

BE ACTIVE KIDSSM



For Parents and Families *Volume 4, Summer 2006*

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?

Have you wondered what your child is eating during school or child care? How about how much physical activity they are getting each day? Starting a new school year is a great time to ask these questions! There are many things you can do to help your child be happy and healthy in preschool.

Activity Time Tally

- How much physical activity is your child getting each day in child care? The National Association for Sport and Physical Education recommends for preschoolers:

- **60 minutes** of structured play each day (led by an adult)
- **60 minutes** or more of unstructured play each day (free play)
- Not being inactive for more than 60 minutes at a time (unless sleeping)

(www.aahperd.org/NASPE)



Breakfast Bites

- Mornings before school and child care can be very challenging but don't forget breakfast! Breakfast gives your child the energy needed to start the day. Try out these fun breakfast ideas:

- **Banana Dog:** Peanut butter, banana, and raisins, in a long whole grain bun
- **Breakfast Taco:** Shredded cheese on a tortilla, fold in half and microwave; top with salsa
- **Yogurt Parfaits:** low-fat yogurt, fresh fruit, and cereal layered in a cup
- **Cracker Sandwiches:** whole wheat crackers with peanut butter and jelly or cheese in the middle

(www.kidshealth.org)



Screen Time Strategy

- Limit time spent watching television, playing on the computer, or playing video games. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends:

- No more than **1 to 2 hours** of quality TV and videos for older children and no screen time for children under the age of two. *(www.aap.org)*

Lunch Lessons and Snack Secrets

- What is your child eating for lunch and snacks during child care? Whether you pack a lunch or order lunch from the center, talk to your child about healthy lunch and snack choices. A variety of low-fat milk products, lots of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and lean meats and beans are all important. Try these tips to make lunch and snack fun for your child:

- **Cookie Cutter Sandwiches:** Use cookies cutters to turn ordinary sandwiches into fun shapes.
- **Add Stickers and Notes:** Instead of high sugar snacks for treats, add a sticker or a note for a surprise.
- **Try a Rainbow of Colors:** Red apples, orange carrots, yellow corn, green celery sticks, blue blueberries; every color provides something different to make strong bodies!

Physical Activities for Be Active Kids

- **Water Painting!** Go outside and give your child a small cup with water and a paintbrush. Encourage them to “paint” the house, steps, fence, flowers, grass, sidewalk and trees. Encourage them to practice different movements from one place to the next like skipping, hopping, and galloping.
- **Sink or Float?** Go on a scavenger hunt with your child to gather objects from around the house such as a paper clip, sponge, small toys, a cork, a small rock, etc. Take the objects outside to a bucket of water and experiment. Make it a game by jumping once if the item floats, and two times if the item sinks.
- **Bubble Blowing!** Running, skipping, hopping, and walking outside is more fun with bubbles. If you don't have bubble supplies on hand, use ½ cup hand dishwashing liquid and 5 cups of water. Adding a tiny bit of cooking oil will make the bubbles last longer. Use drinking straws as bubble wands. Dip one end in the bubble liquid, and blow on the other end.

(www.preschooleducation.com)



Fun Food Safety



When packing food for a lunch or a picnic, be sure to keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. Pack hot items like soup in a thermos to keep them warm. Use cold packs if you have items that need to stay cold like yogurt, milk, cheese, or deli meats.



Healthy Foods for Be Active Kids



- **Easy on the “Extras”!** Some foods do not fit into any food group. These “extras”, such as cookies, sodas, French fries, and candy, are typically made of fat and sugar. It is important to teach preschool children that there are no “bad” foods. Instead, give them the message that foods high in sugar, salt, and fat are “sometimes” foods and should not be a part of our everyday diet.
- **Taste-Testing Party!** Have your child and one or two friends wash various fruits and vegetables. Cut up the food into lengthwise strips and have various low-fat dips available. Try dipping fruits in yogurt or dip vegetables in low-fat dressing. Make silly faces on plates with raisin eyes and carrot hair. Even preschoolers will try something new if it's presented in a fun way with friends.
- **Food Talk.** Whenever you get the chance, talk to your preschooler about which foods are healthy choices. Information on MyPyramid for Kids can be found at www.mypyramid.gov.

