Fitting Nutrition in Afterschool Programs

Audra Losey MS, RD
Natalie Sehi MS, RD
The Power of Afterschool and the Future of Learning
A Nebraska Afterschool Conference
September 28, 2012

Agenda
- Latest and Greatest with Nutrition
  - Why and how to teach nutrition & physical activity?
  - MyPlate
- Healthy Snacking and Beverages
- Importance of Role Modeling
- Effective Teaching Methods
  - What works in the afterschool setting?

Why are good nutrition and physical activity important?
- Our diet and activity habits developed in childhood continue into adulthood.
  - True for healthy and less healthy habits
- Poor food choices and inactivity can cause:
  - Behavioral problems
  - Emotional problems
  - Academic difficulties
  - Health problems

Nutrition for the School-Aged Child
- Carbohydrates and fats provide energy for growing and physical activity.
- Protein builds, maintains, and repairs body tissue.
- Vitamins and minerals support growth and development.

How do we get kids to eat better?
- Involve them in planning and picking out food.
- Make food that looks good.
- Give them time to eat.
- Offer options.
- Encourage them to explore the social, cultural, and personal influences of different foods.

Guidelines for Teaching Nutrition
- Nutrition education must be culturally appropriate. Cultural appropriateness includes issues of ethnicity, gender, language, culture, and income.
- Youth must be actively involved in the planning and implementation of nutrition education. (e.g., Let youth determine what is relevant, and what would interest them.)
- Nutrition education must be balanced with education about physical activity.
- Young people today need skill building in the areas of consumer literacy, meal planning, cooking, shopping, and fitness.
- The community environment and norms must be changed to support healthy eating and physical activity (includes the school, the after school program and the community).

*CANFIT’s Guiding Principles
What can you do to teach nutrition?

1. Make it fun and positive.
2. Make it integrated.
3. Make it interactive and hands-on.

Making it Hands-on

- Younger elementary
  - Cutting, pasting, drawing, etc.
  - Talk about favorite foods, etc.
- Older elementary
  - Draw or cut pictures of foods out of magazines.
  - Discuss family meals, healthy alternatives, etc.
- Older elementary and middle school
  - Role play
  - Talk about media and marketing on TV and in magazines

Activity Ideas

- Choose a healthy food to learn about each week.
  - Food’s history, folklore, preparation, etc.
- Read books about food and eating
  - Have the kids come up with their own food version of a story.
- Taste-test different varieties

Nutrition Messages to Teach

- How to build a healthy meal with MyPlate
  - Breakfast
  - Energy balance
  - What are whole grains?
  - Making smart drink choices (dairy)
- Eating out & grocery shopping
- Media & food
- Cooking skills
- Food safety & hand washing
- Role modeling to younger students

Nutrition Tips

1. Just say “No” to chips, candy, and soda
2. Get up and get moving
3. Serve low-fat or fat-free yogurt
4. Fill up on fiber
5. Pick fruit and vegetables
6. Offer 100% fruit juice
7. Make it 1% fat milk
8. Don’t Forget the Water

*Modified from CANFIT’s Nutrition Tips List

MyPlate

- MyPlate is based on the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans to help consumers make better food choices.
- MyPlate is designed to remind Americans to eat healthfully; it is not intended to change consumer behavior alone.
- MyPlate illustrates the five food groups using a familiar mealtime visual, a place setting.
Key Messages

- Balancing Calories
  - Enjoy your food, but eat less
  - Avoid oversized portions
- Foods to Increase
  - Make half your plate fruits and vegetables
  - Make at least half your grains whole grains
  - Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk
- Foods to Reduce
  - Choose lower sodium foods
  - Drink water instead of sugary drinks

Make half your plate fruits and vegetables

- Choose red, orange, and dark-green vegetables like tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and broccoli, along with other vegetables for your meals. Add fruit to meals as part of main or side dishes or as a dessert.

