HELPING STUDENTS MAKE HEALTHY CHOICES.

Good nutrition is fundamental for our students to grow and develop in a healthy manner. Teachers play a vital role in their students' knowledge of nutrition and the food choices they make. Providing students with simple but informative learning activities can be a real struggle at times. Depending on their age, getting them to interact can be difficult. The following activities are hands-on exercises that may help demonstrate the effect different foods have on our bodies.

HOW MUCH SUGAR IS IN THAT SODA?

- Some brands have more than others. Surprisingly, per the product label, there are 12.5 teaspoons of sugar in one 12 oz. can of orange soda. Pepsi® has 10.25 teaspoons, Coca-Cola® has 10 teaspoons and Mountain Dew® has 11.5 teaspoons. The following exercise is a great way for kids to realize how much sugar is actually going into their drinks. They will be able to see and taste it. This is an inexpensive and easy activity. All you will need is:

  * 12 oz Club Soda
  * 12 teaspoons Granulated Sugar
  * 2 drops Orange Extract
  * 2 drops Orange Food Coloring

Pour club soda into a large glass. Add sugar, 1 teaspoon at a time, orange extract, and orange food coloring; mix until sugar has completely dissolved. Divide the drink out for the students to taste to confirm that the amount of sugar added is accurate.

- **A point for discussion can include:**

  While sugar is a carbohydrate, it is an "empty calorie food," providing calories but no other nutrients. All bodies want and need foods that have vitamins, minerals, protein, carbohydrate, and even fat. These nutrients help bodies to grow strong and healthy. With proper nutrition, bodies are able to fight off infections and ward off diseases.

WHAT CAN YOU CHOOSE INSTEAD OF THESE ITEMS?

"Empty calorie foods" are considered junk foods or foods that are not providing the nutrients needed to be healthy. Every day students are forced to make decisions about what foods to eat. **How can they make better choices?**

ASK students: What can you choose instead of these items? (Young students can draw or cut out pictures for their answers.)

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WHY THE BODY NEEDS PROTEIN.

Protein can be a source of energy but mainly its role is to build muscles, repair body tissues and help your immune system.

Protein foods contain zinc, B-vitamins, iron, selenium and more. Each of these nutrients helps the body in a special way. Zinc and B-vitamins are important for growth, iron aids in brain development and selenium works with other vitamins to prevent damage to our body's cells.

PROTEIN WORD FIND
(For ages 7-11 years)

Protein foods make you strong!

Find the protein power foods listed below the puzzle. Words can go forwards, backwards, up, down, and diagonal.

C	H	I	C	K	E	N	O	X	I	T	E	B	
T	P	B	F	E	K	Y	O	S	U	G	E	A	
B	U	E	K	U	O	F	F	N	G	A	H	L	
K	E	R	A	S	I	M	A	S	N	A	C	M	
V	R	E	K	N	A	I	K	S	M	Q	N	O	
C	M	O	F	E	U	Q	A	B	A	U	I	N	
U	S	C	P	R	Y	T	U	J	U	D	E	D	
N	C	G	S	S	G	R	B	E	S	W	T	S	
X	Z	T	T	E	G	F	S	U	T	M	O	B	
R	U	E	D	E	O	T	I	D	U	C	R	X	
N	A	T	R	G	U	G	L	S	E	T	P	Y	
K	P	H	A	M	D	J	K	M	H	E	E	G	
H	Y	H	B	S	T	U	N	A	E	P	S	R	

ALMONDS	HAM	PROTEIN
BEANS	HAMBURGER	SEEDS
BEEF	NUTS	SOY
CHICKEN	PEANUT BUTTER	STEAK
EGGS	PEANUTS	TUNA
FISH	PORK	TURKEY

Web site http://www.learningzonexpress.com/ and toll free number 888-455-7003

Resource Web sites

The following Web sites are good resources for teachers. Many of them offer free, downloadable activities and handouts. Some of these are specific to teachers while others are designed for students.

Teacher Web sites:

www.healthteacher.com
www.healthykidschallenge.com
www.teachfree.com
www.teachnet.com
http://education.wichita.edu/caduceus/examples/soda/soda_index.html
http://www.5aday.com/educators/
http://classroom.kidshealth.org
http://www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines
http://www.fns.usda.gov.fns/nutrition.htm

Student Web sites:

http://www.verbnow.com
http://bam.gov
http://kids.health.org
http://kidnetic.com
http://www.smallstep.gov

CHILD NUTRITION DIRECTOR
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For more information on federal Child Nutrition Programs, please contact:
Idaho State Department of Education
Child Nutrition Programs
Phone: (208)332-6820
Fax: (208)334-2228
Web Site—www.sde.idaho.gov/child

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Nutrition Education Ideas

For Elementary Teachers

IDAHO CNP

Child Nutrition Programs
Idaho State Department of Education

Tom Luna
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