

# Personal and External Factors and Influences: Making Connections for Healthy Living

Lesson 3 of 5

40 Minutes

Curriculum Expectations 1.5, C3.1, C3.2

Healthy Living

Who's Influencing You?



## Learning Goals

By the end of this lesson students will be able to:

- demonstrate the ability to make connections to how their choices and behaviours affect both themselves and others while responding to scenarios
- use critical and creative thinking to analyze the personal and external factors that affect healthy behaviours
- use critical and creative thinking to identify the implications of personal and societal factors on healthy behaviour choices.

## Facility

Classroom

## Materials

- From Lesson 2: Teacher Resource 2: Making Connections Checklist
- Student Resource 7: Internal and External Influence Strips
- Student Resource 8: Decision-Making Pathway

## Minds On

Prepare Student Resource 7: Internal and External Influence Strips by cutting both horizontally and vertically to create enough strips that each student can have his or her own strip, either a factor or scenario.

Share and clarify the lesson Learning Goals.

Each student receives his or her own strip from Student Resource 7: Internal and External Influence Strips. One side of each strip is a factor that influences behaviours and the other side is a scenario to which that influence applies. Students move throughout the class trying to find another student to match the factor that influences behaviour strip to the appropriate scenario strip (and vice versa).

After all students have found a match, have the class share their influences and identify whether they are personal or external influences and how they might cope or respond. Consider recording student responses on a T-chart:

Personal	External
Likes Dislikes Schedule Food allergies or sensitivities Personal values Cultural practices or teachings	Family budget Cost of foods Type of foods available at home, at school, in the community

## A&E

Teacher observation with verbal feedback of students' demonstrated knowledge of personal and external influences

# Personal and External Factors and Influences: Making Connections for Healthy Living

Who's Influencing You?

Lesson 3 of 5

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## Action

Working with their partner and their scenario strip, students respond to their scenario by completing the Decision-Making Pathway portion of Student Resource 8: Decision-Making Pathway. Review Student Resource 8: Decision-Making Pathway. Consider using the Think-Aloud Strategy (see Appendix) using one of the scenario strips to model for students how to complete Student Resource 8: Decision-Making Pathway.

Write the word "Implication" on the board. Have students offer responses as to what the word "Implication" means (i.e., a likely consequence of something). Using student responses, create a Mind Map for what personal and external implications might be for various healthy and unhealthy behaviours (e.g., technology dependence, second-hand smoke, unhealthy eating, underage drinking, use of steroids).

Remaining with their partner, students use their scenario strip and Student Resource 8: Decision-Making Pathway to identify the personal and/or external implications of their decision.

## A&E

Teacher observation with verbal feedback of students' demonstrated ability to make connections to how their choices and behaviours affect both themselves and others using Teacher Resource 2: Making Connections Checklist (from Lesson 2)

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## Consolidation

Each pair joins with another pair and shares their scenario strip and responses from Student Resource 8: Decision-Making Pathway. Have pairs offer further suggestions for improvement.

Review Learning Goals with students. Students self-assess, using the Thumbs-Up Strategy (see Appendix), their ability to achieve the lesson Learning Goals.

## A&E

Teacher observation of student response during Thumbs-Up self-assessment

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## Ideas for Extension

Two pairs join to form a group of four and select one scenario to perform in a tableau. Students create one sentence to orally share that demonstrates the thinking of their character. When students present the tableau, call on each student who then remains frozen but shares the sentence.

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## Next Steps

Students will demonstrate the ability to make connections to how their choices and behaviours affect both themselves and others. They will identify ways of encouraging healthier behaviours.

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## Notes to Teacher

Students will use Student Resource 8: Decision-Making Pathway in the next lesson. Consider storing in the students' portfolios.

### Personal and External Influences

#### Personal Factors

1. Your Lifestyle – A student's busy life revolves around school, family and friends. If you are busy you may eat more food from fast-food outlets or choose convenience foods that are easy to carry and conveniently located.
2. Likes/Dislikes – Your choices for food may now revolve around eating more of the foods you like and avoiding the ones you dislike.

# Personal and External Factors and Influences: Making Connections for Healthy Living

Who's Influencing You?