Make at least half your grains whole

- To eat more whole grains, substitute a whole-grain product for a refined grain product – such as eating whole wheat bread instead of white bread or brown rice instead of white rice.

Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk

- They have the same amount of calcium and other essential nutrients as whole milk, but fewer calories and less saturated fat.

MyPlate Food Groups

- Vegetable Group
- Fruit Group
- Grains Group
- Protein Group
- Dairy Group

Vegetable Group

- Key Consumer Message: Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
What counts as 1 cup?

**In general...**

- 1 cup from the vegetable group =
  - 1 cup of raw or cooked vegetables or vegetable juice
  - 2 cups of raw leafy greens
  - 1 medium potato
  - 12 baby carrots
  - 2 large stalks of celery
  - 1 large ear of corn
  - 1 large raw tomato

***Fruit Group***

- Key Consumer Message: Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.

What counts as 1 cup?

**In general...**

- 1 cup from the fruit group =
  - 1 cup of fruit
  - 1 cup of 100% fruit juice
  - ½ cup of dried fruits
- Whole fruit is preferred
  - 1 small apple
  - 1 large banana
  - 32 seedless grapes
  - 1 medium grapefruit

***Grains Group***

- Key Consumer Message: Make at least half of your grains whole grains.

What counts as 1 ounce?

**In general...**

- 1 ounce of grains =
  - 1 slice of bread
  - 1 cup of ready-to-eat cereal
  - ½ cup of cooked rice, cooked pasta, or cooked cereal
  - 1 packet of instant oatmeal
  - ½ English muffin or bagel

***Protein Group***

- Key Consumer Message: Go lean with protein.
What counts as 1 ounce?

- **In general...**
  - 1 ounce meat/meat equivalent =
  - 1 ounce of meat, poultry or fish
  - ¼ cup cooked dry beans
  - 1 egg
  - 1 tablespoon of peanut butter
  - ½ ounce of nuts or seeds
    - Almonds, cashews, mixed nuts, peanuts, sunflower seeds, sesame seeds or pumpkin seeds.

Dairy Group

- **Key Consumer Message:** Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk.

What counts as 1 cup?

- **In general...**
  - 1 cup from the dairy group =
    - 1 cup milk
    - 1 cup yogurt
    - 1 1/2 oz. or 2 slices hard cheese (cheddar, mozzarella, Swiss, parmesan)
    - 2 oz. or 3 slices processed cheese (American)
    - 1 1/2 cups of ice cream
    - 1/3 cup shredded cheese
    - 2 cups cottage cheese

Daily Food Plans for Kids

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Grains</th>
<th>Vegetables</th>
<th>Dairy</th>
<th>Fruits</th>
<th>Protein</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 yr olds</td>
<td>4-5 oz</td>
<td>1-1.5 cups</td>
<td>1.5-2 cups</td>
<td>1.5 cups</td>
<td>2 oz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 yr olds</td>
<td>5-6 oz</td>
<td>1.5-2 cups</td>
<td>2.5-3 cups</td>
<td>1.5 cups</td>
<td>3 oz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 yr olds</td>
<td>6-7 oz</td>
<td>2-2.5 cups</td>
<td>3 cups</td>
<td>1.5 cups</td>
<td>4 oz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 yr olds</td>
<td>7-8 oz</td>
<td>2.5-3 cups</td>
<td>3-3.5 cups</td>
<td>1.5 cups</td>
<td>5 oz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 yr olds</td>
<td>8-9 oz</td>
<td>3-3.5 cups</td>
<td>3 cups</td>
<td>1.5 cups</td>
<td>6 oz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 yr olds</td>
<td>9-10 oz</td>
<td>3.5-4 cups</td>
<td>3.5 cups</td>
<td>1.5 cups</td>
<td>7 oz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 yr olds</td>
<td>10-11 oz</td>
<td>4-4.5 cups</td>
<td>4 cups</td>
<td>1.5 cups</td>
<td>8 oz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GIRLS BOYS GIRLS BOYS GIRLS BOYS GIRLS BOYS

Healthy Snacking and Beverage Choices

- Snacks help children get the vitamins and minerals they need to grow and learn.
- Snack time is an opportunity for children to eat with others and a way for them to learn to enjoy new foods.
- Limit sugary snacks such as pop, candy, cakes, and cookies.
- Encourage fruits and veggies.

