

Dear Family,

“You are what you eat.” How many times have we heard that familiar phrase? We all know the importance of good nutrition. Your child’s growing brain and body need healthy food. The question is how we can use this knowledge every day to guide our choices (and our children’s choices) about what to eat. A good place to start is to follow the United States Departments of Agriculture and Health and Human Services 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. To help communicate key messages and actions from the dietary guidelines, USDA has released a new generation food icon, MyPlate. The guidelines provide an evidenced-based plan for healthy eating and physical activity.

In school, we have been learning about nutrition (and the dietary guidelines) through class discussion, learning activities, and materials as part of a program called **Healthy Steps for Healthy Lives™** brought to us by Nestlé and the National Education Association Health Information Network. With this program, your child is learning to **EAT Healthy. Ask your child to tell you about MyPlate.** MyPlate illustrates the five food groups using a familiar mealtime visual, a place setting. The new MyPlate icon emphasizes the fruit, vegetable, grains, protein and dairy food groups. **Complete the homework activity on pages 3-5 and return page 5 to school tomorrow.**

This is what you might hear your child say about MyPlate.

Build a healthy plate

Before you eat, think about what goes on your plate or in your cup or bowl.

- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
- Switch to skim or 1% milk.
- Make at least half your grains whole.
- Vary your protein food choices.

Cut Back On Foods High In Solid Fats, Added Sugars, And Salt

Many people eat foods with too much solid fats, added sugars, and salt (sodium). Foods like vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, and lean protein foods contain the nutrients you need without too many calories.

- Added sugars and fats load foods with extra calories you don’t need.
- Choose foods and drinks with little or no added sugars.
- Don’t make treat foods an everyday choice. Limit sweet treats to special occasions.
- Compare sodium in foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals and choose the foods with lower numbers.
- Too much sodium may increase your blood pressure.

Eat The Right Amount Of Food For You

A healthy meal starts with more vegetables and fruits and smaller portions of proteins and grains. Think about how you can adjust the portions on your plate to get more of what you need.

- Avoid oversized portions.
- Everyone has a personal calorie limit.
- The right amount of food for you depends on factors about you – such as your age and physical activity level.
- Use the USDA SuperTracker to get your personal daily intake amounts at www.ChooseMyPlate.gov.





Homework: **EAT Healthy Card Game, “Yummy!”**

- Step 1: Cut the food cards on page 3.
- Step 2: Read the Yummy! card game directions on page 4.
- Step 3: Play Yummy! with a family member.
- Step 4: Complete page 5.
- Step 5: Have a family member initial page 5 and return it to school tomorrow.
- Step 6: Keep the cards in a bag or envelope at home and play again.

Parent to Parent: **Easy tips and ideas from fellow parents**

Your child needs healthy snacks to get enough nutrition every day. Try to plan snacks based on the five food groups in order to use snacking as an opportunity to get the daily recommended servings of each group. Choose snacks that you can make together. This will give you a chance to talk about healthy choices. Save snacks with added sugars and fats for special occasions. Below are some snacking ideas based on the five food groups. Stock your fridge and pantry with these items and give your child the choice at snack time. Keep plastic bags handy to take these healthy combos with you when you are on the go.

Grain Gusto

- Rice cakes with peanut butter
- Whole grain oat toast sprinkled with cinnamon
- Graham crackers with cottage cheese
- Cereals low in sugar
- Toasted pita triangles with cheese

Veggie Vigor

- Baby carrots with yogurt dip
- Celery with peanut butter and raisins
- Bell pepper slices with hummus
- Cherry tomatoes with sliced cheese
- Veggie juice

Fruit Fuel

- Apple slices with cinnamon and yogurt/honey dip
- Bananas rolled in yogurt and granola
- Fruit salad
- 100% fruit juice frozen ice pops
- Fruit skewers with yogurt dip

Protein Power

- Bean dip with corn chips
- Whole grain crackers with peanut butter
- Cereal with milk and nuts
- Hummus with pita triangles
- String cheese

Dairy Delights

- Cold milk (low-fat)
- Hot chocolate (made with low-fat milk)
- Chocolate milk (low-fat) frozen ice pops
- Yogurt smoothies
- Whole grain English muffin with melted sliced cheese



Healthy Family Connections

Homework Packet 2

WE ARE LEARNING ABOUT EATING HEALTHY!

