



Canadian Federation of Junior Leagues
Federation canadienne des jeunes ligues

Facts about the Canadian Federation of Junior Leagues' *Kids in the Kitchen* National Campaign, in partnership with the Podleski Sisters

- The [Canadian Federation of Junior Leagues](#) ("CFJL") is the Canadian group of leagues of the Association of Junior Leagues International; its member leagues are comprised of more than 160,000 women in 292 Junior Leagues in Canada, the United States, Mexico, and the United Kingdom.
- The Junior League's mission is to promote voluntarism, develop the potential of women and improve the community through effective action and leadership of trained volunteers.
- Kids in the Kitchen builds upon a heritage of impact Junior Leagues have had on family nutrition for the past 108 years. The program, which the [Junior League of Calgary](#) started as the *Junior Chefs* in 2001, is now being offered as [Kids in the Kitchen](#) by more than 200 independent Junior Leagues in Canada, the U.S., and Mexico.
- Junior Leagues host interactive educational programs in their communities to teach kids important nutrition tips and encourage a healthy lifestyle. It is one of the most successful programs targeting childhood obesity in North America.
- Janet and Greta Podleski, the co-hosts of the popular Food Network Canada TV series, [Eat, Shrink & Be Merry!](#) have joined the national campaign to promote the Kids in the Kitchen program. The Podleski's three healthy-eating cookbooks have combined sales of over 1.8 million copies, making them three of the top-selling cookbooks in Canadian publishing history. Additionally, *Eat, Shrink & Be Merry* was the top-selling cookbook of the decade in Canada, 2000-2010.
- The Podleskis are dedicated advocates of healthy living, preparing nutritious and delicious foods. Their books feature health conscious recipes that are usually low in sugar, [fat](#), and [sodium](#) and high in [fibre](#) and [protein](#) . [Click here for the Source](#)
- Childhood obesity is a global health issue that has grown at an astounding rate. One in four Canadian children is overweight. In 1989, only 2% of Canadian children were classified as clinically obese. [Click here for the Source](#) And in Toronto, one in three children is overweight. [Click here for the Source](#)
- Obese children are more likely to have longer-ranging health impacts such as high blood pressure, raised cholesterol, type two diabetes, asthma attacks, and kidney problems. Overweight and obesity are also associated with poor self-esteem and depression. [Click here for the Source](#)
- Obesity puts a child's health at lifelong higher risk. [Click here for the Source](#)
- Obesity is complex and caused by many interrelated issues including genes and environment. While genes are a significant factor, the dramatic increases in childhood obesity over the past decade emphasize the importance of a healthy environment. [Click here for the Source](#)

- Addressing and/or preventing obesity requires healthy habits including fresh and nutritious foods and exercise, and addressing it both individually and at the family level. Examples include eating foods that are more nutritious and lower in fat and sugar; getting more physical activity; and watching less television. [Click here for the Source](#)
- 88% of Canadian children and youth are not meeting national physical activity guidelines (CFLRI CAN PLAY 2007-2009), which suggests they are also not engaging in sufficient amounts of active play.
- Yet 74% of a group of children in Ontario said that if they were allowed to decide, they would choose to do something physically active after school (Canadian Assessment of Physical Literacy Study, 2009).
- Recommendations indicate that at least half of the physical activity accumulated by children should be in active play.
- As Canada's largest city, the National *Kids in the Kitchen* Campaign is starting in Toronto. One in three Torontonians is overweight. More than half of all Torontonians live in "food deserts" – areas with no grocery store within a one kilometre radius, leaving convenience stores and fast food outlets as the only accessible options for those without a car or close to public transportation. [Click here for the Source](#)
- Education is particularly important to support healthy decisions where limited options exist.
- Deborah Maw is the National Coordinator of the Canadian Federation of Junior Leagues and will be in attendance at the event.
- Jonna Smith is the President of the Junior League of Toronto and will be in attendance at the event.
- **More information:**
- Podleski Sisters and healthy living www.eatshrinkandbemerry.com
- Junior League's *Kids in the Kitchen* Program <http://kidsinthekitchen.ajli.org/>
- Canadian Federation of Junior Leagues <http://www.cfjl.org/>
- Junior League of Toronto www.jlt.org
- Active Healthy Kids Canada www.activehealthykids.ca/