

2011 5/30 Health and Wellness Challenge:
An opportunity to get started for your health...
and your family's!

Montreal, January 5, 2011 – The holiday season can be a real marathon – but not necessarily one that's good for your health! We eat more, we have a drink or two, we're less active and we don't sleep enough. To begin the year on the right foot and make a gift to yourself as well as to your family, why not get started with the 2011 *5/30 Health and Wellness Challenge*?

For its 7th year this huge campaign is back in top shape with a host of new features, especially for families, and once again with an overall approach to health that encourages Quebecers to look after not just their bodies but their minds as well. It was in 2010 that the Wellness component was added to the *Health Challenge*, an extremely relevant addition for dealing with lives that are filled with obligations of all sorts, where everything happens at top speed and where we sometimes forget all about ourselves.

The spokeswoman for the *5/30 Health and Wellness Challenge*, Marie-Claude Savard, is inviting all Quebecers to get started with her in taking up the *Health Challenge* by registering either alone, as a family or as a team before March 1, 2011, on 530HealthAndWellnessChallenge.ca.

Take up the Health Challenge: it's motivating!

The *Health Challenge* rests on a simple formula. All participants commit to reaching the following goals for a period of 6 weeks, from March 1 to April 11, 2011: **eating at least 5 servings of fruit and vegetables** a minimum of 5 days a week; **moving at least 30 minutes** a minimum of 5 days a week; **improving their wellness** by selecting one of the following goals: helping themselves sleep better, having some time for themselves, and assigning priority to priorities.

"Often people know they should change their lifestyle for better health but they don't do it," campaign spokeswoman Marie-Claude Savard explains, "either because they don't have the time or the motivation, or because they don't know how to get started. The *Health Challenge* is just that little nudge that will help us take concrete action to eat better, be more active and take better care of ourselves. Besides," she adds, "it's motivating, and it's done with good humour!"

Take advantage of support!

Participants in the *Health Challenge* are winners all down the line. In getting started, they benefit from **free support**, including the IGA kit, the Internet site 530HealthAndWellnessChallenge.ca and the motivational e-mails. They're also eligible to win numerous prizes, with a total value of over \$15,000.

"The support is part of the Health Challenge's winning formula," says Marie-Claude Savard. "And this year, new support elements have been added: the 5/30 Wellness calendar online, weekly menus, physical activity programs and the Facebook page (www.Facebook.com/defisante), where participants can interact with and encourage one another. With all that support," she concludes, "it's really worth it to sign up!"

New for 2011: Become a Health Challenge Family!

Experts keep saying it: our children aren't active enough, and their diet isn't all it could be. In fact, 73% of young Quebecers don't reach the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity daily, and more than half (51%) don't eat at least 5 servings of fruit and vegetables a day. "Those habits are harmful and risk compromising their health and their well-being," stresses Dr. Martin Juneau, co-president of ACTI-MENU, the organization behind the *5/30 Health and Wellness Challenge*, and member of the board of Fondation ÉPIC. "Indeed, close to one youngster in four (23%) is overweight, which over the years can entail the early appearance of diseases such as diabetes." And yet, adopting a healthful lifestyle

can be made easier among children, and simple little actions can make a big difference. Municipalities, just like schools, have an important role to play – but good habits begin at home!

“This year the *Health Challenge* will be seeking to sensitize parents to the importance of setting conditions that make it easier for eating better and being more active to happen at home,” explains Dr. Roxane Néron of ACTI-MENU, the organization behind the *Health Challenge*. “And sometimes that can be easier than you think! For example, having raw vegetables ready to munch on in the fridge, leaving a basket of fruit on the counter, or encouraging children to get around more on foot or by bike. And of course, you also have to help them limit the time they spend in front of the TV set and the computer. Also, when they adopt healthful behaviours themselves, parents become inspiring role models for their children. With the *Health Challenge*,” she concludes, “the idea is to promote the parents’ role and above all equip them and support them so that they make a success of their health adventure as a family.”

Families who want to become a Health Challenge Family can register at Families.HealthChallenge.ca before March 1. For the first time this year, parents will be able to evaluate **the health rating of their homes** with the help of a test and get practical ideas for making those homes more conducive to an active life and a balanced diet.

This new expanded offer intended for families is made possible thanks to the project *Municipalités et familles, ensemble pour des enfants en santé*, carried out in association with the *5/30 Health and Wellness Challenge*. XXX Québec municipalities and local communities have signed up as part of this project to become *Municipalités Défi Santé*. They are committed to mobilizing families and citizens and supporting them in their *Health Challenge*. To see the list of the municipalities and communities taking part in the *2011 Health Challenge* as well as the activities and services offered by several of them (arenas, parks, pools, courts, etc.), visit the “Municipalities” section on 530HealthAndWellnessChallenge.ca.

About the 5/30 Health and Wellness Challenge

The *5/30 Health and Wellness Challenge* is presented by ACTI-MENU in collaboration with the Québec Public Health Departments, the Québec Department of Health and Social Services, the Canadian Cancer Society and the *Prends soin de toi* program. It is carried out in partnership with IGA, Desjardins, TELUS Health Solutions, AstraZeneca, Pfizer, Familiprix, Danone, Evian, Multi-Marques, Exceldor, Rôtisseries St-Hubert and Allegro Residences.

About Municipalités et familles, ensemble pour des enfants en santé

The project *Municipalités et familles, ensemble pour des enfants en santé* is an initiative of Fondation Épic and is presented by ACTI-MENU. It is spearheaded by Québec en Forme, in association with Kino-Québec, the Réseau québécois de Villes et Villages en santé (RQVVS), the Québec Public Health Departments, the Fédération Québécoise des Municipalités (FQM), the Union of Québec Municipalities (UMQ) and the government of Québec (the Department of Health and Social Services, the Department of Education, Leisure and Sports, and the Department of Municipal Affairs, Regions and Land Occupancy).

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