This past year has once again been a successful year for one for Tastebuds’ and its hardworking volunteers! We’ve seen expansion of Tastebuds programs in Hamilton and an increase in community involvement and commitment.

The Grocery Foundation ran their Toonies for Tummies campaign from February 4 – 18. Thanks to everyone who supported the campaign. In September 2016, Hamilton Tastebuds schools will receive $20,575 in gift cards.

As a parent, I love when a positive message delivered at the school expands kids’ mindsets. With the same hopes, we welcomed Harlem Globetrotters star Buckets Blakes at St. Joseph’s Elementary School on April 11th. Blakes spoke with the students about the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. In conjunction with Buckets Blakes’ visit, FirstOntario Credit Union made a cheque presentation of $250,000 to representatives from REACH and Tastebuds. These funds will be used to support Tastebuds programs.

It’s rightly said that “Volunteers don’t necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.” We know this first hand - with 1,269 volunteers who make nutrition programs a success. We want to thank each one of you for your time and commitment. This year with the volunteer appreciation was held at the Knights of Columbus Hall, with all the food generously donated by MZ Foods. We are grateful to Market Fresh for donating fruits and veggies for the infused water and Lococo’s for cups and cutlery; the event wouldn’t have been a success without their support, and without the tireless planning efforts of Suzanne Giovannetti.

The Feast on the Farm happened on May 26th. The night had everything: a beautiful location, good food, exemplary music from Hamilton super-group FryTruck and friends coming together for a common cause – the health and success of students in Hamilton. We send a big THANK YOU to Pearle Hospitality, Zarky’s Fine Foods, Lococo’s, Quatrefoil, Brux House, CityFarm Catering, Mapleton’s Organic Dairy, Lincoln Line Orchards and ManoRun Farm. We would like to thank Brux House bartender Kevin Delaney for being our emcee and photographer Peter Michael Wilson for volunteering his photography expertise. All funds raised will be used to support Tastebuds programs.

As you close your program for summer, please remember to clean the fridge, freezer and cabinets. Check the expiry dates on your food (ie. cereal/crackers). Budget to start the program in September. This is a good time to get some ideas for fundraising. On behalf of the Tastebuds team, I hope you have a safe summer! See you all in September!

Since 2008, Hamilton Tastebuds Student Nutrition Collaborative has supported student nutrition programs in local elementary and secondary schools. This year alone over 1,269 dedicated volunteers with 172 nutrition programs will provide over 463,383 breakfasts, 2,565,329 morning meals, 73,093 lunches, 925,290 healthy snacks to 30,082 students in our school communities. Please visit our website at www.tastebudshamilton.ca! Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @TastebudsSNC
This year Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School has seen a transformation in the menu at Nourishing Minds, their after school nutrition program. The Nourishing Minds team has worked hard to switch from frozen pre-made convenience foods to hearty meals cooked with fresh ingredients. At first, students weren’t happy about losing their favourite Tuesday meal, chicken fingers, but now they’re adjusting to the new menu which includes healthier alternatives, like chicken and rice stir fry.

The menu is planned by volunteer John Bak, who everyone calls Chef. Twice a week, Chef takes over the Nourishing Minds kitchen to prepare food and cook meals from scratch, including big batches of chilli to be frozen and served on days when he’s not there.

Finding additional volunteer support was crucial to implementing the menu change at Nourishing Minds. Even with Chef’s expertise in menu-planning, the program still needed extra hands in the kitchen. The program coordinators, Jodi Brimer, Maggie Howden and Derek Forde, are all staff at Churchill and needed to be in their classrooms. So Maggie called upon her daughter Krystyna, a Delta student who needed to complete a food-service co-op placement.

“I was going to do my co-op at McDonald’s, where I work, but this is so much better,” says Krystyna. As part of her Special High School Major, Krystyna has taken cooking classes throughout high school, as well as some baking and food culture classes. For her final project, She needs to make an entire meal by herself, including shopping for the ingredients and researching the nutrition content. And since she’s decided to make her meal for the Nourishing Minds program, she already knows it needs to fit the Guidelines too. Working alongside Chef to see how he plans and preps meals has been perfect practice for her project.

Along-time volunteer with other Tastebuds programs, Chef is passionate about food and showing others how to make inexpensive, nutritious and delicious meals. This includes teaching skills like how to use a knife to chop an onion and what to buy at the grocery store to get the most bang for your buck.

John is also keen to introduce students to healthy options that they may have never eaten before. Since starting her co-op placement, Krystyna has tried “a lot” of foods for the first time: hummus, zucchini and, now a favourite, home-made salsa. Vegetables, raw or cooked, aren’t very popular; students would eat around chunks of carrot in soups. “We’ve learned to chop it up small so it blends right in,” says Derek Forde, the main program coordinator, who has cultivated many creative tricks during his 7 years running Nourishing Minds. For example, when students were snubbing tomato soup, he realized that if he added a sole meatball in each bowl, students would gobble-up the whole meal.

