

# LET'S EAT WELL EVERY DAY!



A-B-C-1-2-3 HEALTHY KIDS IN TENNESSEE:  
*LET'S EAT WELL, PLAY, AND BE AWARE EVERY DAY*

**HEALTHY EATING/NUTRITION  
ACTIVITY GUIDEBOOK**

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## Learning Objectives



By participating in the suggested activities for the A-B-C-1-2-3 Healthy Kids in Tennessee: *Let's Eat Well, Play, and Be Aware Every Day*, children will

- recognize the United States Department of Agriculture's Choose My Plate for Preschoolers and will understand the importance of choosing healthier foods;
- distinguish between healthy versus less healthy foods using the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services "Go, Slow, and Whoa" food chart;
- increase consumption of *GO* foods, decrease consumption of *SLOW* foods, and limit consumption of *WHOA* foods;
- understand that fruits and vegetables are healthy choices by participating in activities that emphasize the messages of the Produce for Better Health Foundation's Fruits and Veggies - More Matters campaign; and
- learn the importance of eating well through activities involving science, math, music, arts and crafts, reading, and interactive and imaginative play.

## What Is Eating Well and Why Is It Important?

Healthy physical and mental development of children is a top priority for parents, children, and our nation. The basics of healthy development begin with physical activity and proper nutrition, both factors emphasized in initiatives such as Michelle Obama's "Let's Move" obesity prevention campaign, public school programs working to provide improved nutrition environments, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services "Go, Slow, and Whoa" kid's initiative (where foods are categorized as *GO* foods, *SLOW* foods, or *WHOA* foods). All of these programs have a common denominator—children eating well.

Eating well means one is taking in adequate nutrients by consuming healthy foods such as meats, dairy products, grains, fruits, and vegetables. Each of these food groups provide different yet essential nutrients that result in health benefits to the human body. For example, meat and eggs contain protein (building blocks for bones and muscles) and B vitamins (help the body release energy and form red blood cells).<sup>1</sup> Milk and milk products provide potassium (helps maintain healthy blood pressure) and are the primary source of calcium (used for building bones and teeth).<sup>2</sup> Fruits like oranges and kiwi are good sources of vitamin C (important for growth/repair of all body tissues and helps heal cuts/wounds).<sup>3</sup> Fruits also contain folic acid which helps form red blood cells. Vegetables like carrots and spinach provide vitamin A (keeps skin and eyes healthy; helps protect against infection) as well as vitamin E.<sup>4</sup> Whole grains like oatmeal and brown rice are excellent sources of dietary fiber which helps decrease blood cholesterol levels, helps reduce constipation, and may lower the risk of heart disease.<sup>5</sup>

Proper diet early in childhood and adolescence is not only essential for a child's growth, it can prevent health problems such as dental caries, obesity, and iron deficiency anemia.<sup>6</sup> Childhood obesity is a major problem in Tennessee, as a new report by Trust for America's Health finds the state ranked 6th highest in overweight youth (ages 10-17) at 20.6 percent.<sup>7</sup> Healthy eating is also associated with reduced risk of many diseases for which children may be at risk later in life including heart disease, stroke, and cancer.<sup>6</sup>

Fruits and vegetables are foods naturally low in fat and calories, and research has shown that diets rich in these food groups may reduce the risk of various cancers.<sup>8</sup> A study done in the San Francisco Bay area between 1995 and 1999, for example, looked at the relationship between vegetables and fruits and pancreatic cancer. People participating in the study completed food-frequency questionnaires in direct interviews. The results revealed that there can be some protection against developing pancreatic cancer by increasing vegetable and fruit consumption.<sup>9</sup> Researchers from the National Cancer Institute wanted to see if there was an association with vitamin D (found in vegetables like mushrooms), calcium, and colorectal cancer. From 1994 to 1996, they collected data on dietary intake via food frequency questionnaires and enrolled qualified subjects into a study conducted at the National Naval Medical Center. The authors found an inverse association with serum 25-OH vitamin D [25-(OH) D] and colorectal adenoma, suggesting that vitamin D has a protective effect on colorectal cancer.<sup>10</sup>

### **What can we do to further the message of the importance of eating well and to teach children about good nutrition?**

