

BE ACTIVE KIDSSM

For Parents and Families *Volume 8, Summer 2007*



Welcome to *Be Active Kids*, an innovative, interactive nutrition, physical activity, and food safety curriculum for children ages four and five. Find out more information at www.beactivekids.org.



Have You Heard?



Feeling too hot to play? Try these cool activities to beat the heat!

- **Turn on a hose or sprinkler.** Put on your bathing suits and head out for water play. Play music and see who can come up with the best dance moves in the sprinkler. Run like Dart the dog, skip, twirl, hop like Leap the rabbit, or play follow the leader through the cool water.
- **Make your own freezer pops.** Mix 8 oz. of low-fat vanilla yogurt with one can of your family's favorite 100% juice concentrate. Spoon into popsicle molds and freeze. Small paper cups or ice cube trays will also work for popsicle molds if you insert popsicle sticks or plastic spoons and freeze.
- **Play pretend with bubbles.** Blow bubbles, and encourage your child to pretend to be a baseball player knocking the "balls" out of the park for a home run.
- **Have a taste testing party.** Summer is a great time to find inexpensive fruits and vegetables that are in-season. Visit the grocery store or farmer's market and pick up a few favorites, along with one or two new fruits or vegetables. Invite friends or family members to the table to taste test the foods.
- **Drink water!** Children and adults can get easily dehydrated in hot summer weather. To make drinking water more fun, give your child a small plastic water bottle and let him or her decorate it with markers or stickers. Talk about refilling the water bottle many times throughout the day. Make a rule that only water can be put into the water bottle to try to minimize sugar sweetened beverages.
- **Turn off the TV!** When the weather heats up, it's tempting to turn on the television. Preschool children should only get 1 to 2 hours of quality screen time per day. Screen time includes watching television and playing computers or video games. Try other indoor activities that can get your family moving like dancing, creating a scavenger hunt, or playing dress up and pretend.

Physical Activities for Be Active Kids

Below are a few of the activities for preschoolers from *Kids in Action: Fitness for Children Birth to Age Five*. Choose a few activities each day, and play for 10 or 15 minutes with your child! (www.fitness.gov/funfit/kidsinaction.html)

- **Heel Raises.** Stand facing your child, hold hands, and slowly lift and lower your heels. Encourage your child to do the same thing at the same time.
- **Beanbag Balance.** Place a beanbag or a small, soft toy on your child's head. Invite him or her to walk from one point in the room to another without dropping the beanbag. It's okay to hold onto it at first.
- **Jump the River.** Lay a jump rope in a straight line on the floor, or draw a line with a piece of chalk. Ask your child to pretend that the line is a river. Challenge your child to jump from one side of the river to the other.
- **Mirror Game.** Talk to your child about looking in the mirror. Stand facing your child, and explain that you want him/her to do exactly as you do—just like he/she was your reflection in the mirror. Begin making slow movements that you can do in place, like raising and lowering an arm, nodding your head, or clapping your hands. Take turns being leader.

Fun Food Safety



Did you know that you should wash your hands for **20 seconds** to remove all of the germs? Twenty seconds is a long time to a preschooler! To make hand washing more fun, encourage your child to sing a song to pass the time. Try singing different songs at different speeds to see which ones take 20 seconds.



Healthy Foods for Be Active Kids

Below are a few tips on MyPyramid about making healthy choices. More information can be found at www.mypyramid.gov!

- **Make half your grains whole.** Try oatmeal, brown rice, whole-wheat pasta, whole-wheat bread, or barley.
- **Vary your veggies.** Eat a variety of dark green, orange, and starchy vegetables every week. Try spinach, broccoli, carrots, or sweet potatoes.
- **Focus on fruits.** Buy fresh fruits in season when they are less expensive and have better flavor. Go easy on fruit juices since they have high amounts of sugar.
- **Get your calcium rich foods** by choosing low-fat or fat-free milk, yogurt, and other milk products. Healthy children age two and above can safely switch to low-fat milk and dairy products.
- **Go lean with protein.** Try fish, beans, peas, nuts, and seeds to vary your protein choice.
- **Find your balance between food and physical activity.** Choose activities that you enjoy and can do regularly.

