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VICTORIA – Parliamentary Secretary Michelle Stilwell has issued the following statement today:

“When the new year hits, you can be tempted to try to completely overhaul your daily habits and set many resolutions. While the intention behind this is great, by trying to change everything at once, you are often setting yourself up for failure.

“Life is busy and by the second week in January, you may be feeling overwhelmed. Even if you didn’t get up and moving every day this week, just thinking about the healthy habits you want to form is a great start.

“As an MLA, Parliamentary Secretary for Healthy Living, Paralympian, mom and wife, my time gets pretty stretched. A few healthy habits can make a world of difference. Some of my favourites are:

- Stay hydrated. Plenty of water with limited caffeine, sugary drinks and juice will really make a difference. You have lots of ways to keep on track, such as setting a timer on your phone for water breaks or infusing your water with fresh fruit. I find hot water with lemon is great in the winter. In the summer, adding flavoured things like mint, lemon, lime and ginger can make keeping hydrated easier.
- Eat colourful food. Fruits and vegetables come in all of the colours of the rainbow and getting them into your diet every day gives you the vitamins and nutrients your body needs. I find smoothies are a great way to hide the veggies that you may not like on their own but that have a ton of nutrients, such as kale.
- Stay away from sulphites, nitrates and processed foods as much as possible. If a food product has more than five ingredients listed and is found in the inner isles of your grocery store, it is likely processed. Read the labels and do what you can to substitute those items with fresh or flash-frozen options.
- Sleep. By making sleep a priority, your body will get the rest its needs to keep you productive and able to tackle your day. I like to use essential oils and clear my room of any lights, electronic devices or distractions.
- Move. Try and move every day even if it is just a short brisk walk. I set mini-challenges for myself – like how fast can I wheel to work, then I keep trying to beat it.

“Most importantly, start small and try not to get discouraged if you slip on occasion. Try to remember that every day is a new day, and that change takes time. It is also important to give yourself a pat on the back when you are making progress and celebrate those small victories, because each day your new routine will begin to feel more natural, and a part of your everyday life.”
The Ministry of Health’s Healthy Families BC website offers lots of information and tools to help you get started and stay on track. Visit Healthy Families BC at:

http://www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca/

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