10 Group Program

1. How many purple foods can you name?

2. How do you measure fitness?

3. Can you dance the night away?

4. What happens in a commercial kitchen?

5. What food goes where?

6. What’s highest? What’s lowest?

7. Does your portion align with the recommended amounts?

8. Is “super-size” a good deal?

9. How clean are your hands?

10. What's on MyPlate?

- Group Program

1. How many purple foods can you name?

Brainstorm foods in each of these colors: blue/purple, green, white, yellow/orange, and red. Ask youth to bring enough of one food per color in a ready-to-eat form to share with the whole group. Let each create a “rainbow” on a small plate. Eating a colorful variety of fruits and vegetables daily is a fun way to get a wide range of good nutrients.

2. How do you measure fitness?

Invite a physical therapist, personal trainer, athletic trainer, and PE teacher to discuss and demonstrate how they measure flexibility, muscle strength, endurance, and cardio fitness. Ask them to explain why each is important, and to offer age-appropriate tips on how to achieve those qualities.

3. Can you dance the night away?

A CD player, music, and an experienced dancer are all you need for this great fitness and social activity. Start with group dances, such as the Hokey Pokey, YMCA, Bunny Hop, Cha-cha slide, or Macarena. This is a no-watchers activity; everyone participates.

4. What happens in a commercial kitchen?

Arrange to tour or meet at a school, nursing home, hospital, or other site that has a commercial kitchen. Ask a staff member to explain how they develop their menus; how they secure, prepare, and serve the food; and what food safety precautions they follow. Discuss field trip manners and what food safety precautions they follow. Discuss field trip manners before going to the site.

5. What food goes where?

Designate teams of 6 to 8 members. Prepare bags of identical grocery items for each team. Each bag should contain fresh or packaged items representing the food groups. Some suggestions include:

- fruits
- dairy products
- vegetables
- meat/protein
- grain
- sweets/fats

Place filled bags at one end of the room. Place bags labeled for each food group at the opposite end. Each team member must pull an item from their bag, run to the opposite end and place it in the correct food group bag. (You may want a judge at each bag.) If they go to the wrong bag, they must return to the team to get help. (No shouting instructions across the room!) The first team to correctly empty their bag, wins. Briefly review serving sizes for foods in each group.

6. What’s highest? What’s lowest?

Ask youth to bring a food item to donate to the local food pantry, then sort the items by their labels. For example, find the vitamin C or calcium values and sort foods items from highest to lowest. Do the last sort by food groups and bag accordingly, then deliver items to food pantry.

7. Does your portion align with the recommended amounts?

Cut a large bag of rubber bands to resemble spaghetti and place in a bowl. Invite youth to use tongs to place the amount they would normally eat on a plate. Ask how they think their amount compares to the proportions depicted in MyPlate.gov. (Is it taking up slightly over ¼ of the plate?) Ask how much they think they need. (2,000 calories = 6 oz. grains? What does an ounce of spaghetti look like? (½ cup) Let them measure their portions (4 oz. cup measures well.) Eating more than the recommended amount at a time is okay when it fits within the total day’s amount. Want to know more about the recommendations about each food group contributing to your plate? See www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups.

8. Is “super-size” a good deal?

One recommendation for a healthy lifestyle is to only rarely (or never!) select super-sizes. Divide the group into 4 teams and give each one a different size of regular soda (12-ounce can, 20-ounce plastic bottle, 1-liter bottle, 64-ounce fountain drink). Ask each team to determine how much sugar is in their soda. (Hint: 4 grams of sugar = 1 teaspoon or sugar cube.)

9. How clean are your hands?

Call your local Iowa State University Extension office and reserve the Handwashing Kit. Follow the directions and ask youth to suggest other songs that are as long as “Happy Birthday” to use for their own handwashing count. Ask youth to bring a food item to donate to the local food pantry, then sort the items by their labels. For example, find the vitamin C or calcium values and sort foods items from highest to lowest. Do the last sort by food groups and bag accordingly, then deliver items to food pantry.

10. What’s on MyPlate?

Post a copy of MyPlate and briefly review each food group. Divide youth into teams that include a mix of ages. Give each team a sheet of legal-size paper, scissors, and magazines containing food photos so they can cut out the pictures and design their own plate. Check for accuracy before handing out glue sticks. Let each team display their plate and share highlights with the entire group.

More RESOURCES

You don’t have to look far for more great information about food and fitness activities.

Iowa State University Extension Web Sites

www.extension.iastate.edu/healthnutrition

https://store.extension.iastate.edu/healthnutrition

Look at these topic headings:

- Food, Nutrition, and Health
- Kids and Teens/4-H

Other Websites

www.livehealthyiowa.org

- Organize a team to set fitness goals
- www.kids.gov/ health and nutrition questions

www.actionforhealthykids.org

- Share ideas
- www.dltk-cards.com/bingo

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10 Ways to get your group moving

Youth can lead your community to adopt healthier lifestyles. Brainstorm ideas, then keep records of what the group does, tasks, costs, time requirements, participation, and results. Share action photos with local media.

1. Donate fruit or veggie snacks to a preschool or child care center
   Better yet, deliver the snacks and do an activity with the children. Take them for a neighborhood nature or art walk, play games or read a fun food book. When reviewing plans with the teacher/coordinator, ask about food allergies that any of the children might have. For book ideas, see Michigan Team Nutrition Booklet at http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/OMNI/Preschool_Booklet.pdf

2. Organize a workday
   Exercise while cleaning up a community site, such as a park, county fairgrounds, or local community center. Sweep, mop, pick up trash, cut weeds, wash windows, paint, whatever needs to be done. Provide water or juice-based beverages for the crew.

