



FOOD & FUN AFTERSCHOOL, SECOND EDITION

UNIT 6

# HEALTHY SNACKING

# SUPER SNACKS!

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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](http://www.foodandfun.org) or [www.hsph.harvard.edu/research/prc/projects/food-fun/](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/research/prc/projects/food-fun/).

## UNIT 6

# INFORMATION FOR LEADERS

### BEHAVIOR GOAL

Children will choose healthy snack foods.

### KEY MESSAGES FOR KIDS

- Our bodies need healthy snacks to stay energized between meals.
- Choose healthy snack foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lowfat dairy foods, and lean meats or proteins.
- Snacks are “slow” snacks if they have a lot of sugar, unhealthy fat, and salt, such as candy, cookies, and chips.

### KEY INFORMATION FOR PROGRAM STAFF

Many children enjoy treats at snack time, but they need the nutrition and energy that comes from a healthy snack. Snacks often provide children with up to 25% of their daily calorie needs, so serving healthy and tasty foods and drinks is important! Help children understand that snacks create a bridge between meals—it gives them the energy they need to concentrate on schoolwork and to play.

Snacks should be made from the foods children would enjoy at a meal, and snacks should not always be seen as a treat. Avoid serving snacks that are high in sugar or contain trans fats. When children eat sugary snacks, they may get short term relief from hunger and a quick energy boost, but those good feelings don’t last. Similarly, it is unhealthy to choose foods like cookies or brownies because these often contain harmful trans fats. Trans fats are oils that have been chemically treated to make them harder and more shelf stable so they last longer. Trans fats are harmful to health, so it’s important to read food labels to choose products that list 0 grams trans fat and do not list “partially hydrogenated oil” in the ingredients. Also, look at the nutrition label on canned, boxed, and frozen foods to ensure that sodium (salt) levels are low. Try to serve items with less than 300 mg/serving. Look for hidden salt in prepared snacks such as macaroni and cheese, chili, soup, or canned pasta, and compare different brands and types of bread and deli meat.

Since children often have little control over the types of foods served to them, it is important to praise children when they do make healthy choices. The best way to influence

children is to provide them with healthy, tasty snack choices. Show them that eating fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lowfat dairy foods at snack time is fun by getting creative with recipes and enlisting kids to help with selecting and preparing snacks. Serve a variety of healthy snacks from different food groups during program time. Striving for variety also means you should also try to incorporate foods that are relevant to the lives of the children in your program. Take time to talk to kids about the healthy foods they eat at home and make sure to incorporate them into your snacks and activities in this unit. Involve children in preparing and serving snacks. As always, help children see how tasty and fun healthy snacks are by eating healthy snacks yourself. You all will benefit!

To do the activities in this unit, it is important that children understand the difference between GO foods and SLOW foods. Explain to children at the beginning of this unit and at the start of each activity that GO foods are whole grains, fruits, vegetables, lowfat milk or dairy foods, lean meats, and nuts or seeds. SLOW foods contain few vitamins, minerals, and fiber but do contain a lot of sugar, salt, and/or unhealthy saturated or trans fats.

For some super, inexpensive snack ideas to serve at your afterschool program check out *Snack Sense*, the Food & Fun menu planning tool, available on [Exchange](#). Also see [www.foodandfun.org](http://www.foodandfun.org) for additional resources.

# ACTIVITY OPTIONS FOR CHILDREN



## ARTS & CRAFTS

1. Super Snack Book: Create covers for a book of snacks to send home
2. Silly Snacks: Color, make, and taste test



## ACTIVE GAMES

1. Warm Up, Cool Down: Do this whenever the children are active
2. Too Much “Slow” Food Tag: An adaptation on freeze tag that gets children moving and thinking about the foods they put in their bodies
3. Healthy House: An adaptation on “Messy Backyard” that aims to fill the yard with “healthy food”



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

1. Commercial Mania: Older children analyze the commercials they see during a typical show



## SUGGESTED BOOKS

1. *The Berenstain Bears and Too Much Junk Food* by Stan and Jan Berenstain. Mama bear banishes the “junk” and gives the bears super snacks and meals. These healthy habits give the bears more energy to play without getting tired.



## SNACK TIME IDEAS

1. Butterfly Bite
2. Fruity Peanut Butter Pitas
3. Burrito Bites
4. Taste test ideas: Silly snacks, fruits and vegetables, lowfat dairy (cheese, yogurt, milk smoothies), and whole grain crackers

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

- Children need healthy snacks between meals to give them energy and nutrients.
- A healthy snack includes healthy foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lowfat milk/dairy, and protein (eggs, lean meats, nuts, beans).
- Limit snacks that have trans fats, a lot of sugar, and salt like soda, candy, cookies, and chips.
- Be a healthy role model for your child by eating healthy snacks.

## 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 and caregivers 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.
- **Make a recipe book for snacks.** Ask kids to bring in a healthy super snack recipe. Encourage them to ask their parents for ideas of healthy snacks they ate when growing up. Put all of the snack recipes into a book for families. You can even make some of the recipes for an afterschool snack at your program!
- **Make extra snacks for parents and caregivers.** Make extra snacks for parents and caregivers to try when they pick up children at afterschool.

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

- **Parent handout:** “Snacks: A Bridge Between Meals.” 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: “Snacking the Healthy Way!” Insert this into your program newsletter.
  - Email message: “Healthy Habits Power Tips—Super Snacks.” 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/](http://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/](http://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](http://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](http://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/](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/)

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>

Meals Matter is a website that provides many healthy snack ideas.

[www.mealsmatter.org/](http://www.mealsmatter.org/)

Nutrition Explorations, sponsored by the National Dairy Council, offers activity and snack ideas for educators and parents.

[www.nutritionexplorations.org/](http://www.nutritionexplorations.org/)

The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) had published several reports and tips for parents regarding the negative effects that food marketing can have on children.

<http://cspinet.org/new/200311101.html>

They also offer tips and policy resources for reducing soda and junk food in schools.

[www.cspinet.org/nutritionpolicy/index.html](http://www.cspinet.org/nutritionpolicy/index.html)

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/](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/)

Planning healthy celebrations can be challenging. Foodplay offers some great suggestions for tasty and nutritious celebrations throughout the year.

[www.foodplay.com/downloads/FreeMaterials/Teachers/celebration\\_guide.pdf](http://www.foodplay.com/downloads/FreeMaterials/Teachers/celebration_guide.pdf)

## 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](http://www.bam.gov)

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

<http://kidshealth.org>

The Center for Science in the Public Interest produces "Smart Mouth," an informative site created for older children and teens to find out neat facts about food and the food industry, including a meter scale that allows children or adults to see how many calories and fat they have in various meal combinations.

[www.cspinet.org/smartmouth/index1.html](http://www.cspinet.org/smartmouth/index1.html)

The International Food Information Council (IFIC) Foundation developed the kidnetic web site to engage children and encourage healthy habits. This site has a section full of fun recipes to try at meal times or for a midday snack.

[www.kidnetic.com/recipes/](http://www.kidnetic.com/recipes/)