

Healthy Kids Challenge®

Balance My Day™ Curriculum

Grades 6-8 Parent Tips

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HEALTHY
TIPS

Fruits & Veggies – Every Day the Tasty Way



Fruits & Veggies, “Cool” Foods

Do you find fruits and veggies in the meals and snacks you eat? Are there plenty of fruit and veggie choices in your house? If you answered “no” to either of these questions, consider making a healthy change.

Why Fruits & Veggies?

- They are packed with nutrients to help you look and feel great.
- They add awesome tastes and textures. You’ll never get bored!
- They are low in fat and high in fiber which helps keep your heart and digestive tract healthy and running smoothly.
- Without added fat and sugar, they fill you up and help with a healthy weight.

Choose to get more fruits and veggies with one of these “Family Challenges” today!

- **Try different textures to add interest.**
Mix soft, crunchy and smooth textures to add interest. Serve crunchy raw sweet potato slices as a snack. Grill a zucchini for dinner. Eat frozen grapes or slice a soft mango as a dessert.
- **Let everyone choose fruits and veggies to add to the grocery list.**
For variety and cost savings, pick fresh, frozen, dried and canned choices. Fresh apples, frozen melon, raisins and canned pears are ideas. Include “grab and go” choices like baby carrots or bananas.
- **Eat a fruit or veggie at breakfast, lunch and dinner.**
Make a plan like this one, to keep you on track!

Breakfast - Eat a fruit

Lunch - Choose a salad or cooked veggie and canned fruit

Dinner - Serve 2 veggie choices



The Family Challenge we choose this week is:

After the week is over, continue with your healthy challenge or try a new one!



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Fruits & Veggies – Every Day the Tasty Way



Good Times, Great Fruits & Veggies!

Whenever people gather, there is sure to be food! For potlucks and other get-togethers, make it a point to bring a healthy and colorful fruit or veggie dish.

Try these ideas and come up with some of your own!

• **Fresh Fruit Salad**

Mix your favorite fruits in a bowl. Sliced oranges, chopped apples and a sprinkle of fresh or frozen blueberries make a good combo. Top with a spoonful of low-fat fruited yogurt.

• **Colorful Leaf Lettuce Salad**

Start with mixed greens. Add chopped veggies, like green pepper, cucumber, tomato, carrots or any other favorites. Bring along a bottle of low-fat dressing.

• **Veggie Casserole**

Enjoy a new recipe. Try a broccoli/cauliflower mixture or something different like parsnips or rutabaga. If you add cheeses, sour cream and canned soups, make them low-fat.

• **Raw Veggie Plate**

Decorate a plate with veggies in colors of the rainbow. A plate of *red* peppers, *orange* carrots, *yellow* summer squash, *white* cauliflower, *green* cucumbers and *purple* cabbage wedges shows all the colors. Use a low-fat ranch dressing to dip.

• **Spiced Peaches Recipe**

- 2 cans (15 oz.) peach halves in light syrup
- 2 tbsp. brown sugar
- 2 tsp. lemon juice
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- ½ tsp. allspice



Drain peaches and keep the juice. Pour juice in a saucepan. Add brown sugar, lemon juice and spices. Simmer 5 minutes over medium heat. Add peaches and heat through. Serve warm or cold. Yield: 8 servings

Let the family help create the dishes and be “taste testers”. You may find a new favorite dish!



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Snack Attack Between Times... Snack Healthy

“Snacking happy and healthy” is easy if you follow simple tips!

- **Eat less** of foods with added fat and/or sugar and choose them less often.
- **Choose more** healthy foods using MyPlate as a guide (www.choosemyplate.gov).

Choose one of the tips above to set a family challenge! Replace higher fat and added sugar snacks with more veggies, fruits, whole grains and low-fat dairy food choices.

Lower fat and added sugar choices look like:

- Blueberries instead of a supersized high fat blueberry muffin.
- Baked potato chips instead of regular potato chips.
- A glass of ice cold water or 100% juice instead of a sugary soda.
- Low-fat fruited yogurt with graham cracker topping instead of cookies.

Check out the cupboard and refrigerator to see what is on hand for healthy snack choices.

Read the food label of favorite snack foods.

- Find the serving size. Is that what is typically eaten?
- Check labels for grams of sugar and fat. Choose snacks that have less total sugar and fat. Five grams or less is a good goal.

Add healthy snack items to your grocery list!

Here’s a sample list. Fill in your own list below it.