Lesson 3 of 5

## Notes to Teacher - continued...

3. Food Allergies – These may limit what you can eat and might include such things as nuts, fish, eggs or wheat. Food allergies are especially a concern if you are eating out and are unsure of the ingredients in a food, as some allergies are life-threatening. Food allergies might be a concern in your school because often there are students who have dietary allergies, and sometimes an allergen-safe zone is necessary to keep all children in a school safe.
4. Values and Priorities – Not everyone spends time or money the same way; people make choices based on their personal values and priorities. Some students may choose to spend their time helping to prepare family meals or make their own lunches, while others would rather spend money on fast food or convenience foods.
5. Emotions – Emotions and moods can influence food choices. Some students rely on certain foods to make them feel better when they are sad. They choose different foods when they are happy to help them celebrate an event. Some students enjoy comfort foods; they remember eating these foods as a child which remind them of comfort and security.
6. Culture – This refers to the customs, traditions and beliefs that a large group of people share. This group could be people who live in a particular region of the world or who share a common heritage or ancestry. Religious beliefs could be another factor that determines your food choices or practices. These may include dietary laws or rules about what foods may be eaten. Examples include Muslims, who eat no pork; Hindus, who eat no beef; and Jewish people who eat only kosher products. There are many different cultures represented in your school. Canada is made up of a mixture of many cultures. Every culture has its own way of preparing, serving and eating foods. Food-related celebrations are an important part of this country. Morden, Manitoba, has a Corn and Apple Festival, where the entire town offers everything from apple pie to corn chowder. Different seasons of the year also may have a food custom attached to them. In some Aboriginal communities, moose jerky and wild rice soup are an important part of the fall celebrations. In Quebec, poutine and tourtière are foods that are traditional in that province.

Adapted from *Food for Today*, (2004), Chapter 2, Helen Kowtaluk, McGraw-Hill Ryerson.

### External Factors

1. Family – This is probably the group that has the single greatest influence on what you eat. They decide how food will be prepared for you and may dictate a ritual that you have in your family. Perhaps every Friday night at your house is pizza night. You learned many of your food habits by watching what other people in your home eat.
2. Peers – As you become a teenager, you may spend more time with your friends, and this group plays a larger role in your food choices. Because eating is a large part of the social experience, your peers' cultures and food choices may start to expose you to different types of food. If all of your friends eat in the cafeteria for lunch, you may stop bringing your own packed lunch from home.
3. Media – The messages you receive from television, the Internet, newspapers or magazines are a major influence on what you eat. You see messages all day long about nutrition choices and information that may shape your decision about what to eat. Programs on television dedicated to cooking may influence you to be more creative with food selection and preparation.
4. Technology and Food Supply – The practical application of scientific knowledge to increase food supply, along with the global food supply (i.e., getting foods from all over the world), increases the options for food available to us today.
5. Resources – The amount of money available and the types of food available in the home, school or community can greatly alter food choices. In Northern communities with no road access, for example, all food must be flown into the community. The cost of fresh produce, when available at all, is considerable, so it greatly affects healthy food choices.

Adapted from *Food for Today*, (2004), Chapter 2, Helen Kowtaluk, McGraw-Hill Ryerson.

### Self-Esteem During Puberty

Self-esteem is the confidence and satisfaction a person has in himself or herself. It determines how worthwhile, valuable and competent we feel we are. Self-esteem develops from birth through experiences and relationships within the family and continues to be influenced by the significant people in one's life. Supportive parents, teachers, coaches and friends are the key to maintaining and enhancing healthy self-esteem.

Adolescence is a time of transition and confusion, during which boys and girls often experience decreased self-esteem. However, girls' self-esteem tends to drop further than boys' during adolescence (Orenstein, 1994). This may be due in part to the socialization of girls that focuses on their appearance and the need to seek approval from others as a means of defining self-worth.

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# Personal and External Factors and Influences: Making Connections for Healthy Living

Who's Influencing You?

Lesson 3 of 5

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## Notes to Teacher - *continued...*

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### Factors Influencing Self-esteem

- Social skills
- Relationships
- Talents
- Intellectual abilities
- Interests
- Personal characteristics (e.g., kindness, honesty, humour)
- Physical appearance

### Tips for Strengthening Self-esteem

- Encourage students, especially girls, to develop interests and abilities in a variety of areas, such as sports, education, hobbies and clubs. These help youth recognize that their appearance is only one aspect of themselves.
- Acknowledge and compliment students on their skills, abilities and character.
- Challenge students to think of things they like about themselves beyond physical appearance (e.g., swimming skills, musical talents, friendship skills).
- Help youth develop skills for coping with the stresses of adolescence rather than turning to dieting and over-exercising as ways of feeling in control of their lives.
- Teach skills related to friendship, communication and stress management.
- Listen to students' concerns and feelings about their changing bodies.
- Encourage students to talk to parents and trusted adults to help sort through problems.