Proof that the new menu is a success can be seen every day when the school bell rings – students line-up outside the Nourishing Minds door. And it’s this daily line-up that has kept Derek motivated for seven years, running both the Breakfast and after-school meal. It is thanks to Derek’s dedication that students can rely on Nourishing Minds to provide a good meal, twice-a-day, five-days-a-week.

“This is my way to make a difference. All teachers and educational assistants get into this job hoping that they’ll make a difference in the lives of the kids they teach,” says Derek. “I’m able to make more connections with students here than in my classroom. In class it’s a more formal, structured environment. This is more informal,” says Derek. The whole school is welcome here, from athletes who want to eat before practice to the Positive Space group. Derek has created a safe place where students can go before or after school. “At Nourishing Minds, I get more insight into these kids and see a whole different side to them.”
SPROUTING PARTNERSHIPS
By: Jean-Anne Bauman, Community Development Worker, Tastebuds

Thank You to Franks’ No Frills! On May 12, Frank Marchese and team got a workout when they wheeled six shopping carts of donated product from their store at Queenston and Nash to Glen Brae School. The donation was arranged by Tastebuds and Breakfast for Learning in partnership with President’s Choice Children’s Charity. The donation of cheese, yogurt, cereal to fruit - valued at approximately $600. This donation will definitely help the school!

Pictured: Frank Marchese, Frank’s NoFrills; and Ben Wylie, Public Relations – Loblaws.

Pictured: Nicole Doyle, President’s Choice Children’s Charity; Frank Marchese, Frank’s NoFrills; Bev Whitaker, NoFrills; Ryan Francouer, NoFrills; Matt Trafford, NoFrills.

Pictured: Karen Bikinas, Resource Teacher at Glen Brae Elementary School, and student nutrition program volunteers

FUELING FOR TASTEBUDS
By: James Mauro Vice-President, St. David Catholic Elementary School

St. David School has got a real boost to its nutrition program with the help of Eastgate Fortinos and the Fortinos Racing team.

On May 3, the Fortinos Racing visited the school as part of their Fuel for Kids campaign. It would not have been complete without driver Dave Connelly and their “eye-catching” orange car, #82. The entire school had an outside assembly where they learned about safety. They also had the thrill of watching Dave “burn some rubber.”

The Fortinos Racing team then visited a barbeque event hosted by Tony Simeone and Peter Pasalic of Eastgate Fortinos from 4 to 7 p.m. Eastgate Fortinos & their supporters sponsored all food items, provided a raffle for a basket of food, and a chance to win a day at racing school. All proceeds were donated to St. David School’s nutrition program. In three hours, they raised $1900. Way to go!
There is a lot of concern these days about the amount of sugar being offered to children. To satisfy thirst, the beverages people choose are often the sugary drinks, such as juice, soft drinks (e.g. iced tea, pop, ‘fruit’ beverages), energy drinks, vitamin drinks, and sports drinks to name a few.

Next time you are in your local corner store, walk by the refrigerators and take a count of how many sugary drinks are available. Not only will you find many, but the size of the containers is huge!

Why are we concerned? Because there is a clear link between sugary drinks and higher rates of obesity, poor oral health and other health issues. Drinking a large bottle of a sugary drink can be deceiving. You can drink a lot without realizing you are full. As well, there is concern that these sugary foods and drinks are taking the place of nutritious options, like vegetables, fruit, whole grains, and plain milk.

The advice from health professionals is that children should have no more than 5 to 10% of calories from sugar and fruit juice. For children ages 7 to 13 years, this means a maximum of 10 tsp (40 g) per day.

Now consider the amount of sugar found in some common drinks:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRODUCT</th>
<th>SUGAR (grams)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tim Horton’s Small hot chocolate</td>
<td>38g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can of pop (355ml)</td>
<td>41g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit beverage (591ml)</td>
<td>68g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McDonalds milkshake</td>
<td>87g</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What Should a Student Nutrition Program Provide?
Serve water. Cool, refreshing, municipal water is the best choice and should be available and promoted at every meal.

People often think that bottled water is a better choice than water from the tap. In fact, not only do plastic bottles add to the pollution of our planet, but municipal water consistently meets all Ontario Drinking Water Standards.

There are many benefits to drinking plain water:
- It is available, free-of-charge
- Satisfies thirst
- Makes us feel more alert
- Regulates body temperature
- Gets rid of toxins
- Keeps skin lubricated
- Helps us to think and concentrate better

At Tastebuds, we strive to provide children with the best food and beverage choices possible. If you are encouraging children to drink water to quench their thirst and have it available at all meals and snacks you are doing just that!