

You're the Chef

A healthy cooking program for youth in
Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph



WHAT IS IT?

You're the Chef (YTC) is a cooking program that builds the skills and confidence of youth (10 years or older) to prepare healthy and tasty recipes emphasizing **vegetables & fruit**.

Students learn:



About the wholesome ingredients used in the YTC recipes



Cooking skills and techniques (e.g. chopping, mincing, measuring)



Safe food handling and basic kitchen safety



How to prepare a number of YTC recipes

WHAT YOU NEED

- ✓ A room (does not have to be a kitchen!) with:
 - Tables or counters to use for cooking surfaces
 - Two sinks - one for hand-washing and one for food prep
 - Electrical outlets
- ✓ Cooking equipment (e.g. knives, cutting boards, mixing bowls, cooktops). Some equipment may be available to borrow from Public Health.
- ✓ Budget for food. It is about \$40/session. Grants (e.g. Healthy Schools Grant) may be available from Public Health or other organizations.
- ✓ A dedicated adult YTC leader supported by others to aim to have one volunteer per four students.

YTC was originally developed by Niagra Region Public Health and is used with permission by Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health (Public Health).

HOW IT WORKS

2 hour Training: Public Health staff train YTC leaders (e.g. teachers, parents) and provide resources to run the program (e.g. leader manual, recipes, parent consent forms)

YTC leaders work with schools to plan and run the program

Fun hands-on learning: Maximum of 16 participants (aged 10 years +) work together to create health promoting recipes over a minimum of 6 sessions (90 minutes each)

WHY WE NEED IT

In Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph:

Only **1 in 4** youth eat fruit & vegetables \geq 5 times per day



22%

of youth eat at fast food restaurants 1-2 times during the school week

YTC is a great initiative for healthy schools since it:

- aligns with the Foundations for a Healthy School
- meets a need for food literacy courses



In general we see:

Declining food skills among the younger generations

Less opportunities to learn food skills at home and school

Children are more likely to eat & try new foods that they helped prepare

Building food literacy can positively influence dietary behaviours

"Frankly, I think we have done our children a disservice by eliminating programming like "home ec" from the curriculum..." - YTC leader

What do previous YTC Leaders think of the program?

BEFORE RUNNING YTC

100% very satisfied with content of training session

100% very satisfied with leader resources provided

AFTER RUNNING YTC

100%

Felt that the training and leader manual equipped them well to run YTC



100%

Would recommend YTC to other schools or community groups

YTC leaders thought the students benefited by:

- ↑ Confidence in the kitchen
- ↑ Healthy food knowledge
- ↑ Interest in preparing & trying new foods

YTC leaders thought that YTC links well to:

- Health & Physical Education" curriculum
- Other subject areas

"We were able to discuss math, science, & language /grammar /vocabulary topics. Also able to incorporate self-regulation, teamwork, collaboration, independence, etc. into each workshop."

"It was a fun challenge sharing with the students something that for me has become an ordinary day-to-day task. It was exciting to see them so engaged and enthusiastic and taking their jobs so seriously."

"These kids came away from the program feeling empowered to "do it for themselves". They are well aware that cooking and food preparation are valuable life-skills; for health, enjoyment and maybe even future jobs."

What do previous YTC students think of the program?

YTC students practiced or learned to:

- Wash their hands before & during cooking
- Use a sharp knife safely
- Wash vegetables & fruit
- Follow recipes
- Cut fruit & veggies (mince/dice/chop)
- Measure ingredients
- Use the stove (electric burners) safely



100%

Would recommend You're the Chef to a friend

YTC students enjoyed:

- Cooking and eating together with friends
- Getting a book with the recipes to make at home

After completing YTC:

- Students felt more confident in the kitchen & more interested in cooking
- Majority said they would know how to make the YTC recipes at home and that they plan to do so

"I already know how to mince garlic! I did it last week!"

"If I try new food, I might like it!"

"I tried to crack an egg once but I failed." The student then proceeded to successfully crack 3 eggs.

"What are we making next week? I can't wait to cook!"

BRING YTC TO YOUR SCHOOL!

Attend a YTC leader training provided by Public Health. Get in touch with us to get started.

School Health Line:

Email: Schoolhealth@wdgpublichealth.ca

Call: 1-800-265-7293 x 4111