Cut.

<p>Apple sauce</p>  <p>Fruit Group</p>	<p>Oranges</p>  <p>Fruit Group</p>	<p>Grapes</p>  <p>Fruit Group</p>	<p>Bananas</p>  <p>Fruit Group</p>	<p>Strawberries</p>  <p>Fruit Group</p>
<p>Corn</p>  <p>Vegetable Group</p>	<p>Carrots</p>  <p>Vegetable Group</p>	<p>Spinach</p>  <p>Vegetable Group</p>	<p>Broccoli</p>  <p>Vegetable Group</p>	<p>Green beans</p>  <p>Vegetable Group</p>
<p>Breakfast cereal</p>  <p>Grains Group</p>	<p>Waffles</p>  <p>Grains Group</p>	<p>Bread</p>  <p>Grains Group</p>	<p>Popcorn</p>  <p>Grains Group</p>	<p>Oatmeal</p>  <p>Grains Group</p>
<p>Low-fat milk</p>  <p>Dairy Group</p>	<p>Low-fat chocolate milk</p>  <p>Dairy Group</p>	<p>Cheddar cheese</p>  <p>Dairy Group</p>	<p>Swiss cheese</p>  <p>Dairy Group</p>	<p>Low-fat yogurt</p>  <p>Dairy Group</p>
<p>Kidney beans</p>  <p>Protein Foods Group</p>	<p>Salmon</p>  <p>Protein Foods Group</p>	<p>Egg</p>  <p>Protein Foods Group</p>	<p>Nuts</p>  <p>Protein Foods Group</p>	<p>Turkey</p>  <p>Protein Foods Group</p>

Play!

Play Yummy!

The goal of the game is to be the first person to have a five-card hand with one food from each food group.

- Gather 2 – 4 players.
- Shuffle the food cards.
- Deal five food cards to each player.
- Place the remaining cards in a pile face down and spread around between the players.
- The person to the right of the dealer begins to play.
- When it is your turn, you can ask one other player for a food group that you need (Example: Say, “Do you have any foods from the Grains Group?”)
- If the person does have the card that you are asking for, they must give you their card and draw a new card from the pile to add to their hand (this does not count as their turn). You must discard one card that you do not need by placing it face down in the pile. You must have only five cards in your hand at a time.
- If the person does not have the card that you are asking for, then you must pick a card from the pile. Decide if you want to keep it or not. Discard a card that you do not need. You must have only five cards in your hand at a time.

Find out more:

- www.nestleusa.com/healthysteps
- www.neahin.org/healthysteps
- www.choosemyplate.gov
- www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org
- www.nationaldairyCouncil.org/childnutrition/Pages/ChildNutritionHome.aspx
- www.letsmove.gov
- www.healthiergeneration.org/parents
- www.projectwet.org
- www.kidshealth.org

- When a person discards, it is the next person’s turn. Play continues to the right. The first person to have a hand with a food card from each food group, a full plate, can lay the hand down and say, “Yummy!” That person is the winner! Feel free to play again (and enjoy some healthy snacks from the food groups while playing!)

Free online educational games and activities for your children to learn more:

- www.foodchamps.org/
- www.fns.usda.gov/multimedia/Games/Blastoff/BlastOff_Game.html



Healthy Family Connections

Homework Packet 2

WE ARE LEARNING ABOUT EATING HEALTHY!

Record:

Draw the five foods on the cards in the "winning hand".

--	--	--	--	--

Which food from the "winning hand" do you like the most?

What food group is it in? (circle)

Fruits Vegetables Grains Dairy Protein

It is important to eat foods from each food group every single day. Pick a food group that your family needs to eat more of each day. Set a goal for trying new foods and eating more foods from this group.

Record your goal:

Family Member Initials

*Please return this page to school.