To further the important message of eating well and to teach children and parents in a way that resonates with them requires a targeted approach. One approach is by using innovative and age-appropriate educational messages and activities that capture the attention of children and parents that are both easy to understand and are integrated into regular routines and through fun experiential learning opportunities<sup>11</sup>. The United States Department of Health and Human Services' Go, Slow, and Whoa initiative is to make children think about foods in a different light by putting foods into three distinct groups. The *GO* foods (e.g., fresh fruits, fresh vegetables, whole grain breads, 1% milk, skinless chicken) are low in fats and sugar but high in carbohydrates, protein, fiber, and other vital nutrients like vitamin C and potassium. Children learn that these kinds of food give their bodies energy to go. Foods in the *SLOW* group (e.g., white bread, 2% milk, lean ground beef, fruits in light syrup, and vegetables in added sauces) have some health benefits but they're not as healthy as foods in the *GO* group. The foods that are the least healthy, the most likely to cause health complications, and should only be eaten

once in a while are in the WHOA group (e.g., French fries, fruits in heavy syrup, bacon, full-fat cheese, donuts). Smart choices can be made for healthy eating when children and parents know the differences between these listed groups.

The United States Department of Agriculture's Choose My Plate for Preschoolers is a tool that can be used effectively for teaching nutrition to the preschool population. Visually appealing, Choose My Plate is essentially a guide for parents and caregivers to feeding the preschool child. It may also be effectively used to teach children the importance of good nutrition. Choose My Plate replaces the MyPyramid initiative, which grouped foods into categories such as grains, vegetables, fruits, milk, meat and beans, and oils. The Choose My Plate concept provides visuals to help people better understand portion sizes. What and how much to eat hasn't changed, just the way that the information is presented.

Both the United States Health and Human Services Go, Slow, and Whoa theme and the United States Department of Agriculture's Choose My Plate are used as the core of the nutrition module for the A-B-C-1-2-3 Healthy Kids in Tennessee program. The Let's Move! Childcare Providers Checklist, which includes recommendations on food and beverages served at childcare centers, is also an important part of the A-B-C-1-2-3 Healthy Kids in Tennessee program, as is the Produce for Better Health Foundation's "Fruits and Veggies - More Matters" campaign.

Providers can also implement the recommendations of the Let's Move Child Care Checklist as it relates to food and beverages served. In addition to food and beverage intake, the Let's Move Child Care Checklist contains recommendations for physical activity, screen time, and infant feeding. Information on these recommendations and the checklist is included in the Training section of this kit.



## How to Use This Guidebook for Classroom Activities

Childcare providers should refer to the healthy eating/nutrition module of the A-B-C-1-2-3 Healthy Kids in Tennessee program for activities that are recommended for implementation in the classroom. It is recommended that activities focusing on healthy eating/nutrition be implemented in the classroom for 10-15 minutes at least twice a week. Providers may follow the suggested calendar for scheduled daily activities (instructions for each activity are provided in this guidebook) or may choose their own schedule of activities to implement. Following the suggested calendar of activities is optional yet strongly recommended, and childcare providers may choose to modify the schedule based on needs of the classroom and children as appropriate.

For childcare facilities that wish to evaluate activities, providers may review the Evaluation section of this kit to review tools available for assessing progress. A sample questionnaire is included which may be completed by parents on behalf of the children. If a center chooses to participate in evaluation activities, children may undergo evaluations of nutrition intake at the beginning and end of the program, with questionnaires being completed by parents on behalf of the children. For facilities wishing to undergo comprehensive evaluation activities, it is important to have a community partner or resource available to assist with data collection, input, and analysis.

## Key Points for Childcare Providers

The activities in this portion of the A-B-C-1-2-3 program use the United States Department of Health and Human Services' Go, Slow, and Whoa concepts to encourage children to think about foods in a different light by putting foods into three distinct groups. The United States Department of Agriculture's Choose My Plate for Preschoolers is also used.

- The *GO* foods (e.g., fresh fruits, fresh vegetables, whole grain breads, 1% milk, skinless chicken) are low in fats and sugar and high in carbohydrates,

protein, fiber, and other vital nutrients like vitamin C and potassium. Children learn that these kinds of food give their bodies energy to Go.