Sample Grocery List

- ✓ 1 box of graham crackers
- ✓ 1 can peaches, packed in juice
- ✓ 1 pkg. whole grain, low-fat crackers
- ✓ 1 bag baby carrots
- ✓ 1 bag apples
- ✓ 1 quart skim or low-fat milk
- ✓ 3 containers low-fat fruited yogurt

Healthy Snacking Tips!

- Eat slowly and enjoy the flavors.
- Serve it up. Don’t eat from the bag.
- If bored, instead of eating, call a friend, drink a glass of water, or get up and move.

My Grocery List

- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____



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Snack Attack

Family Snack Attack Contest

A FAMILY Snack Attack Contest

A simple family activity that involves kids in the kitchen and provides a great chance to talk about making healthy choices.

Create recipes and vote so that each single serving recipe wins in at least one category!

Reminder:
Any time you work with food, wash hands and keep germs away.



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Recipe Contest: "Proof is in the Pudding"

Contest Ingredients and Measures

(individual servings)

- 1/3 cup pudding (canned, refrigerated, or prepared from a package)
- 1/2 cup fruit (any combination of different fruits)

Contest rules:

1. Everyone follows the "recipe" for ingredients and measures (to create individual servings)
2. Each person can use creativity to mix and match different flavors of pudding and fruits for their own "unique recipe"

Begin the fun! Go to the grocery store, as a family, to make fruit choices.

- Talk about fruit choices - canned, frozen and fresh
- Talk about differences in cost, taste, and whether or not extra sugars are added (and why it might be a good idea to choose some with less sugar)

Contest directions:

- Create single serving dishes, one per family member.
- Mix or layer the ingredients—use your choice of pudding flavors, fruits or combination of fruits.

Example Recipe: Combine: 1/4 cup strawberries with 1/4 cup kiwi slices. In a bowl, alternate layers of a) 1/3 cup pudding and b) 1/3 cup Strawberry/Kiwi mixture.

Vote: For Best Color, Best Taste, Best "Crunch", Best Recipe with ___(name the fruit)...make up more categories if needed so everyone wins!

Enjoy eating your creations! Create other contests for more healthy fun!



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Breakfast GO Power Weekend Breakfasts Offer Variety

Weekday breakfasts are usually quick and simple. When the weekend comes, give “the most important meal of the day” special attention! Gather the family and fix a favorite or new breakfast dish! It’s a great way to encourage breakfast eating and help your kids develop simple cooking skills.

- Choose what time and day works best for busy schedules! If morning just can’t work, try breakfast ideas at lunch!
- Get input and help to decide the breakfast meal, make the grocery list and shop ahead of time.

Weekend Breakfast Suggestions

- **French Toast** - sprinkle lightly with powdered sugar and top with sliced strawberries or canned peaches
- **Fruit Smoothie** - enjoy it while eating toasted raisin bread
- **Veggie Omelet** - serve with a small glass of 100% juice and whole grain bagel
- **Healthy Homemade Bran Muffins** - apple slices and low-fat yogurt round out the meal

Need an easy recipe? Try this Zucchini & Egg Casserole. Serves 6.

- Ingredients:**
- 5 eggs
 - 3 cups chopped peeled zucchini
 - ½ onion, finely chopped
 - 2 tsp. vegetable oil
 - ½ c. grated Parmesan cheese
 - ¾ c. shredded part skim mozzarella cheese
 - 1 tbsp. parsley
 - 1 tsp. basil
 - ½ tsp. salt



Directions:

In a pan, sauté zucchini and onions in oil until tender; set aside. In a large bowl, beat eggs. Add cheeses, parsley, basil, salt and zucchini mixture. Mix and pour into a greased 1 quart baking dish. Bake at 350 degrees F. for 20-25 minutes until knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Serve.





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Breakfast GO Power A New Look for Breakfast Could Mean a New Look for You!

The "Look for You"

If you need to take a NEW look at breakfast consider that studies report breakfast as a key factor in:

- Helping individuals achieve a healthy body size
- Increasing the ability to concentrate
- Helping kids achieve at a higher level with academics
- Making you feel better both physically and mentally



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Take a Look!

Check if these breakfast pitfalls apply to you.

- Is breakfast missing in your day?
- Do you need a little more "breakfast food" excitement?
- Are you too pushed for time to eat breakfast?

A New Look for the Menu

If you are tired of the same breakfast foods, mix it up a bit!

Consider the following ideas and add a few of your own!

