



Happy Healthy Holidays School Nutrition Promotion Series



Timing: December

Corresponding Events: Holiday Season

Core Activity: Healthy Holiday Recipe Contest

Corresponding Healthy Eating Play: Recipe Contest or Meet Your Inner Chef

Corresponding Physical Activity Play: In-Class Physical Activity Breaks

Background Information

- Making healthy choices during the holiday season can sometimes be tough because of all the tempting offerings available. During this time, it's important to encourage students to fuel up on nutrient-rich options like low-fat and fat-free dairy (milk, cheese and/or yogurt), fruits, vegetables and whole grains and to get out and play for at least 60 minutes a day!
- ✗ The 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans provides several recommendations to support Americans of all ages in addressing obesity, improving nutrient intakes and establishing healthy eating habits overall. Children need to build healthier eating patterns by consuming more nutrient-dense foods such as low-fat or fat-free milk and milk products, fruits, vegetables and whole grains, while limiting intakes of sodium, solid fat, added sugars and refined grains.
- Children who participate in the planning and preparation of healthy meals are more likely to eat and enjoy them.



Basic Concept

1. Ask students to submit a nutrient-rich holiday recipe that contains low-fat or fat-free dairy (milk, cheese and/or yogurt), fruits, vegetables, and/or whole grains. Ask them to also submit their favorite cold weather physical activity.
2. Select several recipes to make, and have a panel choose the winning recipe.
3. Provide incentives for those who participate and a grand prize for first place. Feature the winning recipe on the school lunch menu and distribute the recipe on next month's lunch menu.





Expanding the Idea



For the holiday season consider celebrating with the following ideas:

Healthy Choices Catering Menu for the Holidays

- X Offer the opportunity to book a holiday classroom party through your child nutrition program. Target busy parents and teachers with your customized version of the catering menu provided in this holiday promotion. The catering menu choices are an opportunity to model healthy and tasty holiday celebration foods. Experienced teachers report that students reach for healthy choices first when they are offered.



Fuel Up to Play 60 Playbook:

- O **Meet Your Inner Chef**- Celebrate the holidays by inviting a local chef to prepare healthy holiday side dishes to taste test at lunch time or have the chef prepare healthy holiday snacks with students.
- X **In-Class Physical Activity Breaks**- Ask P.E. teachers for ideas for 3-5 minute physical activity breaks that can be done in a classroom with a minimum amount of equipment.

Some Classroom Break ideas:

- **Chair Aerobics**- Students sit up straight, keeping their ankles together to do leg lifts by extending their legs to a 180-degree angle for 20 repetitions. Then students stand behind the chair and while holding the back, extend their right leg out to the side to a 45-degree angle for 20 repetitions. Then repeat with the left leg.
- **Do 3 sets of 12 triceps dips using a chair or desk.**
- **15 squats holding a book**- Lift the object into the air while jumping up from the squat.
- **Take a Tour**- Lead students on an imaginary tour of a different country or state in a charades-like game. For example: take a tour of Boston, March at Lexington-Concord, climb Mount Washington, climb a Vermont Maple tree, swim in the Atlantic Ocean. Create other simulations that point out various landmarks within your state.
- **The Classroom Workout Circuit**- Have students do the following in place for 1 minute each (feel free to mix up the order): jog in place, high knees, jumping jacks, hop on one foot, hop on the other foot, hop on both feet.
- **Play Cards**- Using a standard card deck, assign an activity to each of the four suits (ex: jumping in place, running in place, sit-ups, squats). Pass out a card to each student and they will have to do the activity assigned to that suit for 20 seconds. Have students pass their cards to their neighbor and repeat for 5 passes. Add a twist: Have students perform the activity the number of times designated on the card.



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