- Foods in the SLOW group (e.g., white bread, 2% milk, lean ground beef, fruits in light syrup, and vegetables in added sauces) have some health benefits but they're not as healthy as foods in the GO group.
- The foods that are the least healthy, the most likely to cause health complications, and should only be eaten once in a while are in the WHOA group (e.g., French fries, fruits in heavy syrup, bacon, full-fat cheese, donuts). Smart choices can be made for healthy eating when children and parents know the differences between these listed groups.
- Choose My Plate is a guide for feeding preschool children that replaces MyPyramid. What to eat and how much has not changed, just the way it is presented. Choose My Plate provides a better visual for portion sizes and what is appropriate. Parents and/or caregivers should not be concerned if a preschooler does not eat the exact amounts suggested. Each child's needs may differ from the average, and appetites can vary from day to day. While the amount eaten daily may vary, average amounts over time should be similar to this plan.
- **There are no forbidden foods with Choose My Plate for Preschoolers or as part of the Go, Slow, or Whoa theme.** Some foods, however, are to be eaten in moderation and should not replace foods that provide nutritional value.

It is recommended that each class do **nutrition/healthy eating activities in this section of the kit for a minimum of 10-15 minutes at least twice a week**, to send take-home materials weekly, and to participate in the center-wide challenges. Some activities can be done in as little as five minutes!

Childcare providers are encouraged to incorporate discussion and review of Go, Slow, or Whoa, as well as concepts from Choose My Plate for Preschoolers and Fruits and Veggies - More Matters, into all classroom activities detailed in the Healthy Eating/Nutrition Activities section of this kit.

The information included in the program and related materials are not designed to replace medical advice by trained health care or dietary professionals. Childcare providers for children with special medical or nutritional needs should work with the children's health care providers to determine what guidelines they should follow.



## Key Points to Emphasize With Children:

- We have several tools that can teach us about good nutrition and healthy eating; e.g., *Choose My Plate for Preschoolers*; *Go, Slow, and Whoa*; and *Fruits and Veggies - More Matters*.
- Foods that have certain types of fat and/or are high in calories are less healthy than other types of food. These are *WHOA* and *SLOW* foods.
- Foods containing high levels of fat make it harder for our heart to do its job.
- Foods high in calories and containing very few nutrients - high fat foods or foods that some may call "junk food" or "processed foods"- do not help children learn, grow, and play.
- Foods that have a lot of nutrients—breads, cereals, rice, pasta, beans, fruits, and vegetables—all help children learn, grow, and play. These are *GO* foods and can be found on *Choose My Plate*.
- Some foods, such as milk and dairy products, can either be fat-free, low-fat, or high in fat. Children should look for low-fat and fat-free cheeses, milk, cottage cheese, yogurt, ice cream, and other products and avoid whole milk, whole milk cheese, full-fat ice cream, etc.
- Half of all grains eaten each day should be whole grains.
- Children should not consume too many foods or beverages with a lot of added sugar such as cookies, sodas, donuts, candy, cakes, etc.
- Fruits are sweet, but they are *GO* foods and one of the larger parts of *Choose My Plate* that we should eat more of because they have no added sugar.
- Children should eat a healthy breakfast every day so they will have the nutrients and energy they need to learn, grow, and play.

## Classroom Activities



### Go, Slow, and Whoa - What's It All About?<sup>17</sup>

Teach the children through visuals to start thinking of foods in three distinct groups. A visual is provided as part of the take-home materials in this kit or can be found at the website listed below. Share the visual with the children and explain how foods may be categorized:

- **GO Foods:** Foods that are good to eat almost anytime. They are the healthiest ones. Examples: skim and low-fat milk.
- **SLOW Foods:** These are "sometimes" foods. They aren't off-limits, but they shouldn't be eaten every day. At most, eat them several times a week. Examples: waffles and pancakes.
- **WHOA Foods:** These foods should make you say exactly that—Whoa! Should I eat that? Whoa foods are the least healthy and the most likely to cause weight problems, especially if a person eats them all the time. Examples: French fries and candy.



A list of *GO*, *SLOW*, and *WHOA* foods is included as take-home material in this kit and can also be found using the following link:

<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/downloads/go-slow-whoa.pdf>

Let children know that you will also be expanding on this concept to show the *GO*, *SLOW* and *WHOA* foods as part of Choose My Plate.

