

## **Families in the Town of Pelham Choose to Boost Veggies and Fruit** *Healthy Kids Community Challenge Launches Healthier Eating Initiative*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**April 21, 2017**

**Pelham, ON** – The Town of Pelham’s Recreation, Culture & Wellness Department, working with the Healthy Kids Community Challenge Niagara, is launching the Choose to Boost Veggies and Fruit initiative to encourage kids and families to eat healthier, and to make vegetables and fruits part of their everyday lives.

Whether fresh, frozen or canned, fruits and vegetables help provide children and families with the vitamins, minerals, dietary fiber and overall energy needed to be physically active.

Local programs and activities will encourage families in The Town of Pelham (TOP) to include more fruits and vegetables in every meal and snack.

Over the next nine months, the TOP Eating Games will provide an opportunity for children and their families to learn how to grow produce and prepare healthy meals while working to complete their monthly “passport” to win fun prizes. Each month, a new task will be offered for children to participate in within the community or at home.

Upcoming events include:

- **April – Pick Up Your Passport**  
TOP Eating Games Passports will be distributed at the Annual Easter Egg Hunt (April 15), Community Cleanup (April 22), Home Show (April 22) and Arbour Day (April 28), as well as at Town Hall.
- **May – Kids Can Grow**  
On Thursday, May 25, the Farmers’ Market will begin its free Kids Can Grow program. With the help of our local farmers, children and youth will have a chance to grow their own produce.
- **June – Fruit & Veggie Booth at Supper Market**  
Learn about fruits, vegetables, and healthy eating at the Pelham Supper Market on June 22. Our Fruit & Veggie Booth will offer fun activities and free giveaways.
- **July – Bike Blender Month & TOP Chef Camp**  
Join us at the Supper Market each Thursday in July to test out Pelham’s new Bike Blender. Adult and youth-sized Bike Blenders will be available for use. All you have to do is bring your own fruits and vegetables! Pelham’s Summer Camp will be offering one week of TOP Chef Camp, where kids will develop their cooking and meal preparation skills with an emphasis on fruits and vegetables. Can’t make it to camp? Visit our Fruit & Veggie booth on Canada Day or Summerfest to meet some friendly new characters.
- **August – Cooking Demo**  
The Farmers’ Market will be hosting a special Cooking Demonstration for kids on August 17.
- **September – Packing Health Lunches**  
Back to school! Amp up your kids lunches with our fun meal and snack recipes. Show us your healthy lunch using the hashtag #TOPEatingGames to win lunchbox containers.
- **October – The Great, Big Crunch**  
Pelham will be hosting a Great, Big Crunch in the month of October and an End of Season Celebration on October 5, at the last Farmers’ Market.

- November – Squash Month  
We're kicking off Squash Month with a Pumpkin Parade. Tell us your favourite squash recipe using the hashtag #TOPEatingGames.
- December – Healthy Giveaways  
Submit your completed passports at the Pelham Christmas Market on December 1, or directly at Town Hall. The grand prize draw will be held on Friday, December 15.

Choose to Boost Veggies and Fruit is the next phase of the [Healthy Kids Community Challenge](#), which promotes healthy eating, physical activity and healthy lifestyle choices for children. As part of the first phase, Run, Jump, Play, Every Day., The Town of Pelham introduced Summer Skate Park Sessions, and Play in the Park Fridays, to over 250 local children. As part of the second phase, Water Does Wonders, The Town of Pelham installed two new bottle filling stations to encourage water as the first choice in hydration by making it more accessible.

Encouraging kids to stay active and healthy is part of the government's plan to build a better Ontario through its [Patients First: Action Plan for Health Care](#), which provides patients with faster access to the right care; better home and community care; the information they need to live healthy; and a health care system that is sustainable for generations to come.

#### QUOTES

“As parents, we all want to give our kids the best. When planning meals and snacks, let's give our children the extra boost they need by including more fruits and vegetables. They'll not only have more energy, they'll also develop healthy habits for years to come.”

— Dr. Eric Hoskins, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

“Food preferences are set early in a child's life. Ontario is working with the communities to improve access and availability of vegetables and fruits, and to increase children and parents' knowledge about healthy eating and how to make it a part of their everyday lives.”

— John Fraser, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

“We appreciate the continued funding as part of the Healthy Kids Community Challenge Niagara. Through partnerships with local organizations, we will offer many interactive opportunities for our community's youth and their families to make healthier eating choices.”

— Dave Augustyn, Mayor

#### QUICK FACTS

- [Canada's Food Guide](#) recommends that children get at least five servings of fruits and vegetables a day.
- Eating a diet rich in vegetables and fruit may prevent certain types of cancer, is linked to a lower risk of heart disease, healthy weights and lower risk of obesity.
- The Town of Pelham is among 45 communities selected to take part in the Healthy Kids Community Challenge.
- The Healthy Kids Community Challenge Niagara is receiving up to \$1.125 million from the Ontario government to fund local community projects.
- [The Healthy Kids Community Challenge](#)
- Niagara Healthy Kids Community Challenge – [www.healthykidsniagara.ca](http://www.healthykidsniagara.ca)

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