Strong self-esteem helps students cope with stress and anxiety, enables them to be more resilient in difficult times and helps them make healthy choices (O'Dea, 2005). Students who feel good about themselves are less likely to engage in risk-taking behaviours such as disordered eating, smoking, using drugs, drinking alcohol and engaging in early sexual behaviour.

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### Body Image During Puberty

Body image is part of self-esteem. It's people's perception of their own body size, shape and attractiveness. It also includes people's attitudes and feelings about their body and how they think others see them.

### Body Image Dissatisfaction

Adolescents often become preoccupied and dissatisfied with aspects of their appearance and may think their peers notice and dislike these aspects too. Furthermore, increasing numbers of adolescents are also dissatisfied with their weight and shape. Research shows that early adolescence is a risky time for developing body-image dissatisfaction and disordered eating (Smolak et al., 1996; Levine et al., 2006). These behaviours may be triggered by common stressors that adolescents experience. As a way of coping, some youth turn to dieting in an attempt to achieve an "ideal" body and gain control over their rapidly changing lives.

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### Stressors Contributing to Body-Image Dissatisfaction and Disordered Eating

- Physical changes of puberty such as gaining weight and increased body fat in girls.
- Peer pressure from friends who diet.
- Social pressure to "fit in" and be accepted (e.g., girls are supposed to be "beautiful" and thin; boys are socialized to be "strong" and "macho").
- Development of feelings of attraction and wanting to impress.
- Teasing and harassment – students may suffer from rude comments about their weight, body shape, eating habits, race, culture, etc.
- School transitions – moving to middle school is a significant adjustment
- Misinterpretation of health messages – "good" foods vs. "bad" foods; eating fat is "bad"; obesity messages about the dangers of gaining weight and the need to lose weight (O'Dea, 2005).

# Personal and External Factors and Influences: Making Connections for Healthy Living

Who's Influencing You?

Lesson 3 of 5

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## Notes to Teacher - *continued...*

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- Influence of the media, with its unrealistic expectations for appearance, weight and shape.

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### Media and Body Image

Media have a powerful influence on how young people view themselves. The “ideal” look portrayed in the media makes people feel inadequate and unhappy with their bodies. Research suggests that up to 80 per cent of females and 40 – 60 per cent of males in our society are dissatisfied with their bodies (see <http://research.aboutkidshealth.ca/thestudentbody/home.asp>).

Advertisers go to great lengths to sell products and convince people, especially women, that their bodies are never good enough. Advertising promotes the false belief that everyone can achieve the “ideal” look if they just work hard enough and buy the right products (e.g., cosmetics, hair products, clothes, exercise equipment, supplements and diets).

The female models that are used to sell products are typically tall, thin, young and white and appear perfect. Male models are lean, muscular and equally “perfect” in their appearance. Youth struggle to achieve a similar look, but the image isn’t even real.

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### In Reality...

- Specialized photographic techniques and computer technology alter the models’ appearance to create a look that is flawless.
- Body features are enhanced with props, lighting angles and computer techniques.
- Shapes and sizes are altered.
- Blemishes, freckles, lines, wrinkles, skin folds and other unwanted features are edited out.
- Body parts or features from photos of different people are combined to create the “perfect” image.
- “Body doubles” are common in films when body parts of lead actors don’t measure up to the “perfect” image.
- Photo images can be completely computer generated to fit the popular look of the day.

### Alcohol

Alcohol is often not thought of as a drug – largely because its use is common for both religious and social purposes in most parts of the world. It is a drug, however, and compulsive drinking in excess has become one of modern society’s most serious problems. The effects of drinking do not depend on the type of alcoholic beverage, but rather on the amount of alcohol consumed on a specific occasion.

### Cannabis

Marijuana, hashish and hashish oil are all products of the hemp plant *Cannabis sativa*, a hardy annual that grows in both tropical and temperate climates. The chief ingredient in the cannabis plant — the one that alters mood and perception — is called delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC).

THC and other cannabis constituents have been tested for treatment of asthma, epilepsy, glaucoma, anorexia nervosa and nausea caused by anti-cancer therapy. However, Cannabis is most often used illegally and is the most widely used illegal psychoactive drug in North America.