**Estimated length of activity = 10-15 minutes**

## Choose My Plate for Preschoolers: What's it all About?<sup>17</sup>

Teach the children through visuals about the Choose My Plate for Preschoolers. A visual is provided as part of the take-home materials in this kit or can be found at the website listed below. Share the visual with the children and explain how certain portions of the plate are bigger than others on Choose My Plate, and how the *GO*, *SLOW*, and *WHOA* foods they have learned about are all represented in Choose My Plate.

The following points should be emphasized:



- Choose My Plate encourages everyone to fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables at each meal or eating occasion.
- All of the *GO*, *SLOW*, and *WHOA* foods are represented on Choose My Plate.
- The sections on Choose My Plate represent how much of each type of food one should eat at each meal. Children should eat every color, every day!
- Physical activity is also very important to being healthy. It is important to move our bodies every day!
- To be healthy, we need to eat right, move more, and have fun!

[www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov)

**Estimated length of activity = 10-15 minutes**

### **Mr. Puppet and His Tips for Eating Well! (Imaginative Play)**

Have an interactive puppet show with hand puppet of choice. The puppets ask preschoolers questions about what healthy *GO* foods they know about, while also reminding them about *SLOW* and *WHOA* foods. The puppets may play games with children giving them "clues" about a "mystery food" that the children are trying to guess. The puppets may also show pictures of healthy *GO* foods like fruits and vegetables or other *SLOW* and *WHOA* foods for the children to identify. They can also ask questions and stimulate discussion about *Choose My Plate*.

- Hand puppets can be cartoon-themed so children can identify (i.e., SpongeBob Squarepants, Woody the Woodpecker, Dora, etc.).
- Children may also make their own puppets using small, lunch-sized paper bags or paper plates pasted on a wooden stick.
- Children get a prize for participating and answering questions (prize can be a healthy go food snack, sticker, colorful tattoo, etc.).

**Estimated length of activity = 10-15 minutes**

### **Cooking: *Fruity Smoothies* (Interactive Play)**

Children can participate in making a simple fruit smoothie. Let the children help make their individual smoothies by letting them add their favorite fruit to the blender. Reinforce fruits as *GO* foods and where they fit as part of *Choose My Plate*.



For a simple, delicious, and healthy smoothie, add one banana (peeled and cut into chunks), one cup nonfat yogurt (try vanilla), and one cup orange juice to a clean blender and blend until smooth.<sup>12</sup>

- Any fruit will work for this activity.
- The Fruity Smoothie can be served during regular snack time or as a separate treat.

**Estimated Length of Activity = 15-20 minutes.**

## Grow Good Food Activity! (Science)

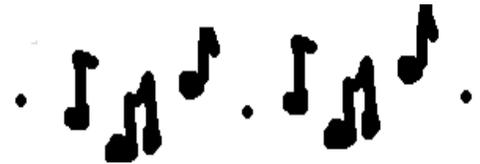
A great way to introduce children to science is through gardening. Let them grow fruits or veggies from seeds. Take an empty egg carton and using a spoon, let the children fill each egg cup with soil. Then plant two seeds in each egg cup and water each cup with a teaspoon of water.



Lettuce, radishes, peas, and apple seeds are usually easy to grow, but you may want to ask your local nursery for other easy-to-grow seeds specific to your area. Discuss with children where fruits and veggies are on the food pyramid and whether or not they are GO, SLOW, or WHOA foods. Let the children take turns watering the plants and monitor their progress daily.<sup>12</sup>

**Estimated Length of Activity = 5-10 minutes**

## The Healthy Food Sing-A-Long (Music)<sup>12</sup>



Take the children's favorite songs and modify them using fruit and vegetable themes, reminding children of Choose My Plate and how fruits and vegetables are GO foods (though they may also be SLOW or WHOA foods depending on how they are prepared).

