

10 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 P.E. 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 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:

grains	a package of rice, loaf of whole wheat bread, box of cereal, oatmeal
dairy products	cheese sticks, empty yogurt containers, empty milk carton
fruits	apples, oranges, canned pineapple
vegetables	small package of carrots, cucumbers, canned green beans, can of vegetable or tomato juice
meat/protein	peanut butter, packaging for pre-sliced meats like ham or turkey, canned tuna, canned nuts
sweets/fats	candy bars, soda

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

IDEAS

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 food 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 by 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 cup measure works 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 personal guideline.

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/>

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/

- Check links to dozens of Web sites

www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org

- Find ideas and recipes for using fruits and vegetables

www.bam.gov

- “Body and mind” site for youth answers health and nutrition questions

www.actionforhealthykids.org

- Share ideas

www.dltk-cards.com/bingo

- Make custom bingo cards

www.4daythrowaway.org

- Get fun, educational food safety information

Prepared by Heidi Bell, field specialist; Kim Brantner, county extension education director; Clark Bredahl, communication specialist; Deb Hall, county extension education director; Jane Hayes-Johnk, Sharon Johnson, and Susan Klein, field specialists; Ruth Litchfield, extension nutritionist.

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10 Ways to get your group moving

School age youth should get at least **60 minutes** of physical activity each day. Encourage youth to plan **ACTIVE** activities not only for themselves, but also for family and friends, senior citizens, and others.

1. Go canoeing or paddle boating

Remember the life jackets!

2. Hold a swimming party

Don't forget to invite the lifeguards.

3. Organize a nature, art, or history hike

Ask a local park ranger, naturalist, art teacher, or community historian for ideas.

4. Go bowling

Use gutter guards for younger bowlers

5. Play in the snow

Try cross country skiing, snow shoeing, sledding, or making snow sculptures.

6. Rake and bag leaves for senior citizens

Visit with the congregate meal site director and offer your FREE services.

7. Show off your steps

Wear matching t-shirts and join a community parade. Toss out Frisbees instead of candy.

8. Head to a miniature golf course or set up croquet

Make this a big buddy/ little buddy activity.

9. Walk or run for a cause

Check out charity events like Relay for Life® or Race for the Cure®. Secure pledges and participate as a group.

10. Organize an outdoor scavenger hunt

Define the area within a reasonable walking distance and write creative clues. Talk to your county extension office about doing scavenger hunts using Global Position System (GPS) for middle school or high school students.

Lead the Way to a

Healthier Community

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/provider, ask about food allergies that any of the children might have. For book ideas, see *Michigan Team Nutrition Booklist* at http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/hsmrs/MI_Preschool_Booklist.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 managers 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.

great snack ideas

Gorp

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

Ice Cream in a Bag

Mix 4 cups whole milk (white or 2% chocolate), ½ 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 fine rock salt in 2 gallon-sized zippered plastic bags. Place filled quart-sized bags inside gallon bags. Add 2 to 3 cups more ice and another handful of fine rock salt. Seal gallon bags, and wrap each in a bath towel. Have youth form circle. 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. Serves 8.

Quesadillas

Sprinkle 1½ cups shredded mozzarella cheese on half of a 6- or 8-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 to the tortilla before heating. Serves 2.

Fruit Kabobs

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

Italian Dunkers

Prepare "brown and serve" breadsticks by package directions. Heat a 10-ounce jar of spaghetti sauce with 1 pound browned, drained, and rinsed ground beef. Spoon mixture into 8 individual serving bowls; dip breadsticks in sauce. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Serves 8.

Fruit and Yogurt Parfait

Place 1 tablespoon low-fat granola-type cereal (e.g. Nutty Nuggets or Grape Nuts) in the bottom of a cup. Add a large spoonful of yogurt. Add 1 cup of 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.

No endorsement of products mentioned is intended, nor is criticism implied of similar products not mentioned.

Frozen Grapes with Sunshine Dip

Freeze individual grapes on a baking sheet. Mix 2 tablespoons thawed frozen orange juice concentrate with one carton low-fat vanilla yogurt; spoon into 6 small containers. Using toothpicks, dip grapes into yogurt mixture. Makes 6 servings.

Baked Tortilla Chips

Using one package of flour tortillas, dip the tortillas one at a time in water. Let drain briefly, then lay flat. Lightly sprinkle with salt, if desired. Cut each tortilla into 8 wedges using a pizza cutter; place in a single layer, salt side up, on a non-stick baking sheet. Bake at 350°F for 3 minutes. Turn with a spatula and continue to bake until golden brown and crisp, about 2 more minutes. Cool and serve with salsa. Store in an airtight bag. Makes 16 servings of 5 chips each.

Blueberry Smoothie

In blender, combine 2 cups blueberries (fresh or frozen), 1 cup chilled pineapple juice, 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 skim milk, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, and dry ranch dip seasonings until smooth).

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?