Marijuana comes from the flowering tops and leaves of the dried plant, and frequently contains seeds and stems. It ranges in colour from greyish-green to greenish-brown, and in texture from a fine substance resembling the herb oregano to a coarse substance that looks like tea. It is smoked in pipes or in hand-rolled cigarettes called “joints.”

Hashish, known as “hash,” is the dried, caked resin from the flowers and leaves of the female plant. It usually contains a higher THC concentration than marijuana, and is therefore more potent.

It is sold in either soft or hard chunks and ranges in colour from light or medium brown to nearly black. Hash is usually mixed with tobacco and smoked in pipes or joints.

# Personal and External Factors and Influences: Making Connections for Healthy Living

Who's Influencing You?

Lesson 3 of 5

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## Notes to Teacher - *continued...*

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The most potent preparation other than pure THC is hash oil, a reddish-brown or green oily extract of cannabis, also called weed oil or honey oil. Hash oil is usually dropped onto the end of a regular cigarette, or wiped onto the paper before it is rolled into a marijuana joint.

### Tobacco

Today, tobacco use is considered Canada's greatest public health problem. Tobacco smoke is made up of thousands of components, the main ones being nicotine, tar and carbon monoxide.

Nicotine is the addictive agent in tobacco, tar can cause cancers and bronchial disorders, and carbon monoxide contributes to heart disease. Nicotine is a powerful mood-altering substance that reaches the brain quickly when you smoke a cigarette. Nicotine is also extremely toxic. Tar is not a single ingredient; it is a dark sticky combination of hundreds of chemicals, including poisons and cancer-causing substances.

Carbon monoxide (CO), the poisonous emission from automobile engines, is also formed when tobacco is burned. While nicotine causes the heart to work harder, CO deprives it of the extra oxygen this work demands. Other chemicals in cigarette smoke include acids, glycerol, glycol, alcohol, aldehydes, ketones, aliphatic and aromatic hydrocarbons, phenols, and such corrosive gases as hydrogen cyanide and nitrogen oxide.

### Steroids

Steroids include a wide variety of chemicals found in both plants and animals (e.g., in cholesterol, in toad poisons, in sex hormones, in plant toxins). One member of the steroid family is the anabolic steroid, a chemically manufactured version of the male sex hormone testosterone. Anabolic steroids have both anabolic (i.e., tissue building) and androgenic (i.e., masculinizing) effects. They are used primarily in veterinary medicine but they also have medical uses in humans.

Athletes and body builders use anabolic steroids in the belief that steroids will enhance performance and increase muscle bulk and body size. Increasingly, adolescents use steroids to "improve" their appearance. Dissatisfaction with body image, particularly the perception of being too small or not muscular enough, is common in individuals who use anabolic steroids. This disorder has been called "reverse anorexia nervosa." Despite the fact that there is little compelling evidence that anabolic steroids enhance athletic performance, the general public and young athletes in particular are often convinced that these drugs can improve physique and athletic performance. While it is illegal to sell anabolic steroids in North America, possession of these drugs is not illegal. They can be readily obtained in gymnasiums or other weightlifting settings.



## Student Resource 7: Internal and External Influence Strips

### Healthy Living

#### Personal and External Factors and Influences: Making Connections for Healthy Living

#### Who's Influencing You?

(Page 1 of 2)

