

## **Yum - Your Ultimate Manual for Good Nutrition**

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We all know many kids need help to eat right so why not create a book that helps kids to do just that? This is what Daina Kalnins, registered dietitian with the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto aims to do in her latest book *Yum - Your Ultimate Manual for Good Nutrition*.

It's nutrition 101 for kids. Children are first introduced to how to read labels, then move on finding out what the macro and micronutrients are and why they are needed for good health. Digestion, balancing food and activity choices, recipes, meal and snack ideas, and other healthy eating tips are amongst the main topics covered. Both the US and Canadian food guides are promoted.

### **PROS**

There is a need for a book that effectively encourages kids to eat right. The "all foods can fit" messages throughout the book are well balanced with the clear, positive messages that our bodies need the healthier choices most often. And there are plenty of ideas for how to put that into action, such as the recipes, meal and snack ideas.

Chunking the information through various tip boxes helps to make the copy more interesting to read and some children may like the celebrity quotes. A nice range of food, nutrition and exercise topics are covered including how kids can make a difference at school to food safety to foods from around the world and how real kids eat. The child-friendly websites and glossary are helpful.

### **CONS**

According to the book's press release, the book is written for readers aged 9 to 12, however we felt that this information was not clear in the book. We wondered if the graphics and copy were tested with the target audience and for several reasons, we questioned whether children would find the book engaging and interesting. Would leading the book with a discussion about food labels really grab a child's attention? Are children interested in the lengthy section on nutrients? How likely is it that a child can commit to a six month plan as suggested at the end of the book?

At times we thought the language and depth of content were more adult oriented. For example, in a discussion about cholesterol, children are advised to "...keep blood levels of cholesterol in check..." by trying to "keep those saturated fat foods to a minimum, and replace them with healthier polyunsaturated ones."

The book could have been easier to read with a larger font, less black or grey background, more white space, and fewer text boxes in places where it disrupts the flow of the chapter. We felt more interactive elements such as checklists and quizzes would also help to keep the reader interested.

**Bottom Line**

We like the concept of a book that empowers children to make healthy choices. Children that are really fascinated about food and good health may find this book interesting, however most kids may not make it through this book. We'd love to see a second edition down the road.