

An Overview of Youth Health in Montréal

UNDERSTAND, MOBILIZE, TAKE ACTION



Eating habits

HIGHLIGHTS

A healthy diet during adolescence is crucial for growth and for the development of lifelong healthy eating habits.¹ Current healthy eating guidelines recommend daily intake of highly nutritious foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and plant-based proteins, and limiting highly processed foods.² The data below are drawn from the section on eating habits of the Québec Health Survey of High School Students (QSHSS), conducted during the 2022–2023 school year in Montréal.



A low percentage of youth follow healthy eating guidelines

- **24 %** of youth eat at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables daily
- **21 %** of youth eat whole-grain foods every day
- **25 %** of youth eat plant-based protein every day
- **18 %** of youth consume at least two portions of milk, non-lactose milk, or soy beverages per day



Only 42% of Montréal youth have something to eat or drink every day before school.



The dietary habits of Montréal youth compare negatively to those in the rest of Québec.



In general, the data indicate a deterioration of youth eating habits over time, apart from the consumption of sugary drinks, snacks, and candies, which are declining in Montréal.

The data show a significant gap between healthy eating guidelines and youth eating habits. This supports the importance of promoting actions impacting community-based determinants that encourage healthy food choices in areas frequented by Montréal youth.

1. Health Canada. Canada’s Food Guide. 2020. Healthy Eating for Teens. Available at: <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/tips-for-healthy-eating/teens>
2. Health Canada. Canada’s Food Guide. 2024. Eat a variety of healthy foods each day. Available at: <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/>