



FOOD & FUN AFTERSCHOOL, SECOND EDITION

UNIT 1

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

TAKE A BITE!

A NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CURRICULUM
DESIGNED TO HELP CHILDREN DEVELOP HEALTHY
HABITS DURING OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME

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ABOUT FOOD & FUN AFTERSCHOOL, SECOND EDITION

The Y is not only one of the nation's largest providers of childcare and afterschool programs—but we are also determined to be the healthiest. As part of our commitment to young people, the Y has adopted a set of Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) standards for early childhood and afterschool programs nationwide. The standards will build a healthier future for our nation's children by providing healthy environments rich in opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity and by supporting families to do the same at home.

The **Food & Fun Afterschool** curriculum is an ideal way to achieve the HEPA standards through activities and lessons designed to be easy to incorporate into your regular afterschool program schedules. Food & Fun includes 11 teaching units that encourage healthy behaviors through active play, literacy, math skills development, creative learning, and hands-on snack time activities. With more than 70 activities to choose from, the lessons make it simple to promote healthy eating and physical activity in your program every day! Food & Fun also gives you tools for engaging families in their children's health.

THE Y'S HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STANDARDS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD AND AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

- Implement an educational program for parents and child care providers with physical activity and nutritional information relevant to the health of their children.
- Ensure that children engage in at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day (for full-day programs), including a mixture of moderate and vigorous physical activities that promote bone and muscle strengthening.
- Play will take place daily outdoors whenever possible.
- No access to television or movies.
- Limit digital device time to less than one hour per day. Digital device use is limited to homework or programs that actively engage children in activity.
- Serve fruits or vegetables at every meal.
- Serve all meals family style.
- No fried foods.
- Offer water at the table during every meal and have water accessible at all times.
- Serve beverages that do not have added sugars.
- Serve healthier beverages, including water, lowfat (1%) or nonfat milk, or 100% fruit juice (no more than one 6- to 8-oz. serving per day).

The HEPA standards are based in part on years of research supported by collaborations with the Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH), University of Massachusetts at Boston, the Healthy Out of School Time Coalition (HOST) and the National Institute for Out of School Time (NIOST). Through these collaborations, as well as the experience of Ys across the nation, the Y has learned the most effective ways to create healthy environments in out-of-school time settings.

Additionally, the Institute of Medicine's Early Childhood Obesity Prevention policies, the National Afterschool Association's "Standards for Healthy Eating and Physical Activity in Out of School Time Programs" and the Let's Move Child Care Standards played a significant role in the HEPA standards.

Teaching about healthy behavior is most effective when your program environment is consistent with the HEPA standards, which are supported through the Food & Fun curriculum. The Food & Fun materials were created by the Harvard School of Public Health Prevention Research Center on Nutrition and Physical Activity in collaboration with YMCA of the USA. In addition to afterschool programs, these materials are appropriate for use in a wide variety of out-of-school time programs, like summer camps, sports programs, extended day programs, and before school programs.

For more information on the HEPA standards, visit [Exchange](#). All Food & Fun materials, including parent engagement tools, tip sheets on implementing the HEPA standards, snack recipes, and can be downloaded on [Exchange](#). For more resources from the Harvard School of Public Health, visit www.foodandfun.org or www.hsph.harvard.edu/research/prc/projects/food-fun/.

UNIT 1

INFORMATION FOR LEADERS

BEHAVIOR GOAL

Children will eat more fruits and vegetables (five a day!)

KEY MESSAGES FOR KIDS

- Go for five! Eat five or more fruits and vegetables (combined) each day.
- Try to eat a fruit or vegetable with every meal and snack.
- Just take a bite! Don't be afraid to try a new fruit or vegetable—chances are you'll like it.

KEY INFORMATION FOR PROGRAM STAFF

Fruits and vegetables are important foods to include in a healthy diet, but many children (and adults!) eat much less than the recommended five or more servings each day. Fruits and vegetables are packed with lots of vitamins and nutrients. They're also a great source of fiber, which helps you feel full.

The trick is that each type of fruit or vegetable has unique benefits, so it is important to eat different types. Encourage children to eat a variety of different fruits and vegetables so they get all the vitamins and nutrients they need to be healthy. Tell children it is fun to try new fruits and vegetables, and they taste great! They say that "an apple a day keeps the doctor away," but don't forget your oranges and broccoli! Striving for variety also means you should also try to incorporate fruits and vegetables that are relevant to the lives of the children you serve. Take time to talk to kids about the kinds of fruits and vegetables they eat at home and make sure to incorporate them into your snacks and activities in this unit.

WHAT'S A SERVING?

¼ cup of dried fruit, such as raisins

½ cup of raw or cooked vegetables, such as baby carrots or cooked green beans

½ cup of canned or cut-up fruit, such as applesauce or canned pineapple

1 medium piece of fresh fruit, such as an apple the size of a tennis ball or 1 medium banana

1 cup of leafy greens, such as spinach (dark greens pack more nutrients than pale iceberg lettuce)

Tip: September is National 5-a-Day month, so check out the resource section and connect to organizations that may offer free materials or ideas. School food service directors may also have promotional material, or they may be interested in working with school-based programs on taste-tests or other activities.

Refer to the “Fruits & Veggies” tip sheet, available on [Exchange](#), for ideas on how to serve fruits and vegetables for snack at your afterschool program. Also see www.foodandfun.org for additional resources.

