

# NUTRITION KNOWLEDGE

*Greater Opportunities of the Permian Basin Head Start*

MARCH 2021

## MOVEMENT MATTERS

Help children begin to learn about food groups through active play and color matching.

To prepare, cut out pictures of food from magazines or printed off line. Glue each fruit to a red piece of paper, each vegetable to a green paper, and so on as depicted in MyPlate. Tape a piece of velcro to the back of each.

Around the classroom or outdoor play area, hang 5 large sheets of paper- one for each color- and stick several piece of velcro to each. Lay the prepared food pictures all around the play area.

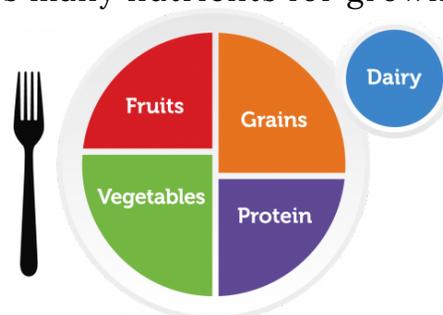
Have children race to find a food picture and stick it to it's corresponding colored paper. After all of the pictures have been velcroed, walk the class around to each paper and have children help you identify the food in each picture.

March is National Nutrition Month! It's a month dedicated to celebrating food and healthy diets.

Healthy diets include all different kinds of food in many different colors. Healthy diets offer a balance of nutrient-dense foods with a few sweets. Here's **4-easy steps** you can take to serve healthy diets at home:

1. Serve **non-starchy veggies and fruit at every meal**. Include lots of different colors!
2. Offer **milk at meals only**, and only 2 to 3 glasses per day.
3. Serve meat or other **protein source at meals and snacks**.
4. Serve **sweets only two or three times per week**, and offer them alongside a nutrient dense food like milk, fruit, low-fat protein, or non-starchy veggies.

A healthy diet that offers balance and variety also offers many nutrients for growing kiddos.



For more information on food groups and building a balanced plate, visit [www.myplate.gov](http://www.myplate.gov).

# STEM IN THE KITCHEN: How is food digested?

What happens to food after we put it in our mouth? Give children a visual of how their insides work with this fun digestion experiment.

1. Place a piece of bread in a ziploc bag. The bag represents our mouth, and the bread the food we eat. Have children mush the bag with their hands; our teeth break down food just as they are doing with their hands.
2. Open the bag and add a few squirts of water. The water represents the saliva our mouth makes when we put food in it.
3. Add 2 oz of lemon juice or orange juice. Soda and juice contain acid and represent the acid our stomach produces to help break down food. Close the bag, and have children continue to mash the bag for 2 minutes to demonstrate how our stomach works to further breakdown food.
4. Empty the contents of the bag onto an absorbent towel. Wrap the towel around the food, and have children squeeze it. The towel represents the intestines where food is squeezed. Nutrients and water are absorbed in the intestines and transported to the rest of the body.
5. Open the towel. The dry food that's left represents our stool, and what's left of food after it travels through out digestive system.

## KIDS IN THE KITCHEN

When planning weekly meals, ask your child what he or she would like to see on the table. Giving them simple options allows them to take ownership in the meal and can improve picky eating. Here's a few simple questions to get them involved:

- Would you rather have broccoli with cheese or butter?
- Should we serve a bowl of strawberries or a bowl of kiwis?
- Do you want milk in a blue cup or a green cup?
- Should we cut the sandwich in squares or triangles?

## KID-FRIENDLY RECIPE

### Simple Fruit Salad

By: Amy Halfmann, RD, LD

- 1 cup grapes, halved
- 1 cup pineapples, cubed
- 1 cup strawberries, halved
- 1 cup blueberries
- 1 cup canned oranges, drained
- 1 lemon, zest and juice
- 2 Tbsp mint leaves, finely chopped (optional)

1. Place all fruit in a medium size bowl.
2. Add lemon zest and juice.
3. Add mint leaves.
4. Mix together.
3. Serve as a colorful side dish.



For questions or information, contact your Head Start dietitian, Amy Halfmann at [amy@amyhalfmannnutrition.com](mailto:amy@amyhalfmannnutrition.com)