3. Hold a dance marathon
   Donate the proceeds to a worthy cause. Serve healthy snacks.

4. Get growing
   Plant and care for a community garden or flower bed. Set up a care schedule that includes watering and weeding for the entire summer.

5. Assist with a community health day
   Check with local public health or hospital officials to find out if there is a health fair and when. Brainstorm ideas you might want to do.

6. Fight hunger
   Volunteer at a local food pantry, homeless shelter, or meals on wheels site. Pack cold lunches, help in the serving line, or stock shelves when deliveries are made. Visit with shut-ins to find out what food items are in short supply.

7. Give healthy treats
   Make and deliver fruit baskets to shut-ins, child care providers, new residents, or anyone else in your community. Create your own “holiday” instead of waiting for the traditional gift-giving days.

8. Promote healthy snacks
   Work to get healthy choices on the menu at concession stands. String cheese, 100% fruit juice, pretzels, oranges, apples, and baked potatoes might be big hits.

9. Say thanks
   Let teachers know you care by preparing nutritious snacks for in-service or parent-teacher conference days. Talk to a school official in advance to organize this project.

10. Promote walking
    Check out www.walktoschool.org/. Consider mapping safe walking routes for specific distances throughout the community.

Gorp
   Set out 1 box of cereal (e.g. Cheerios, Chex) 1 bag small pretzels, 2 cups raisins, 2 cup peanuts, large bag of candy pieces (e.g. Skittles, M&Ms). Give each student a small zippered plastic bag to fill with 1 cup of the cereal and 1 tablespoon of each of the other ingredients. Serve 8.

Ice Cream in a Bag
   Mix 4 cups whole milk (at least 2% chocolate), 1/4 cup sugar (slightly less if using chocolate milk), and 1 teaspoon vanilla. Divide between 2 quart-size zippered plastic bags. Seal, then tape edges together with duct tape. Place 2 cups ice and a generous handful of the ice cream in 2 gallon-sized zippered plastic bags. Place filled quart-size bags inside gallon bags. Add 2 to 3 cups more ice and another handful of ice cream. Seal gallon bags, and wrap each in a towel. Have youth form a line. Start the bags at two different locations and ask participants to flip and shake bag for 1 minute, then pass it to the next person. Play music or sing a group song. Keep shaking and passing until the ice cream hardens. Remove inner bags. Clip off the bottom corner of each bag and squeeze servings into cups. Top with fresh fruit, if desired. Serve.

Quesadillas
   Sprinkle 1/4 cups shredded mozzarella cheese on half of a 8- or 9-inch flour tortilla. Wet the edge of the tortilla with water, fold the tortilla in half, and use a fork to seal the edges together. With a spatula, place quesadilla in a large non-stick skillet or griddle (if desired use non-stick spray) over medium-high heat. Turn when brown and cooked until the other side is browned. Cut in half and serve with salsa. Optional: Add cooked meat and chopped veggies with cheese in the tortilla before heating. Serve 2.

Fruit Kabobs
   Select a variety of fruits (bananas, apples, pineapple, strawberries, melon, grapes) Wash and cut into 1-inch chunks. Thread fruit onto wooden skewers. Prepare in advance, dip apples and bananas into orange or pineapple juice to keep them from turning brown.

Italian Dunkers

Fruit and Yogurt Parfait
   Place 1 tablespoon low-fat granola-type cereal (e.g. Malt-O-Meal) in the bottom of a cup. Add a large spoonful of yogurt. Add 1 cup of a cut-up fruit. Add another spoonful of yogurt. Sprinkle with 1 tablespoon of cereal. One 8-ounce container of yogurt will make 2 to 3 servings.

Blueberry Smoothie
   In blender, combine 2 cups blueberries (fresh or frozen), 1 cup chopped pineapple, 8 ounces low-fat vanilla yogurt, and 2 teaspoons sugar. Blend until smooth, about 1 minute. Serve immediately. Makes 6 sample-size servings.

Tortilla Wrap-Up
   Spread 1 tortilla with reduced fat French onion or ranch dip. Top with 1 cup chopped vegetables (tomato, pepper, cucumber, carrot, onion, and zucchini) and 2 tablespoons grated cheese. Roll-up, cut in 2. Makes 2 servings. (Make your own spread by blending 1 cup low-fat cottage cheese, 2 tablespoons sloppy milk, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, and dry ranch dip seasoning until smooth.)

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**FREE**

**Ways to work for the entire summer.

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**Discussion STARTERS**

Use the following questions for roll call, “get to know you” activities, or conversations in one-to-one or road trip settings, and to plan future activities.

**WHAT IS...**

... a sport or fitness activity you enjoy?... a sport or fitness activity you’d like to try?... a food you eat only on special occasions?... a food you’d like to learn to make?... a green food?... a drink, other than soda, that you like?... the first food you prepared yourself?... a career related to food or fitness?... a food you’d like to taste this year?... the best cook or chef you know?

Food and Nutrition Facts for the Gorp, Ice Cream in a Bag, Quesadillas, Gorp, Fruit Kabobs, Italian Dunkers, Fruit and Yogurt Parfait, Blueberry Smoothie, and Tortilla Wrap-Up...