



FOOD & FUN AFTERSCHOOL, SECOND EDITION

UNIT 5

WHOLE GRAINS

**GO FOR
WHOLE GRAINS!**

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 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 5

INFORMATION FOR LEADERS

BEHAVIOR GOAL

Children will eat more whole-grain foods.

KEY MESSAGES FOR KIDS

- Whole grains are important because they help you feel full longer and make your body healthy.
- Eat whole grains (like whole-wheat bread, whole-wheat pasta, whole-wheat crackers, and brown rice) instead of refined grains (like white bread, muffins, pasta, and white rice) whenever possible.
- Breakfast is a great time to try whole grains. Try whole-grain cereals, waffles, bread, or bagels.

KEY INFORMATION FOR PROGRAM STAFF

Many children do not eat enough whole grains. Whole grains contain fiber, vitamin E, and healthy fats. Whole grains help keep your blood sugar under control, arteries clear, and make you feel full longer. Refined “white” flour and sugar do not have the nutrients or health benefits of whole grains. When serving grains for snack (like bread, crackers, and cereal), serve whole grains. Read nutrition labels and choose 100% whole-grain breads and cereals that have at least 3 grams of fiber per serving. Choose breads and cereals that list a whole grain first, like whole wheat, barley, oats, or rye. As you explore all the different types of whole grains, try to incorporate foods that are relevant to the lives of the children you serve. Take time to talk to kids about the grains they eat at home, identify which of these grains are whole grains, and make sure to incorporate them into your snacks and activities in this unit.

Children have several opportunities during the day to consume whole grains. The two easiest meals to do so are breakfast and lunch since there are many cereals and breads made with whole grains. Out-of-school programs can help introduce such whole-grain foods like whole-wheat crackers (with no trans fats), breakfast cereals (with less than 5 grams of sugar per serving), mini whole-wheat bagels, and whole-wheat pita bread. There are many whole-grain options available for the same price as refined options.

Look for products with at least 3 grams of fiber and no more than 5 grams of sugar per serving.

Refer to the “Whole Grains” tip sheet, available on [Exchange](#), for ideas on how to serve whole grains in your afterschool program. Also see www.foodandfun.org for additional resources.

ACTIVITY OPTIONS FOR CHILDREN



ARTS & CRAFTS

1. Mosaic Creations: Design pictures using grains



ACTIVE GAMES

1. Warm Up, Cool Down: Do this whenever the children are active
2. Red Hen Relay: Children race carrying bags of flour



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

1. La Milpa: Learn to make corn tortillas
2. Make flour from wheat berries



SUGGESTED BOOKS

1. *Everybody Cooks Rice* by Norah Dooley tells a multi-cultural tale of how different families cook rice; recipes included.
2. *Bread Is for Eating* by David and Phillis Gershator explains how bread is created while Mamita sings, "El Pan es Para Comer" ("Bread is for Eating"). Music and lyrics in both Spanish and English are included.
3. *The Little Red Hen*, a Golden Book Classic, illustrated by J.P. Miller tells the tale of the little red hen who plants, reaps, carries the wheat to the mill, and finally bakes bread while her barn friends sleep.



SNACK TIME IDEAS

1. Silly Popcorn
2. Corn on the Cob
3. Whole-Wheat Banana Pancakes

4. Whole-Wheat Mini Pizzas
5. Awesome Granola
6. Taste test themes include: Oatmeal (January is National Oatmeal Month) and popcorn with different toppings

You can also find these recipes in the "Recipe and Taste Test Packet," available on [Exchange](#).

CONNECT WITH PARENTS

KEY MESSAGES FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

- Whole-grain breads and cereals help you feel full longer, and are packed with fiber and other nutrients.
- Refined grains (white bread, muffins, pasta, and white rice) aren't as nutritious as whole grains (whole-wheat bread, whole-wheat pasta, and brown rice).
- Serve whole-grain breads and cereals that have at least 3 grams of fiber per serving and no more than 5 grams of sugar per serving whenever possible.

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 in daily physical activities and snack time.
- Hold regularly scheduled events each month.
- **Healthy cereal taste test.** Invite parents to participate in a healthy cereal taste test. Look for whole-grain cereals with 5 grams or less of sugar and more than 3 grams of fiber. Show parents and kids that cereals can be healthy AND taste good!
- **Hold a whole-wheat pancake breakfast!** If you serve kids before school, invite parents to a whole-wheat banana pancake breakfast. Alternatively, have an upside down day with breakfast for dinner! Try out the recipe in the Food & Fun Recipe Packet. Make extra copies of the recipes to give out to parents so they can make them at home!
- **Whole-grain options are available for the same price as refined grains!** Display a few examples of whole-grain foods that can be purchased for the same price as refined grain options. Include the price tag in the display! For example, whole-wheat crackers, whole-wheat bread or pita, and/or whole-wheat tortillas. Shop around and see what other whole-grain options you can find at a low price!

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:** "More Whole Grains, Less Added Sugar for Good Health." Send this handout home in a mailing, insert it into your next newsletter, or have copies available for pick up at your program's sign-out area.

- **Parent communications:**

- Newsletter article: "Get the Whole Story on Whole Grains." Insert this into your program newsletter.
- Email message: "Healthy Habits Power Tips: Go for Whole Grains." Email this message to parents 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:

www.hsph.harvard.edu/prc/

Let's Move is First Lady Michelle Obama's initiative to provide parents 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 Whole Grain Council is an educational program helping consumers achieve better health by increasing their consumption of quick, easy, and delicious whole grains. Their website includes information on the health benefits of whole grains. Although their Whole Grain Stamp helps consumers spot foods containing at least 8 grams of whole grains, these products may still contain a lot of sugar!

<http://wholegrainscouncil.org/>

Some of their materials are also available in Spanish:

<http://wholegrainscouncil.org/resources/recursos-en-espa-ol>

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>

Neat Solutions offers a comprehensive listing of nutrition education resources and books. The "Red Hen Relay" was adapted from a lesson on this web site.
www.NeatSolutions.com

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

WEBSITES FOR KIDS

The BAM! (Body and Mind) program 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 a website especially for kids, in English and Spanish.
<http://kidshealth.org>

The Division of Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine at Children's Hospital Boston produce the Young Men's Health and Young Women's Health websites to provide carefully researched health information to teens. They even have a special grains guide for teens section.
www.youngwomenshealth.org/grains.html
www.youngmenshealthsite.org/grains.html

ChooseMyPlate.gov has a page of activities and materials for kids ages 6 to 11. It includes a Blast Off Game as well as kids' posters and coloring pages.
www.choosemyplate.gov/children-over-five.html