

Back-to-School Means Back to Morning Crunch Time New survey says breakfast a priority, skipped by majority

TORONTO, August 13, 2012 - While teary bedtimes or family dinners can make afternoons and evenings taxing for parents, it's mornings that Canadian parents have declared the hardest over any other time of day.

Six out of 10 Canadian moms and dads say morning is the most stressful period of the day, according to the results of a new poll conducted by Ipsos Reid on behalf of Breakfast Cereals Canada.

The survey is the organization's first look at what really happens in Canadian homes in the time between "get up" and "go."

So how does a tiny fraction of the day become the time so many dread?

At a glance...

- **Breakfast a priority, skipped by majority:** While 93 per cent of those polled say making sure everyone eats breakfast is a top morning priority, six out of 10 say at least one family member skips the morning meal at least once a week.
- **Gluttons for guilt:** Half of parents feel guilt in the morning, driven by failing to serve up a nutritious breakfast at home, skipping breakfast altogether or opting for other less nutritious breakfasts on-the-go.
- **The "me time" advantage:** Moms and dads who reported spending less time getting themselves ready and more time focused on the family were more likely to call mornings the most stressful time of day.

Morning time "thrival"

The time constraints of the morning rush combined with the pressure on parents to feed their families a wholesome, balanced breakfast make for a powerful combination of guilt and stress for many parents. You can see why so many throw their hands in the air and say 'I give up.'

"As a mom and a dietitian, I know how crazy and chaotic the morning can be, especially at back-to-school time" says Andrea Holwegner, a registered dietitian and mother of one. "It's important not to skip breakfast. Eating well in the morning is easier - and faster - than many parents think, especially when you get the whole family involved." Holwegner has compiled her best tips and ideas for doing so into Breakfast Cereals Canada's Morning Crunch Time "Thrival" Guide (download it at morningcrunchtime.ca).

A breakfast that's high in nutrition doesn't need to be high in stress. "Many breakfast cereals are an important source of whole grains, are typically low in fat, are a source of nutrients like iron and B-vitamins, and help kids and grown-ups meet their daily fibre recommendations - which otherwise isn't so easy to do," says Holwegner.

While parents do know the benefits of eating a nutritious morning meal, lack of time was the top reason why families find it challenging to put together a healthy breakfast. It's that gap between what parents think they 'should' be doing and the perception of how much time is required to provide a nutritious breakfast every day that makes mornings so loaded.

The great morning race

The poll found that it takes families on average 77 minutes from the time the alarm goes off until everyone is out the door for school or work. Canada's speediest households - the top five per cent - reported getting out the door within 10 minutes or less of waking. At the opposite end of the spectrum, five per cent say it takes their families two hours or more.

So who's racing through the morning routine the fastest? At less than 62 minutes per household, Quebec families reported the quickest morning times. The slowest Canadians in the morning are in British Columbia, who clocked in at 84 minutes.

While getting out the door in less than 30 minutes was associated with the lowest likelihood of being stressed out in the morning, it wasn't the worst of the morning slowpokes who reported the most stress. Rather, families who clocked in around average - between 60 and 89 minutes - were the most likely to say they find mornings to be a challenge.

The "me time" connection

Not taking enough time to take care of their own needs also ups the stress factor for many parents.

Among those who reported spending lower amounts of their time on themselves, 71 per cent say it's the most stressful part of the day - 16 per cent higher than the national average. By comparison, those who say they spend 41 per cent or more of the morning on themselves were less than half as likely to be stressed out.

Moms and dads: Who's pitching in?

The poll also reveals some gender gaps when it comes to prepping the family for the day ahead: nearly twice as many moms (64%) than dads (36%) say they spend more time focused on getting everyone else ready in the morning than themselves. Dads

were nearly 20 per cent more likely to place priority on getting themselves ready (65% for dads vs. 45% for moms) and twice as likely to say squeezing in a workout was important in the morning.

That's not to say dads don't help out! More dads than moms (23% vs. 17%) say they help their spouses get ready in the mornings.

"Breakfast cereal is a delicious, convenient, nutritious and economical option for busy Canadian families," says Kathryn Fitzwilliam, Executive Director at Breakfast Cereals Canada. "It's our hope that by understanding what's causing parents stress in the morning and by providing some simple solutions to get the family involved in preparing a healthy breakfast, we can help them smooth out crunch time."

About Breakfast Cereals Canada

Breakfast Cereals Canada (BCC) represents the four leading manufacturers of breakfast cereals in Canada: General Mills Canada, Kellogg Canada Inc., Post Foods Canada Inc., and Quaker Canada. The companies joined together in 2007 to serve as a voice for breakfast cereals and to take a leadership role in enabling more Canadians to enjoy the benefits of breakfast cereal as a nutritious part of their diets.

In Canada, the ready-to-eat breakfast cereal market is valued at more than \$1 billion, and cereal has become a staple of Canadian cupboards, with 93% of Canadian households purchasing ready-to eat-cereal.

Breakfast cereals have a long food history that is grounded in science, and the industry has a demonstrated commitment to providing healthy, nutritious and innovative cereal products.

For more information about Breakfast Cereals Canada visit breakfastcereals.ca.

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For more information and to book an interview with a registered dietitian or Breakfast Cereals Canada spokesperson, please contact:

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The poll was conducted by Ipsos Reid on behalf of Breakfast Cereals Canada between July 6 to 10, 2012 on a sample of 811 parents of at least two children below the age of 12. Results are accurate to the entire population +/- 3.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.