### *Do You Eat Your Vegetables? (tune of "Muffin Man")*

*Oh, do you eat your vegetables, vegetables, vegetables?  
Oh, do you eat your vegetables  
Each and every day?  
Oh, yes, we eat our vegetables, vegetables, vegetables,  
Oh, yes, we eat our vegetables  
Each and every day!*

*(Ask each child in turn to name a vegetable then replace the child's name and the vegetable he or she has chosen.)*

*Oh, Sally eats broccoli, broccoli, broccoli*

*Oh, Sally eats broccoli ...each and every day!*

***Little Apples (tune of Ten Little Indians)<sup>12</sup>***

*One little, two little, three little apples  
Four little, five little, six little apples  
Seven little, eight little, nine little apples  
Ten little apples in the grocery store.*



***One Potato, Two Potato (fingerplay)<sup>12</sup>***

One potato, two potato, three potato, four  
Five potato, six potato, seven potato, more .  
(Hold up one finger at a time as you count. Clap on more.)

**Estimated length of activity = 5-10 minutes**

## **Story Time**

Choose one of the books below or one of the others listed in the Reading Suggestions section. Use story time as an opportunity to have open dialogue with children about what they have already learned and will learn about good nutrition and how it relates to the story you are reading. Teachers may have their own favorite books that are also very appropriate for this activity.

*The Very Hungry Caterpillar*

**Eric Carle**

The caterpillar eats his way through the week (and book) before changing into a beautiful butterfly.



*Eating the Alphabet*

**Lois Ehlert**

This book introduces fruits and vegetables from around the world along with upper and lowercase letters.

*Peanut Butter and Jelly: A Play Rhyme*

**Nadine Bernard Westcott (Illustrator)**

Two children create a table-sized sandwich.

**Estimated length of activity = 10 minutes**

**Buried Treasure (Math: Counting)**

Hide toy fruits and/or vegetables in a sand box or in the sensory table; let preschoolers dig them up.<sup>12</sup> Remember to talk about Choose My Plate for Preschoolers as well as GO, SLOW, and WHOA foods!

**Estimated length of activity = 5-10 minutes**

**Let's "Pear Up!" (Math: Sorting)**

Bring in fresh fruits and vegetables and let children practice sorting them into pairs.<sup>12</sup> This activity may be done before snack time; the fruit can also be the snack after the activity has ended. This is another great opportunity to talk about the Choose My Plate for Preschoolers as well as GO, SLOW, and WHOA foods!

**Estimated length of activity = 5-10 minutes)**

## Sprouting Beans!<sup>18</sup> (Science)

### Supplies

- \* Any types of lentils/beans with shell (red, green, yellow, etc.)
- \* Small container (plastic cup or bowl, glass jar, etc.)
- \* Cotton balls
- \* Water

### Directions

1. Soak a handful of cotton in water and place in a container.
2. Spread a teaspoon of lentils/beans on the cotton.
3. Wait for about two (2) days, and you can start to see the sprouts.

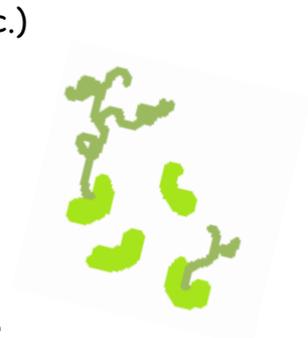
Discuss with the children where lentils/beans are represented on Choose My Plate and ask if they are considered a GO, SLOW, or WHOA food. Use the opportunity to talk in general about how fruits, vegetables, and other plants grow.

**Estimated length of Activity = 5-10 minutes**

## It's Coloring Time!<sup>14</sup> (Art)

Fruit and Veggie Color Champions coloring pages may be provided with this kit or may also be found at [http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/?page\\_id=78](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/?page_id=78). There are enough selections for each child to have at least two different coloring pages to take home to show parents. Give children various colored crayons and help them color the fruits and vegetables correctly.

**Estimated length of activity = 15-20 minutes**



### **"Thank You Family!"<sup>13</sup> (Art)**

Have children design and decorate a Thank You card, thanking family members who cook for them and provide healthy and nutritious foods and meals.

**Estimated length of activity = 15 minutes**

### ***"Red Light, Green Light" [Interactive Play]***



Children line up on one side of the room or play yard. On your cue of *GO* children try to run to you as fast as they can. On the cue of *SLOW* children must walk, but must stop and "freeze" on your cue of *WHOA*. When they have stopped or are walking slowly, pick a child (at random) to name a *GO* food, a *SLOW* food, or a *WHOA* food.

