



Task Title: Newspaper Article

OALCF Cover Sheet – Learner Copy

Learner Name: _____

Date Started (m/d/yyyy): _____

Date Completed (m/d/yyyy): _____

Task Description: In this task the learner is required to answer comprehension questions using his/her own words and then write an opinion paper.

Competency: A: Find and Use Information, B: Communicate Ideas and Information

Task Groups: A1: Read continuous text, A2: Interpret documents, B2: Write continuous text

Level Indicators:

- A1.2: Read texts to locate and connect ideas and information
- A1.3: Read longer texts to connect, evaluate, and integrate ideas and information
- A2.2: Interpret simple documents to locate and connect information
- B2.1: Write brief texts to convey simple ideas and factual information
- B2.3: Write longer texts to present information, ideas and opinions

Performance Descriptors: See chart on last page

Materials Required: Newspaper Article "Obesity: A generation at risk" (attached)

Obesity: A generation at risk



OMA wonders if kids will live as long as parents

Report pushes for an hour of daily exercise in schools

ELAINE CAREY, MEDICAL REPORTER,
05/10/2005

An epidemic of childhood obesity may lead to the first generation of children who will not live as long as their parents, Ontario's doctors warn.

Poor food choices, overeating and lack of physical activity doubled the rates of overweight and obese children in Canada in 15 years, to almost one-third of boys and one-quarter of girls, says a report by the Ontario Medical Association released yesterday.

It calls on the province to take immediate action, including mandating one hour per day of aerobic physical activity in both elementary and secondary schools and tougher restrictions on advertising junk food and sweets to kids younger than 13.

"We need to stop simply talking about it and move forward," OMA president Dr. Greg Flynn told a news conference.

"If we do nothing, we will watch our children succumb to avoidable illnesses," including type 2 diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure, which are now showing up in children for the first time.

"The problem we're looking at today is huge," said Dr. Alan Hudak, a pediatrician and member of the OMA child health committee. "I am seeing more and more obese children every day, and more and more complications."

The report, which makes 12 recommendations, "is meant as a call to arms to all levels of government, parents and physicians," he said.

The Liberal government has already banned junk food in vending machines and tomorrow will formally announce its healthy schools initiative program, including a mandatory 20 minutes a day of physical education in elementary schools.

Schools will be able to phase in the phys-ed program over the year, a spokesperson said.

Task Title: Newspaper ArticleTask_SP_A1.2_A1.3_A2.2+_B2.1_B2.3

"Those are great initial first steps," Hudak said. "We're calling for an increase in those measures."

Britain last week banned junk food and candy from school cafeterias and vending machines and introduced cooking lessons and nutrition education for all children aged 11 to 14.

Flynn said increasing school activity to an hour a day was reasonable. "Is it reasonable to allow this to go on? If you make kids active and make it fun, it's very reasonable."

But Richard Ward, co-ordinator of health and physical education for the Toronto District School Board, said that would be a real challenge without totally restructuring the school day.

"With the new curriculum, it's very difficult to meet all the expectations in 300 minutes a day," he said.

The president of Concerned Children's Advertisers says advertising to children is already so regulated that every ad must be cleared by two separate committees of the Advertising Standards Council before it can air.

As a result of the restrictions, there hasn't been a single complaint about a children's ad in five years, said Cathy Loblaw.

The industry also pays for public service announcements promoting active living and good nutrition on all Canadian television networks.

"Certainly, when they call for restrictions on advertising to children we absolutely agree," she said. "I think we have a strong system in place."

Obese children turn into obese adults, the report says, and the health consequences cost the Canadian economy more than \$1.8 billion a year.

The report also calls on the province to extend OHIP benefits to cover obesity counselling for children, to create child obesity clinics and to issue an annual report card on the problem.

Health Minister George Smitherman told reporters yesterday that raising awareness of childhood obesity is important to "slow the tide of challenges to the health care system."

"Am I worried about it? Yeah, sure. We all have to be," said Smitherman, who added the government is taking steps to address the problem in schools.

Jim Watson, who heads the new ministry of health promotion, acknowledged there's "a tremendous amount of work to do" on the issue, but urged parents to take time to teach their kids better habits.

"It's a lot easier to stop and get a pizza on the way home from picking the kids up at soccer or picking them up after school than it is to cook a home-cooked meal, and I don't diminish the challenges that parents are facing," Watson told Canadian Press. "That's why I think there is a role for both government and parents to work side by side on this issue."

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Healthier Kids

What parents can do to prevent childhood obesity, according to OMA:

- ✓ Promote balanced eating. Change habits, such as teaching kids to eat slowly
- ✓ Plan meals and prepare more balanced food selections
- ✓ Do not skip breakfast
- ✓ Help children to learn to recognize clues about when they are full
- ✓ Increase physical activity; while having a more active lifestyle
- ✓ Eat meals as a family, not while watching TV or sitting at the computer
- ✓ Promote balanced snacking based on real hunger. People who eat small amounts frequently typically have lower body fat and weight than those who eat only at meals
- ✓ Limit "screen time" by keeping TVs out of a child's bedroom

Work Sheet 1

Task Description: Read a newspaper article and answer opinion questions about the article.

Task 1: Read the article "Obesity: A generation at risk."

Task 2: Using the dictionary, write the meaning of each of the words below.

Obese:

Mandating:

Succumb:

Vending Machines:

Skip:

Task 3: Name 3 things that have doubled the rates of overweight children in Canada in the last 15 years.

Work Sheet 2

Task 4: How long should children exercise in school every day?

Task 5: Name 3 illnesses or conditions you are likely to find in obese children.

a)

b)

c)

Task 6: How much exercise has the government actually mandated for elementary schools?

Task 7: Complete the following sentence by writing the missing words in the spaces provided.

Obese children turn into, the report says _____ , and the health consequences cost the _____ more than _____ a year.

Work Sheet 3

Task 8: Look at the box called *Healthier Kids* on page 4. Which point do you think is most important? (Choose only one point). Write 2 or 3 sentences explaining why you feel the point is the most important.

Task 9: You are the supervisor at an afterschool program with children aged 5 – 12. Write a paragraph that explains how you would use the information learned from this article to develop a children’s exercise program. Include both suitable snacks and activities that you might introduce.
