Sample Nutrition Education and Physical Activity Promotion Activities

Elementary Level

Kindergarten

- Students draw pictures of favorite fruit or vegetable; dictate food’s name and reason for liking it.
- Read Bread and Jam for Frances. Have students discuss foods they like to eat in addition to bread and jam. Place pictures and names of these foods on a Food Guide Pyramid poster.
- Demonstrate the steps in proper handwashing, placing a label on a pocket chart for each step.
- Guide students in tasting a variety of fruits and vegetable pieces then in discussing the smells, tastes, textures, colors and tastes.
- Sort fruit and vegetable pictures by color, nutrient content or size.

Grades 1-3

- Before lunch, guide students in sorting foods on the school lunch menu for the day into the Food Guide Pyramid groups and after lunch tally the number of Food Guide Pyramid foods they actually ate.
- Read It Looks Like Spilt Milk, by Charles Shaw. Have students taste non-fat, low-fat and whole milk without identifying type.
- Students write sensory words after tasting a variety of vegetables and fruits. Write words on sentence strips and assemble into a class poem.

Grades 4-5

- Instruct students in taking resting pulse and pulse after running ¼ mile. Make a two-colored bar graph charting both pulse rates over one month and analyze data.
- Instruct students to identify total fat, saturated fat on Nutrition Facts labels. Looking at serving sizes, students use information from frozen ice cream and frozen yogurt labels to determine the frozen dessert with the lowest % of saturated fat.
- Have students use vegetable oil and ½ teaspoon cinnamon on their hands before washing them and observe the “germs” that are left after they have finished washing. Repeat with different lengths of handwashing time. Estimate percent of their hands that are bacteria free after each length of time handwashing. Graph results.
- Students research food-related advertising on television. Students create advertisements for their favorite vegetables.
- Discuss with students the concept of a “healthy body” and the many different body types that they see in the world. They can look through magazines at pictures of models and discuss the media’s representation of body image.

All Grades

- Students bring healthy snacks to class for a healthy snack party.
- Go on a field trip to a farm or farmer’s market.
- Organize a school health fair.
- Invite a chef from a local restaurant to do a cooking demonstration at your school.
- Write letters to Student Nutrition Services to suggest new menu items.
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**Middle School Level**

- Students plan a meal high in carbohydrates to eat before exercise or before a sports activity.
- Guide students to record their minutes of physical activity for a week and make a bar graph of individual results. Have each student set an individual goal of at least one hour of physical activity per day.
- Review foods high in vitamins A and C and iron. Have students collect recipes from cookbooks. Students tally the number of times vitamin A, vitamin C and iron-rich ingredients appear in 10 recipes and graph the results.
- Students compute their own BMI based on height and weight data and compare to growth curves for the appropriate gender and age.
- Ask a representative of the Certified Farmers’ Market Association to speak to the class about definitions and benefits of organically grown foods.

**High School Level**

- Divide class into cooperative groups for breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks. Assign each group to plan meals or snacks to comprise a one-week menu that includes key ingredients for teen health. Using the *Food Guide Pyramid* have students evaluate their composite menu against the weekly nutrition goals. Make adjustments in each group’s meals or snacks to fit the goals.
- Students research grains grown around the world, including how they are used in regional/cultural cooking and the economic importance of these grain crops in countries where they are grown.
- Students bring in snack food labels. In groups they compare the percentage calories from total fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol, then identify lower-fat choices.
- Guide students to work in groups and create games to teach the *Food Guide Pyramid* to young children.
- Have students examine foods currently available on campus with regard to sugar content. Have students brainstorm healthier alternatives that students would buy.
- Assign students to study the growing problem of eating disorders in the United States. Divide class into three groups to study eating disorders in adolescence, adulthood and old age. Students create a case study of a mythical subject giving his or her current weight, height and disease profile and a plan to improve his or her health status.
- Have each student interview two other high school students about their food intake for one day. Pool the data and develop an analysis of eating habits of the students in their school.