

BE ACTIVE KIDS®

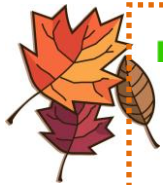
For Parents and Families *Volume 12, Fall*



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?

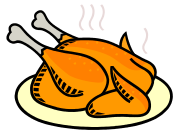
The holidays are in full swing, which means lots of family, fun...and FOOD! Even holiday treats can fit into a healthy eating plan and active lifestyle. The key is balance and moderation. The tips below are gifts you can give yourself and your family to maintain a healthy and active lifestyle.



- **Let the holiday spirit move you!** If you can make your family time active, you will become healthier and have fun doing so. Cut back on your family's television viewing time and start a new family tradition. Go for a brisk walk around the neighborhood to see the holiday decorations or play an annual "Holiday Bowl" football game in the backyard with the entire family!



- **Choose portions wisely!** It's easy to overindulge during the holidays. Select one or two of your favorites from the many tempting foods, and fill the remainder of your plate with healthy fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Remember – large portions can be overwhelming for small children. Serve your child about a third of the adult portion size and let your child ask for more if they are still hungry.



- **For a great holiday gift,** try going to your farmer's market or grocery store and selecting fresh fruits and vegetables. Let your child help you pick them out! Place all your tasty treats in a basket, and you have a present packed with tasty fruits and vegetables.



Did You Know? You can often make simple substitutions in your favorite holiday recipes that reduce the amount of fat and sugar without sacrificing flavor! Try the following:

- Substitute applesauce for half of the butter, shortening or oil called for in the recipe.
- Use evaporated skim milk rather than the full-fat version.
- Use cooking spray instead of butter, margarine, shortening or oil to prevent sticking.
- Try using the reduced-fat or fat-free versions of cream cheese, mayonnaise, and milk.



- Anyone in your family diabetic? Use a sugar substitute, like Splenda®, to make baked goods that everyone can enjoy.



Physical Activities for Be Active Kids

Children have already started to develop essential motor skills by the time they are 4 and 5. Practicing new skills will help your child build confidence and increase the likelihood that they will engage in group activities or sports as they grow older. Have fun trying some of these skill-building activities with your child!

- **Heel Raises:** Stand facing your child, holding hands, and slowly lift and lower your heels together. Be creative – pretend you are walking on hot coals or freezing ice and hop from one foot to the other quickly. Make believe you are crossing a river by jumping from stone to stone on two feet and you must bend very low to jump very high.
- **Beanbag Balance:** An all-time favorite! Place a beanbag or gift-wrap bow on your child's head. Invite your child to walk from one point in the room to another without dropping the beanbag. Try walking forward, backward, sideways, or zigzagging. Be creative - pretend you are at the circus and your child is walking a tight rope.
- **Simon Says!** Play this excellent body-parts identification game without any elimination! To include fitness factors, have "Simon" issue challenges to jog or tiptoe in place, bend and stretch, or bend and straighten knees.

(Source: www.fitness.gov)

Fun Food Safety



Be a clean machine! Teach your family the importance of washing hands. Hand sanitizers are meant to be used as an addition to hand washing, *not* as a substitute! 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



- **Don't Skip Snack Time!** It is hard for preschoolers to get enough in three meals to provide the nutrients and calories they need. Aim for at least two different food groups in each snack. Try apple or celery slices with peanut butter or graham crackers with low-fat milk. Snack time may also be a good time to introduce new foods with familiar foods.
- **Know What to Limit!** Try to avoid giving your child large amounts of sweet desserts, soft drinks, fruit-flavored drinks, sugarcoated cereals, chips, or candy. These foods have little to no nutritional value and will fill a child up quickly, leaving little room for more nutritious foods. Try labeling these foods "sometimes foods" and let your child eat small amounts of them occasionally.
- **Offer Foods with Kid Appeal.** Younger children usually like plain, unmixed foods, as well as finger-foods that make eating easier.
- **Keep the Focus on Mealtime!** Make every effort to make eating, and not watching television, the main focus of the family meal.

(Sources: www.preschooleducation.com & <http://life.familyeducation.com>)