**Estimated length of activity = 10-15 minutes**

### ***Go, Slow, and Whoa Matching Game! (Math)***

Prepare clean and empty containers, labels, and wrappers of *GO* foods (e.g., empty fruit can), *SLOW* foods (e.g., low-fat microwave popcorn bag), and *WHOA* foods (e.g., empty potato chips bag). Have three large boxes or bins labeled *GO*, *SLOW*, and *WHOA*. Have pre-schoolers place the correct labels in the corresponding "Go," "Slow," and "Whoa" bins. The number of empty containers/labels/wrappers needs to be enough so that every child gets a chance to participate.

**Estimated length of activity = 15 minutes**

## ***Gone Fishing! Game (Art)***

### **Supplies**

- \* Cardboard Box
- \* Pictures of *GO*, *SLOW*, and *WHOA* foods
- \* Magnets
- \* String/yarn
- \* Colored paper
- \* Paper clips
- \* Pens
- \* Glue
- \* Sand pail

First, make fishing poles with yarn, sticks and magnets. Next, make fish shapes by pasting pictures of *GO*, *SLOW*, and *WHOA* foods on cardboard fish forms. Put a green dot on the blank side of the *GO* fish, a yellow dot on the blank side of the *SLOW* fish, and a red dot on the blank side of the *WHOA* fish. Attach paper clips to each fish. Children can sit in the boat (box) and fish for healthier food choices. An area on the floor can be designated as the pond and marked off with tape or blue paper. Explain how to put the *GO* and *SLOW* foods in the pail and toss back the less healthy choices (*WHOA* foods).



- Set up the game so multiple children can play at one time
- Children can talk with each other about why they made their choices
- Children can rotate when all of the healthy fish are caught
- If there's no boat (box), children can fish from the shore

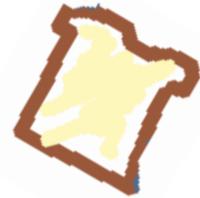
**Estimated length of activity = 30 minutes**

## Baking Bread (Science)

### Supplies

- \* Frozen loaves of bread OR favorite bread recipe (prepared in advance)
- \* Grease, pan, and wax paper

Children can experience science in action as they see bread rise. Use frozen bread loaves or your favorite bread recipe. Prepare the bread in advance and keep in freezer. When ready for the experiment, take bread from the freezer and put in a greased pan. Grease the top of the loaves and cover with waxed paper, and place in a warm place. Children can check the progress of the bread throughout the day. Take the opportunity to explain how grains fit into our plates, are GO foods, and part of eating healthy. This is a great opportunity to talk about whole grains, and about half of their daily grain intake should be from whole grains.<sup>13</sup>



**Estimated length of activity = varies**

### Collage Creations (Art)

Have the children cut out pictures of fruits and vegetables from magazines to create a collage. Glue on construction paper.<sup>13</sup> This activity can be done with pictures of bread and dairy foods or with a combination of healthy GO foods. Don't forget to talk about the Choose My Plate for Preschoolers and discuss the fruits and vegetables as part of that plate.

**Estimated length of activity = 15 minutes**

### Play Dough (Art)

The children can assist in preparing play dough. If the mixture is left uncolored, it will resemble bread dough and have a similar consistency. Place three cups of flour and one cup of salt in a mixing bowl. Add three-quarters cup of water and stir.

Keep adding small amounts of water and mix until the dough is workable but not sticky.<sup>13</sup> Have the children make the play dough into various shapes of healthy foods found on the Choose My Plate for Preschoolers that are healthy GO foods.

**Estimated length of activity = 30 minutes**

### **The Choose My Plate Game (Art)**

Draw a large plate on butcher paper and label all the sections (the side of any bread bag usually has a picture that is good to copy). Have the children cut pictures of food out of the weekly grocery circulars. Decide together where to glue them on the plate and to share whether or not the food item is a GO, SLOW, or WHOA food. Once this is done, it can be used it for a game. Gather play food items from the housekeeping center (or glue pictures on cardboard and laminate, attaching Velcro on the back of each picture and on the Choose My Plate visual display). Distribute them during circle or group time. Encourage each child to put their food on the plate.<sup>12</sup>

**Estimated length of activity = 30 minutes**

### **Pretzel Time! (Math: Sorting and Counting)**

Make available to each child cups of pretzels of different sizes and shapes. Encourage children to lay out the pretzels from the cup onto a napkin, and then sort them by size, shape, etc.<sup>13</sup> Counting can also be done as part of this activity.