- ♥ Egg Burrito (add potato, rice, or beans)
- ♥ Tortilla with Low Fat Cheese
- ♥ Leftover Pizza or Spaghetti
- ♥ Rice with Fruit or Vegetables
- ♥ Melted Low Fat Cheese, Sliced Tomato, and Ham on an English Muffin

Write your own ideas: _____

Ideas for the Times When there is No Time

- ♥ Peanut Butter and Tortilla Roll-up
- ♥ Low Fat Cheese and Crackers
- ♥ Cereal Bar
- ♥ Smoothie to Go (Blend: 1/2 cup juice, 1/4 cup yogurt, 1/4 cup fruit, 1 Tbsp. nonfat dry milk, 1 tsp. sugar)



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Smart Servings Fast Food Style

Americans like to eat out and fast food tops the list! Enjoy the meal but learn how to eat "smart" with serving sizes and food choices.

Check out these ideas to help make healthier fast food restaurant choices!

Food Choice	Healthier Food Choice
Double-patty hamburger with mayonnaise, cheese, and bacon	Single-patty hamburger without toppings
Fried, breaded, chicken sandwich	Grilled chicken sandwich
French fries	Baked potato or side salad
High fat meat sandwich - tuna salad, bacon, meatball	Lean meat sandwich - turkey, chicken, with added veggie toppings
Thick crust pizza with extra cheese and meat toppings	Thin crust pizza with single toppings and extra veggies
Crispy-shell beef taco	Grilled chicken soft taco
Sugary drink	Low-fat milk or water

Do you see patterns with these healthier choices? What about...

- Smaller portions (avoid the "super-sizes")
- Grilled or baked foods
- Fewer high fat toppings (bacon, whole milk cheese, mayonnaise)
- More veggies
- Sugary drinks replaced by healthier choices



What fast food habits from this list are you willing to change?

As a family, talk about eating at fast food restaurants with healthier menu choices. Many restaurants have nutrition information available.

Next meal out, challenge each other to make a healthier choice!



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Smart Servings

Smart Servings on MyPlate

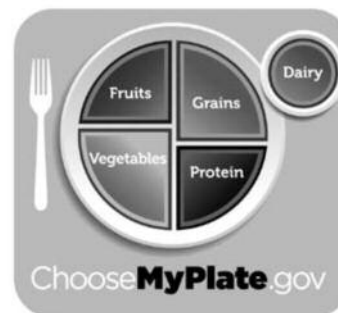


Let your eyes be your guide! The MyPlate food symbol, a place setting, encourages smart servings and healthy food choices.

MyPlate makes it easy to recognize a healthy serving size!

Imagine filling YOUR meal plate:

- ½ full of colorful broccoli, bright carrots and red cherries
- ¼ full of whole grain pasta or brown rice
- ¼ full of grilled chicken or fish
- Then adding a glass of low-fat milk or small cup of yogurt



It's as simple as that!

Check the LOOK of your plate.

At the next meal, challenge family members to use the **MyPlate** symbol to fill their plates. Check to see if any food section is missing or looks bigger or smaller than **MyPlate** suggests.

Be a family that does get enough fruits & veggies.

Fill half your plate! At least 5 fruit and veggie choices a day is a good rule. Check MyPlate.gov for exact amounts based on calorie needs according to age, gender and activity level.

Watch those fats and added sugars.

Fats and added sugars can add up fast in lunch meats, bacon, soda, bakery sweets and candies. Follow **MyPlate's** suggestion to "Enjoy your food, but eat less" and eat them less often.

Use these tips to choose smart servings!

- Use the **MyPlate** symbol to guide meal food choices and amounts.
- Enjoy your food, but eat less. Slow down when eating and listen to your body naturally tell you when it's full.
- Avoid oversized portions. When eating out, order regular-sized food choices.
- Read and follow food label serving size information for snacks and meals.



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Drink Think

Choices, Choices: What to Drink?

With so many beverage choices available, how do you decide what's best?
Become a "beverage detective" and use the Nutrition Facts label to find clues.



Check for:

- Serving size
- Calories
- Amount of sugar
- Caffeine

On a trip to the grocery store, gather the clues. Use the chart below to write information and make comparisons about family favorite drinks. On the chart, some popular beverages give you a start!

Drink Name	Serving Size	Calories	Sugar in grams	Caffeine in milligrams
Cola	12 oz.	150	41	38
Orange drink	12 oz.	124	33	0
Sports drink	8.0 oz.	50	14	0
Energy drink	8.4 oz.	110	27	80

Know the facts about popular sports and energy (caffeinated) drinks:

- Experts recommend limiting sports drinks for use by athletes only during prolonged, vigorous exercise. Water is the first choice for active kids!
- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends young children and teens avoid energy drinks entirely. Drink low-fat milk for an energy boost!

