soups, chili, and to make rice bowls (try "California mix" for this recipe)

Frozen Fruit:

- Frozen fruit to make yogurt parfaits or smoothies

Frozen whole grain breads, wraps, bagels and pitas:

- English muffins or bagels for breakfast sandwich with microwaved scrambled egg
- Pitas to use as crusts for pita pizza
- Cooked rice for rice bowls
- Tortillas for quesadillas and wraps
- Frozen crusts for pizza
- Homemade muffins and loafs
- Sub buns and hamburger buns

Yogurt and Cheese:

- Frozen grated cheese for chili, tacos, wraps, and baked potato
- Frozen yogurt tubes

Meats and Poultry:

- Hamburger patties made in advance from lean ground beef (freeze with wax paper between for easy separation)
- Cooked lean ground beef frozen on a cookie sheet then packed in plastic freezer bags for making taco salad, taco wrap, or taco in a bag (tip: add a can of rinsed kidney beans after thawing to boost fibre and lower the cost.
- Cooked chicken breasts-freeze and wrap individually for use in a wrap, fajita, quesadilla, or in a pita

Other:

- Frozen perogies (boil instead of deep-fried) served with light sour cream
- Chili; can also be used as a baked potato topping
- Soups, stews and meat sauce for pasta; pre-prepared and frozen in batches or individual servings

See the 'Move to Healthy Choices Toolkit' for more healthy ideas, food safety and storage tips.

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