

# BE ACTIVE KIDS<sup>SM</sup>

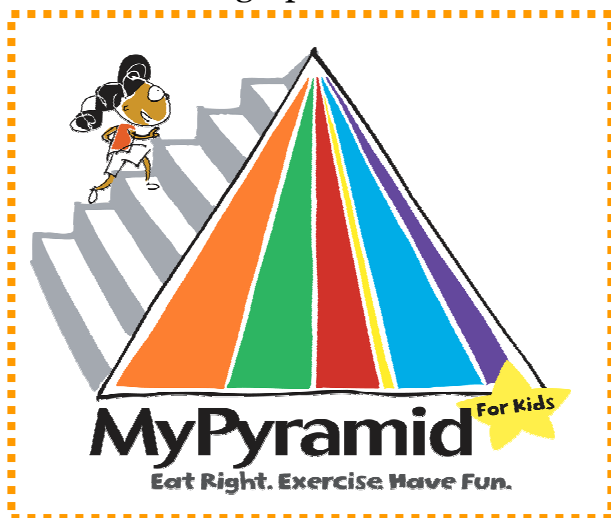
For Parents and Families *Volume 1, Fall 2005*



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](http://www.beactivekids.org).

## Have You Heard?

The United States Department of Agriculture released the **MyPyramid** food guidance system earlier this year. MyPyramid replaces the Food Guide Pyramid introduced in 1992. The new system provides options to help people make healthy food choices and to be active every day. You can access the information at [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov). Enter the age, gender, and level of physical activity for each member of your family to get personalized guides to making healthy choices. **MyPyramid for Kids**<sup>\*</sup> was also created specifically to target children. Although MyPyramid for Kids is specifically designed for children ages 6-11, the child-friendly graphics will appeal to preschoolers. Since four and five year olds will be exposed to MyPyramid for Kids when they reach elementary school, it is important for them to begin to recognize and learn about the new graphic.



Here are a few general tips to keep in mind from MyPyramid for Kids:  
([www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov))

- ② **Make half your grains whole.** Choose whole-grain foods, such as whole-wheat bread, oatmeal, brown rice, and low-fat popcorn, more often.
- ② **Vary your veggies.** Go dark green and orange with your vegetables—eat spinach, broccoli, carrots, and sweet potatoes.
- ② **Focus on fruits.** Eat them at meals, and at snack time too. Choose fresh, frozen, canned, or dried, and go easy on the fruit juice.
- ② **Get your calcium rich foods.** To build strong bones serve low-fat and fat-free milk and other milk products several times a day. Healthy children age two and above can safely switch to low-fat milk and dairy products.
- ② **Go lean with protein.** Eat lean or low-fat meat, chicken, turkey and fish. Also try to eat more dry beans and peas.
- ② **Change your oil.** We all need oil. Get yours from fish, nuts, and liquid oils such as corn, soybean, canola, and olive oil.
- ② **Don't sugarcoat it.** Choose foods and beverages that do not have sugar and caloric sweeteners as one of the first ingredients.
- ② **Find your balance between food and physical activity.** Choose activities that you enjoy and can do regularly.

## Physical Activities for Be Active Kids

- Ⓢ *How much is enough?* Be sure your children get at least 60 minutes of moderate physical activity every day. Adults need at least 30 minutes on most days of the week in addition to daily activities. ([www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov))
- Ⓢ *Take a nature walk!* Visit a local park or garden to enjoy the fall colors and fresh air.
- Ⓢ *Limit screen time!* Computers, television, and video games all lead to children being inactive. To encourage active behavior, set a limit on time spent in front of the television each day. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no more than one to two hours of quality TV and videos a day for older children and no screen time for children under the age of two. ([www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org))
- Ⓢ *Remember the basics!* Just as you would teach your child the alphabet, motor skills like jumping, hopping, skipping, galloping, catching, throwing or bouncing need to be encouraged, taught, and practiced.
- Ⓢ *Set a good example!* Children are looking to you as their role models. If you take small steps to be active everyday, they will be encouraged to join you in the fun.



## Fun Food Safety

Be a clean machine! Teach your family the importance of washing hands. Hands need to be washed for at least 20 seconds with soap and warm water to remove germs. Sing a song or practice the alphabet to make the time pass quickly. Make a hand washing calendar and place it by the sink. Put a sticker or a mark on the calendar for each time hands are washed for 20 seconds.



## Healthy Foods for Be Active Kids

- Ⓢ *Snacks are good to go!* Healthy snacks can be easy for busy families on the go. Try graham crackers, low-sugar cereals, popcorn cakes, apple rings with peanut butter, low-fat string cheese, hard-boiled eggs, cherry tomatoes, cut up raw veggies with low-fat dip, or tangerine sections.
- Ⓢ *Relaxing meal times!* Mealtimes are a great chance to have quality family time. Try turning off the TV or loud music and leave plenty of time to talk and eat.
- Ⓢ *Don't give up on new foods!* For kids, trying new foods can be a big challenge. Try presenting the food in a fun and different way, maybe by making shapes or faces.
- Ⓢ *Every color every day!* The colors on MyPyramid represent the five food groups plus oils. Remember to eat foods from all food groups every day. ([www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov))

