

BE ACTIVE KIDSSM

For Parents and Families *Volume 5, Fall 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?

Don't let cold weather slow down your activity! With all of the hustle and bustle of holiday celebrations, this is an important time of year to encourage your family to be active and make healthy eating choices.

Tips for Staying Healthy and Active During the Holiday Season

- **Make walking fun!** Instead of turning on the TV when it's cold outside, dress your family in warm clothes and go for a walk. It may feel cold at first, but you will warm-up quickly. Make your walk an exciting adventure for your preschooler. Name all of the colors of leaves you see. Count how many leaves have fallen on the ground, or how many are left in the trees. Play "I spy" for animals, colors, pinecones, or houses in your neighborhood.
- **Celebrate with activity!** Make physical activity a part of your celebration with family or friends. Throw a ball in the backyard. Go for walk around your neighborhood to see lights or decorations. Participate in a holiday walking, running, or biking event in your community. Hold contests with children to see who can run the fastest or do the most push-ups or sit-ups.
- **Eat before you go!** Feed your family a small, healthy snack before going to parties and celebrations. Skipping meals to "save room" for food at parties causes overeating. Eating a small healthy snack before you go will help decrease your appetite for unhealthy choices.
- **Choose wisely!** Holiday celebrations are full of treats. Encourage each family member to pick one special treat at the party. After the treat, encourage them to load up on fresh fruits and vegetables, whole-grain crackers and cheese, pretzels, or salsa with low-fat chips. Encourage your children that there are no "bad foods". Instead, teach them there are "some foods we eat less of and some foods we eat more of".
- **Active chores!** Manually rake the leaves or shovel the snow to get more activity. When it is time for your child to clean up toys, put on some music and encourage them to dance while they pick up. Dancing will not only give them more activity while cleaning, it will also make it more fun!



Physical Activities for Be Active Kids

■ **Ribbon fun!** Take scraps of ribbon from holiday decorating or birthday gift-wrapping supplies and make your child a fun, active toy. Make one for yourself as well so you can play together. Glue long and short pieces of ribbon on a stick, piece of wood, plastic straw, plastic shower ring or any other object they can hold easily in their hand. Follow the suggestions below for active ribbon games.

■ Make a **river** in front of you. (Drag the ribbon across the floor in front of you.)

■ Make **waves** in the ocean. (Put your ribbons on the floor and shake them to make waves.)

■ Make a **rainbow** go over your body. (Beginning in a squatting position with the ribbon at one side, stand up while bringing the ribbon up over your head. End in a squat with the ribbon on the opposite side.)

■ Make a **tornado**. (Spin around, moving the ribbon high and low.)

■ Pretend to be a **horse**. (Hold the ribbon to your back like a horse's tail and gallop around.)

■ Make a **bird** fly. (Run around holding your ribbon up so that it flutters.)

Source: www.pecentral.org, "Rhythmic Rhythms"



Healthy Foods for Be Active Kids

■ **Involve your child in meal preparation.** By allowing your preschooler to take part in fixing meals, you may help increase your child's interest in a new or unfamiliar food.

■ **Keep portions child size.** One way to consider portion sizes is to have one tablespoon of each type of food for each year of your child's age.

■ **The eating environment is important.** Select chairs, tables, dishes and silverware suitable in structure and size for your preschooler. Do not expect a young child to sit still at meals, although it is ok to ask them to slow down in activity. A child may be excused from the table if finished or disinterested in eating.

■ **Offer a variety of healthy foods and children will eat what they need.**

Remain calm if your child leaves a portion or an entire meal untouched. Preschool children typically know when they are hungry and when they are full.

Source: www.preschooleducation.com, "Family Meals with the Preschooler"

Fun Food Safety



The grocery store is a great learning opportunity for your child! Food Lion stores offer age appropriate store tours for classes of children where they can learn about food types, nutrition, food safety, fun grocery jobs, and recycling. Please contact your local store to learn more about this opportunity and to help your child's teacher schedule a class tour.