Alternatives to Using Food as a Reward

- “Free choice” time
- Sit by friends
- Teacher read a book to the class
- Read or do an activity outdoors
- Treasure box
- Better yet, set policy that doesn’t allow food as a reward → change the expectations
### Limit Soda and Sugary Drinks
- Soda and sugary drinks
  - Contain a lot of sugar
  - Provide no vitamins and minerals
  - May cause weight gain or cavities on your teeth
  - They usually replace healthy food or drinks
- Examples of sugary drinks:
  - Soda, juice drinks, lemonade, tea, and sports drinks
- Healthier drink options:
  - Water, low-fat or fat-free milk, 100% fruit juice, or smoothies

### Sugar Content in Soda and Other Drinks Activity
- Compare each drink and discuss sugar content with kids
- Select drinks and figure out how many teaspoons of sugar are in that product
  - 1 teaspoon of sugar = 4 grams of sugar
  - 12 oz. Cola can has 42 g of sugar
  - 42/4 = 10.5 teaspoons
- Display (empty) bottles filled with the amount of sugar (teaspoons) that is in the drink
  - Examples: Bottle of soda, sports drinks, juice drink, water, and calorie-free drink mix

### The Importance of Role Modeling
- Parents are the child’s most important role model, but you spend a lot of time with and in front of the child as well.
- When the children see you practicing a healthy habit such as eating healthy or being physically active they are more likely to follow your example.

### 5-4-3-2-1-Go!
- 5-Servings of fruits and vegetables a day
- 4-Servings of water a day
- 3-Servings of low fat dairy a day
- 2-or less hours of screen time a day
- 1-or more hours of physical activity a day
- Go—Just go and do it

### Nutrition Education and Cooking Club
**Successes**
- Contests
- Multiple teachers
- Using fun and different recipes
- "Kitchen Checks"
- Separate days for nutrition lesson and cooking club
- Physical activity in lessons

**Challenges**
- Parent involvement
- Attendance consistency
- Other programs
- Start/departure time
- No clear goals or objectives
- Instructors inexperience with subject matter

### After School Programming—Advice
- Collect dietary considerations before planning (allergies, religious preferences)
- Collect information about previous knowledge and experience of students
- Review hand washing and food safety with each lesson
- Provide expectations for the students before each lesson
After School Programming - Advice

- Use visuals, especially when teaching cooking preparation skills
- If trying new recipes that students may be cautious with, pair them with something you know the students will like (e.g., hummus and crackers)
- Work nutrition education into cooking club to re-iterate what has been taught
  - When cooking something with dairy: why is dairy important? How much dairy should you have each day?
- Keep nutrition education lessons short and to the point

ChooseMyPlate.gov

- The website features practical information and tips to help Americans build healthier diets.
- It features selected messages to help consumers focus on key behaviors.
- ChooseMyPlate.gov includes much of the consumer and professional information formerly found on MyPyramid.gov.
- Focused on the actionable messages that will be the "how-tos" for consumer behavior change.

Take Home Messages

- Good nutrition and physical activity are important to kids both now and in the future.
- MyPlate is designed for every 2 years and older.
- Make nutrition fun, positive, integrated, and interactive.
- Keep lessons short and to the point.
- You can make a difference in their lives!

Questions

References

- http://www.choosemyplate.gov
- www.cdc.gov
- Magrann, S., Childhood & Adolescent Nutrition 7th, Nutrition Dimension
- CANFIT http://canfit.org/our_work/nutrition/