Busy Schedule	Sumona is active in hockey, volleyball and tennis. Almost every day of the week she is involved in one kind of sporting activity or another. By the time she gets home from her practices, she barely has enough time to do her homework. In the morning, Sumona wakes up, quickly grabs a glass of milk, munches a couple of cookies and rushes off to school. During the day, she finds herself snacking on whatever she picks up at the cafeteria — usually French fries with gravy and a pop. Dinner is the only time Sumona eats a complete meal because her parents insist on eating dinner together. Sumona has been feeling very tired in class, sometimes even dozing off for a moment. She is worried that if her marks drop, she will be kicked off the school sports teams.
Likes/Dislikes	Nick is a very picky eater. He doesn't like to try new foods and hates almost everything except pizza. His friends have been going to a new samosa place for lunch; Nick's never had a samosa before, but he just knows that he won't like them.
Food allergies or sensitivities	Joseph has a life-threatening allergy to nuts. This is especially a concern at school because there are so many students bringing lunches and snacks.
Family Budget	Cole lives with his grandparents, who are both retired and on a limited budget. He was learning in school about the importance of eating from the four food groups, but his family can't afford the fresh produce from the local grocery store. He wants his family to eat healthier. What can he do?
Emotions	John is 11 years old and likes to play sports. He is sometimes teased by the other kids in phys. ed. class because he isn't as muscular or athletic as they are. Over time, John begins to dislike any kind of physical activity and prefers to stay home playing on his computer and watching television. John feels lonely and bored so he begins eating more than he used to eat to occupy himself. John thinks that eating more will be OK, because it might help him gain more muscle. Not only does John begin to feel tired all the time and complain of constant indigestion, he feels sad and down on himself and his body.
Culture	This weekend you are invited to a friend's sleepover to celebrate her 12th birthday. You've overheard Sarah planning the festivities and the menu. As Muslims, your family doesn't eat pork. You've heard Sarah talk about her dad's breakfast specialty, a bacon loaf spectacular. What do you do?
Family	You are at your Uncle Joe's house. He's your dad's younger brother. He comes into the living room with a joint of marijuana and offers it to you. "Here," he says. "It's time you learned to be a man."
Family	Armand wants to try out for the football team but worries that he is too small. His older brother has recently gotten much more muscular and is working out a lot at the gym. Armand asks his brother to help him get bigger. His brother has some pills that he says he will give to Armand if he really wants to bulk up. What will Armand do?
Family	Michael lives with his mom. She works at two jobs, and most days he is home alone after school and in the evening. Typically, he eats frozen dinners and often snacks on cookies, chips and ice cream while he surfs the Net and plays video games on his computer.
Family	Amir lives with his aunt. She owns a bakery, and growing up he watched her creating food in the kitchen. Amir has started baking cakes, cookies and pies every day to help his aunt. To test how tasty the baked goods are, he eats a large piece of every creation. Lately, he's been eating so many sweets that he's usually not hungry when it's time for dinner.
Peers	You have just moved to a new school and you sit beside one of the "cool" kids. She has invited you to hang out with her friends on Saturday. You really want to make a good impression with her and her friends, and you spend ages deciding what to wear. One of the gang "borrows" cigarettes from his mom for you all to try. What do you do?
Peers	You are over at Joanne's house, working on a school project. She's babysitting her younger brother. Just as you settle down to work, she brings in a couple of shots of liquor. "I always have a drink before I start work," she says, "It helps me think better."
Peers	Today is such a busy day for you. After class you have only about 20 minutes before the big game and forgot your snack at home. You join your friends at the closest eatery, which also happens to be your favourite fast-food restaurant. Today they have a deal: five mini-burgers for \$5. One of your friends gets an idea to pool all your money and have a mini-burger eating contest. "Let's see who can eat the most, until he/she pukes," your friend shouts. What do you do?

## Student Resource 7: Internal and External Influence Strips

Healthy Living

Personal and External Factors and Influences: Making Connections for Healthy Living

Who's Influencing You?

(Page 2 of 2)

Media	Angela loves reading teen magazines and checking out gossip websites. One day, Angela comes to a website that tells her she is out of shape and needs to get "beach body ready." The next day, Angela begins a new routine with morning crunches, jumping jacks and side leg raises. She now skips breakfast and heads to school. For lunch, she eats some fruit. After school, she exercises to one of her sister's exercise videos and then goes for a jog around the neighbourhood. When she gets home she is exhausted and lies on her bed to read her teen magazines. She wishes she had a body shape like those girls. Her family and her best friend tell her she looks great, but she can't help feeling unhappy about her body.
Media	You just finished a run with one of your friends and you stop by a convenience store to grab a drink. Your friend grabs an energy drink and talks about the flashy commercial and how it's "guaranteed to give you a boost." She tells you about the celebrity who drinks this particular energy drink and how you'll have so much energy you can fly. You look in the cooler and see water and juice, as well as chocolate milk. What do you do?
Technology	As a birthday gift, Rasheed received a laptop. Now he sits at his desk and plays on it day and night. He never eats healthy meals. He only grabs quick snacks, such as cookies and pop, so that he can eat without interrupting his screen time.
Technology	Christine loves technology. When she takes notes in school, she writes in her laptop. Rather than speaking with friends she sends them text messages. She's always checking out social media sites to find out what people are up to. Christine's parents are concerned that she is becoming too dependent on technology.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Decision Making Pathway					
What's the Problem?	What are the Alternatives?	Evaluate Alternatives		Make a Decision	Reflect on the decision. What was learned?
		Pros			
		Cons			
		Pros			
		Cons			
		Pros			
		Cons			

Implications for my decision:

Personal	Societal