What did you learn about your current beverage choices?

How could you make healthier changes? Use the following ideas:

- Choose beverages lower in fat and sugar.
- Add low-fat milk and water to the "family favorites" grocery list.
- Substitute at least one sugary beverage a day with water.



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Drink Think Make Water Your "Go To" Beverage

**Water truly is nature's wonder drink! It tastes good and is vital for life!
We all need it, yet may not make it our first beverage choice.**

Choose and drink more water in the day by challenging family members and friends to join in these fun and simple ideas!

Temperature Counts. Icy cold water bumps up enjoyment! Keep a pitcher of water in the refrigerator at home. Ask for water with ice in restaurants. When on the go, fill a water bottle with ice before adding water.

Make it Fruity! Add a touch of flavor with a slice of lemon, lime or orange in a glass of water. Make fun ice cubes with slices of fruit to use in water glasses.

Start the Day Right. First thing in the morning, drink a cup of water.

Schedule it. Make it routine to drink water at breakfast, mid-morning, lunch, afternoon, and dinner; or on the hour. Find a schedule that works for you.

Drink in Style. Enjoy drinking water in a fun bottle you can use on the go or at home. Something fun might remind you to drink!

Drink more water! It's an easy healthy habit to start and will help you gain confidence to make other healthy changes.



4 Super Reasons to Drink Water

1. It quenches thirst.
2. The body must have it!
3. When a person is dehydrated, fatigue and headaches can be a problem.
4. It's free or low-cost.



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Active Play, Balance My Day

Take a Break to Energize

**A lot of sitting can make anyone feel tired. Move to feel, work and play better!
Make getting more minutes of physical activity a daily happening!**

Move from the chair or off the sofa!

- During "screen time" (computers, hand-held devices, video games) take a break to move after 15-20 minutes of sitting (check the clock).
- When watching TV, stretch or run in place during commercials.
- If talking on the phone, get up and walk.

Try these quick physical activity ideas for movement breaks!

Stretch It!

- Build those muscles by doing push-ups, sit-ups and pull-ups.
- Do gentle leg and arm stretches, then add jumping jacks to get your heart pumping!
- Test your balance. Stand on one foot with arms out from sides for 30 seconds. Can you do it? Switch to the other foot.

Move It!

- Dance to favorite music and move every muscle!
- Keep a jump rope handy to jump.
- Go up and down stairs in safe places or your house. How many can you climb?
- Walk in place or around the house. Mix up walking in place with side steps and back steps.

Think and do it!

- Other ideas _____

**Have fun with daily movement breaks. Challenge family members to a contest.
See who can get the most variety of movement breaks in any one day!**



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HEALTHY
TIPS



Active Play, Balance My Day

Learn New Moves for Healthy Balance

A body was meant to MOVE. Give it what it needs!

Kids (6-17 years old), getting 60 minutes or more of physical activity each day, helps them feel and look better.*

Adults, the goal is 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity every week and muscle-strengthening activities on 2 or more days a week.* It's easy to meet that goal with 30 minutes of brisk walking or bicycling 5 days a week. It is okay to break it up into 10-minute sessions through the day. Twice a week add muscle-strengthening activities like: resistance bands, calisthenics (like push-ups and sit-ups), heavy lifting or gardening (hoeing, digging).

Finding something new and interesting makes it easier to be active!

What is of interest? Try a new skill, sport, game or old favorites!

Talk with a friend about what they like to do. Learn what schools and parks have for facilities and equipment.

Ideas for "fun moves"

- Street Games - stoopball, streetball, stickball
- 2-Man Jump Rope - twist, turn, run through
- Ball Juggling or Hacky Sack
- Clap and Rhyme Hand Games - learn new variations
- 6 or 9 Square - with chalk, expand a 4-square area to 6 or 9 squares

Many libraries have videos to loan or YMCA's and recreation centers have beginner classes for activities like:

- Kickboxing
- Dance - folk, jazz, hip-hop and more!
- Martial Arts - Karate, Judo, Tae Kwon Do
- Tai Chi or Yoga
- Swimming - Learn how, or learn a new stroke



Look for available choices. Join an afterschool or weekend recreational team or club for volleyball, tennis, cycling, soccer, or walking. Many communities are starting community gardens. Working in the garden is a fun way to get more movement!

**2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