**Estimated length of activity = 15-20 minutes**

## Ring Around the Baggy! (Science)

### Supplies

- \* Paper lunch bags
- \* Assortment of breads/muffins
- \* Assortment of cheeses (fat-free, low-fat, high-fat)
- \* Donuts
- \* Any other food items you want to include in this experiment

Place each food item on top of a paper lunch bag before the activity begins. This must be done in advance so grease and/or water spots will have time to form. When the activity begins, have children look at each food item and identify the food and where it fits in the food pyramid and ask them whether they think it is a GO, SLOW, or WHOA food. Encourage them to touch the food and the paper bags. Encourage dialogue regarding the foods that have left grease spots and those that have left water spots. Explain that the foods leaving "grease" spots are foods high in calories and fat, which are the SLOW and WHOA foods, and should be eaten only every now and then. The foods with "water" or no spots are GO foods because they are lower in fat and have fewer calories and should be eaten daily.

**Estimated length of activity = 10-15 minutes**

## What's for Dinner? (Art)

Purchase a package of paper placemats. In advance, prepare stencils of a plate (make a circle or buy paper plates), fork, knife, spoon, cup, and napkin. Let the children trace these items onto the paper placemat in the correct positions. Children then may color their placemat if they want.<sup>13</sup>



**Estimated length of activity = 15 minutes**

## Planning a Picnic with the Swedish Chef (from the Muppets)<sup>13</sup> [Cooking]

Plan a cooking session with children to make snacks for an outdoor picnic. As you are helping them prepare the food, have discussion on where each food item fits into the Choose My Plate for Preschoolers and whether it is a GO, SLOW, or WHOA food.

Following are some sample recipes you might use as part of the cooking session.

### *Trees In a Broccoli Forest - Makes 4 servings*

#### Ingredients

##### Dipping Sauce

- \* 1/4 cup plain nonfat yogurt
- \* 1/4 cup light sour cream
- \* 2 teaspoons honey
- \* 2 teaspoons spicy brown mustard

##### Broccoli Trees

- \*2 carrots, peeled
- \*3 cups broccoli florets
- \*4 cherry tomatoes
- \*3 tablespoons parsley leaves

#### Directions

1. To prepare dipping sauce, combine yogurt, sour cream, honey, and mustard in a small bowl.
2. Hold carrots against cutting board and trim off ends. Cut each in half crosswise, then lengthwise, to make four pieces.
3. Arrange each plate by putting two carrot pieces side by side in the center. Arrange broccoli around the carrots forming a cluster. Arrange the tomatoes at the top of the plate. Spoon the prepared dip around the base of carrots and sprinkle with parsley.

**Preparation Time = 5-10 minutes**

**Ready in = 15-20 minutes**

## ***Ants on a Log (snack) - Makes 10 servings***

### **Ingredients**

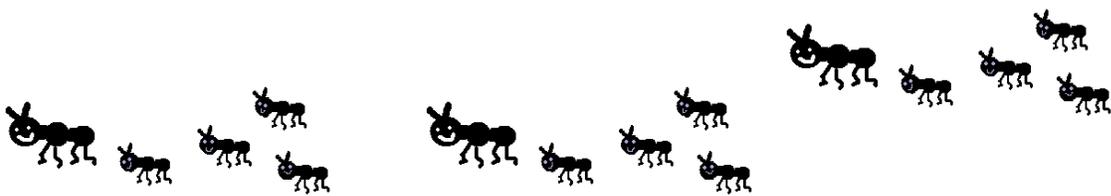
- \* 5 stalks celery
- \* 1/2 cup peanut butter (low-fat)
- \* 1/4 cup raisins

### **Directions**

After cleaning the celery, cut the stalks in half. Spread with peanut butter and sprinkle with raisins.

**Preparation Time = 5 minutes**

**Ready in = 5 minutes**



## Reading Suggestions



### *The Carrot Seed*

**Ruth Krauss, Crockett Johnson (Illustrator)**

A classic story about a little boy who plants a seed, then waits patiently for his prize-winning carrot to grow.

### *Blueberries for Sal*

**Robert McCloskey**

Sal can't seem to pick the berries as fast as she eats them in this gentle tale of mothers, cubs, and blueberries.