ACTIVITY OPTIONS FOR CHILDREN



ARTS & CRAFTS

1. Fruit and vegetable placemat: Kids make this placemat and use it to track which fruits and vegetables they've tried



ACTIVE GAMES

2. Warm Up, Cool Down: Do this whenever the children are active
3. Fruit and Vegetable Relays: Use the various modifications to teach children about fruits and vegetables



OTHER GROUP GAMES OR ACTIVITIES (CAN BE USED IN CIRCLE TIME OR SMALL GROUPS)

1. I'm Going on a Picnic: Pack an alphabet of fruits and vegetables
2. Find the Favorite: Interview friends to determine group favorite, with modifications for older and younger children
3. Bingo: Make your own board using template provided



SUGGESTED BOOKS

Eating the Alphabet by Lois Ehlert takes children through the ABC's of fruits and vegetables

I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato by Lauren Child follows Charlie's creative nature as she convinces her picky sister Lola to try vegetables in disguise.



SNACK TIME IDEAS

1. Bugs on a Log
2. Fruit Kabobs With Spiced Yogurt Topping
3. Oven-baked Carrot Strips
4. Taste test ideas—take a bite of a new fruit or vegetable

These recipes are also in the "Recipe and Taste Test Packet" on [Exchange](#).

CONNECT WITH PARENTS

KEY MESSAGES FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

- Go for five! Eat five or more fruits and vegetables (combined) each day.
- Serve a fruit or vegetable with every meal and snack, even if your child doesn't always eat them.
- Involve your child in healthy eating. Ask your child to help choose which fruits and vegetables you buy for the family and pick which you serve with meals.
- Encourage your child to at least "take a bite" of every fruit and vegetable you serve.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT OPTIONS

It is important to engage parents and caregivers on a regular basis in a variety of ways. Here are some ways that you can engage parents at afterschool:

- Have a conversation with parents at pickup
- Create a bulletin board with the key messages from each Food & Fun unit
- Involve parents and caregivers in daily physical activities and snack time
- Hold regularly scheduled events each month
- **Plan a potluck!** Invite parents to participate in a fruit and veggie potluck. Ask parents and caregivers to bring their favorite fruit or veggie dish to share with other families. Ask them to bring copies of the recipe so others can make the dish at home.
- **Offer fruits and veggies at pickup.** Put a bowl of fruits or veggies by the sign-out book for parents to grab when they pick up their kids from afterschool.

Refer to the parent handouts and parent communications, available in English and Spanish on [Exchange](#), to reinforce the messages in this unit of Food & Fun:

- **Parent handout:** "Fruits and Vegetables: Eat 5 or More Servings for Health." Send this handout home in a mailing, insert it into your next newsletter, or have copies available for pickup at your program's sign-out area.
- **Parent communications:**
 - Newsletter article: "Fruits and vegetables for better health." Insert this into your program newsletter.
 - Email message: "Healthy Habits Power Tips: Get your 5 servings of fruits and veggies!" Email this message to parents and caregivers at the start of this unit.

RESOURCES



WEBSITES

Harvard School of Public Health publishes an online nutrition news and resource center.

www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/

The Harvard School of Public Health Prevention Research Center on Nutrition and Physical Activity works with community partners to design, implement, and evaluate programs that improve nutrition and physical activity, and reduce overweight and chronic disease risk among children and youth. The Harvard School of Public Health Prevention Research Center offers additional materials and resources on nutrition and physical activity on its website.

www.hsph.harvard.edu/prc/

Let's Move is First Lady Michelle Obama's initiative to provide parents and caregivers with the support they need to make healthy family choices, provide healthier school foods, help kids to be more physically active, and make healthy, affordable food available in every part of the U.S.

www.letsmove.gov/index.html

Alliance for a Healthier Generation is a joint venture between the American Heart Association and the Clinton Foundation with a mission to reduce the nationwide prevalence of childhood obesity by 2015 and to empower kids nationwide to make healthy lifestyle choices.

www.healthiergeneration.org

Action for Healthy Kids is a nonprofit and volunteer network fighting childhood obesity and undernourishment by working with schools to help kids learn to eat right, be active every day and be ready to learn. Their website includes tools and fact sheets about childhood obesity, nutrition, and physical activity.

www.actionforhealthykids.org/

The Produce for Better Health Foundation provides tips for eating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables, nutritional information, as well as ideas about planning, shopping, and cooking meals and snacks packed with fruits and vegetables.

www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has a website dedicated to information about fruits and vegetables. It includes recipes, budgeting tips, and

guides to healthy meals.

www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has an interactive website that provides information about the MyPlate food guidance system (formerly the Food Guide Pyramid) with specific information on each food group, which can be tailored for individual needs.

www.choosemyplate.gov/

The Nemours Foundation's Center for Children's Health Media created KidsHealth to provide families with doctor-approved information that they can understand and use. Includes sites for parents, children, and teenagers and provides a variety of health information, including nutrition and fitness topics. Also available in Spanish.

<http://kidshealth.org>

The National Heart Lung and Blood Institute (National Institutes of Health) offers a national childhood obesity prevention program, Ways to Enhance Children's Activity & Nutrition (We Can!), which provides families and communities with helpful resources.

www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/

WEBSITES FOR KIDS

The BAM! (Body and Mind) program, of the CDC, provides tweens with tips on nutrition and physical activity. Children can explore the over 30 physical activities, including the necessary gear and how to play. They can also find great ideas for healthy snacks and meals.

www.bam.gov

KidsHealth also has websites especially for kids, in English and Spanish.

<http://kidshealth.org>

The Produce for Better Health Foundation has a fun interactive website designed just for kids. It includes recipes, games, activities and more.

www.foodchamps.org/

SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOLS

The Produce for Better Health Foundation provides educators with several options that can be used to help children monitor their fruit and vegetable intake.

http://pbhfoundation.org/pub_sec/edu