### *Chicken Soup with Rice: A Book of Months*

**Maurice Sendak**

"Each month is gay, each season nice, when eating chicken soup with rice."

### *Color Crunch*

**Charles Reasoner**

A colorful food guide for preschoolers, complete with bite marks on the pages that feature food.

### *Eating the Alphabet*

**Lois Ehlert**

This book introduces fruits and vegetables from around the world using upper- and lowercase letters.

### *Growing Vegetable Soup*

**Lois Ehlert**

This story describes the process of growing vegetable soup, from preparing the tools and digging holes for the seeds, to weeding plants; picking the vegetables; washing, chopping, and cooking them; and finally enjoying the soup made from the recipe which is included.

*Growing Colors*

**Bruce McMillan**

Bruce McMillan uses his camera to invite young children into gardens and orchards to discover nature's beautiful colors.

*I Eat Fruit*

**Hannah Tofts, Rupert Horrox (Illustrator)**

This book introduces children to fruits and vegetables, and also provides an artful impact by placing a photograph against a dramatic background.

*I Eat Vegetables*

**Hannah Tofts (Illustrator)**

A colorful introduction to fruits and vegetables that allows children to see which need to be peeled, which have seeds, which have pits, etc.

*Jamberry*

**Bruce Degen (Illustrator)**

A boy and a bear romp through Berryland, inviting the reader to celebrate in this berry-filled hunt.

*Lunch*

**Denise Fleming (Illustrator)**

A mouse chomps his way through this clever book of turnips, carrots, corn, peas, berries, grapes, apples, and watermelon.

*No Milk!*

**Jennifer Ericsson, Oran Eitan (Illustrator)**

A charming book about a city boy who tries almost everything to get milk out of a cow.

*Pancakes, Pancakes*

**Eric Carle (Illustrator)**

This story takes the reader through the preparation of a pancake breakfast: getting flour from the mill, an egg from the hen, milk from the cow, butter churned from cream, and firewood for the stove!

*Peanut Butter and Jelly: A Play Rhyme*

**Nadine Bernard Westcott (Illustrator)**

Two children create a table-sized sandwich.

*The Very Hungry Caterpillar*

**Eric Carle**

The caterpillar eats his way through the week (and book) before changing into a beautiful butterfly.

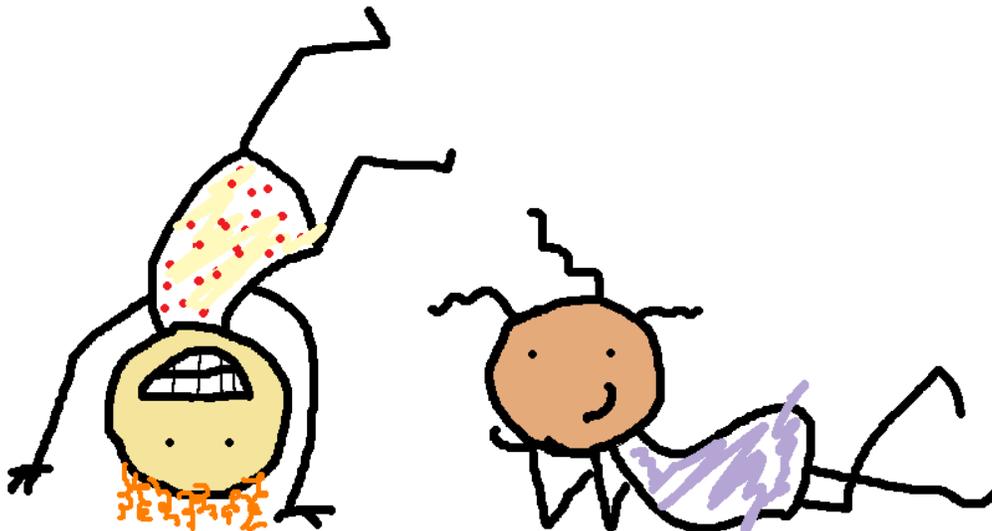
*To Market, To Market*

**Anne Miranda, Janet Stevens (Illustrator)**

Rhythmic and fun, this story adapts a traditional children's song into amusing chaos in our contemporary world.

*Green Eggs and Ham*

**Dr. Seuss**



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