



SOUTH CAROLINA FAMILY AND COMMUNITY LEADERS

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Leader Training Guide

Eating a Rainbow

Objectives - Youth will:

- Identify fruits and vegetables by color groups.
- Determine how much fruits and vegetables should be eaten daily
- Understand why it is important to eat a variety of fruits and vegetables every day.

Lesson Overview/Introduction:

Fruits and vegetables are high in many nutrients, including important vitamins, minerals, fiber, and disease-preventing factors called phyto-nutrients. They are also low in fat and calories. Studies have shown that diets rich in vegetables and fruits help lower the risk for heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke and some types of cancer. They also help to maintain a healthy weight. A healthy weight prevents these diseases and diabetes too. MyPlate recommends that half our plates should consist of fruits and vegetables. Fruits and vegetables come in all colors of the rainbow. Each color contributes specific nutrients to our diets. The chart below shows recommended amount of fruits and vegetables needed daily for children ages 9 – 18.

Daily Fruit and Vegetable Requirements

	<i>Fruits</i>	<i>Vegetables</i>
Girls 9-13	1 ½ cups	2 cups
Boys 9-13	1 ½ cups	2 ½ cups
Girls 14 – 18	1 ½ cups	2 ½ cups
Boys 14 - 18	2 cups	3 cups

These are the recommended amounts for individuals who get less than 30 minutes of moderate physical activity beyond normal daily activities. Those who are more active may be able to consume more while staying within calorie needs.

Lesson:

1. Welcome youth to the class.
2. Have youth sit or stand in a circle. Tell them they’re going to play a game called **Fabulous Fruits and Valuable Vegetables**.
3. Have them take turns coming forward to pull 1 slip each from a hat, box or bag. Youth should return to their spot.
4. Tell them that when you call out their word, they should stand up and name a fruit or vegetable the word describes. For example, “crunchy” is the word you call out. The person having the slip with “crunchy” written on it stands up and says “carrot”. Continue until everyone has had a chance to name a fruit or vegetable. Some children may need help naming a fruit or vegetable that fits the description. The group can help them.

5. Say "You can see from this game that there are all kinds of flavors, textures and colors in fruits and vegetables." Ask youth, "Why are fruits and vegetables important? Can you tell me why we should eat fruits and vegetables?" Allow youth to respond.
6. Summarize by telling them that fruits and vegetables:
 - Provide vitamins, minerals and fiber to keep us healthy and avoid some really serious diseases.
 - Help us grow strong, have healthy skin and hair and do our best when learning and playing.
 - Are fun to eat for meals and snacks."
7. Say "To be healthy, it's important to "Eat a Rainbow" of fruits and vegetables every day. In other words, we should eat a variety of colors each day. Let's look at some color groups. We'll begin with green."
8. Say "Can you name some dark green vegetables?" Have youth name some dark green vegetables such as kale, Romaine lettuce, broccoli, spinach, collards, turnips, etc. Show them a dark green vegetable using a picture or, ideally, using a real food. Note: 1 cup leafy greens counts as ½ cup vegetable. (If using real food, measure 1 cup of leafy green vegetable and place in a clear cup. Display so all the children can see it.)
9. Say "Orange vegetables are also especially healthy." Have youth think of some orange vegetables such as carrots, sweet potatoes and winter squashes (butternut, acorn, pumpkin). Show them ½ cup or equivalent using a picture or the real thing. (If using real food, place the orange vegetable in a clear cup and place beside the dark green vegetable.)
10. Say "The next group is dry beans and peas". Name some, for example, refried beans, pinto beans, garbanzo beans, black-eye peas, lentils, split peas, black beans, etc. Show the ½ cup equivalent. Note: Dry peas and beans are in both the vegetable and protein groups because they share characteristics of vegetables - high in fiber and similar nutrients and are also high in protein. (If using real food, place dry beans or peas in a clear cup beside the dark green and orange vegetables.)
11. Say "Two other groups of vegetables are starchy (like peas, beans, corn, potatoes) and other vegetables like green beans, tomatoes, cucumbers, and any others we may not have named yet." Say " So you see, it is important to eat lots of vegetables each week, especially leafy greens, orange vegetables and dry beans/peas." Show what ½ cup of each of these looks like. (If using real food, place 1/2 cup of a starchy vegetable and ½ cup of any other vegetable not included in these groups in separate clear cups displayed so children can see them.) You will have five cups.
12. Pour each item into a quart sized zipper bag or clear bowl. Say, "It is important to eat enough fruits and vegetables each day. Try to eat many colors every day. How much vegetables should you eat each day?" (Answer: 2 ½ cups.)

13. If time allows, use pictures or real food to show what 1½ cups of fruits look like. (¼ cup of dried fruit is equivalent to ½ cup fresh fruit.) Show the fruit in clear cups like you did with vegetables. One half cup of three fruits can be used. Pour into clear bag or bowl to demonstrate. Say “How much fruits should you eat each day?” (Answer: 1½ cups)
14. One way to help us get enough fruits and vegetables is to use MyPlate. MyPlate tells us “Make half our plate fruits and vegetables.”
15. Say “Now it’s your turn to practice adding more fruits and vegetable to your meals.” Divide the group into 4 or 8 teams (based on the size of the group). Give each team a pencil and menu card or sheet. Read Snack 1 to the group. *(From Activity 3 below: Snack 1 -originally cheese nachos- becomes cheese nachos, salsa, refried beans, 1 cup apple juice. If a chalk or white board is available, write the menu on it so everyone can see it.)* Read the example to them. Discuss the variety incorporated into the new menu: Originally we had crunchy, salty, smooth, yellow cheese nachos. The new menu adds red, brown, some spice, coolness, etc. to the nachos. Give them 10 minutes or less to complete the task. Have each group share their original menu. Then have each team share their new menu.
16. Ask these questions: How did you choose which fruits and vegetable to include in your menus? What was easy/hard about this activity? Did you hear any menus that you would be willing to try? How would you teach what you learned today to someone else?
17. Encourage youth to write down all the vegetables and fruit they eat during the next week. Help them set goals to eat more fruits and vegetables.

Lesson Summary:

Fruits and vegetables should be a part of every meal and snack. This makes it easier to get the correct amounts that are needed each day. They add color, crunch and taste to every meal. Include leafy greens, orange, dried beans and peas a few times every week. They help our bodies grow strong, keep our hair and skin healthy, help us do well in sports and stay healthy. Fruits and vegetables are not only good to eat, but they are fun to eat and can be eaten at any time.

Suggested Activities:

Activity 1 - **Fabulous Fruits and Valuable Vegetables**

Activity 2 - **Teacher-Led Demonstration**

Activity 3 - **I Can Eat A Rainbow**

Suggested Materials:

Activity 1 – **Fabulous Fruits and Valuable Vegetables**

Prepare slips of paper with these words written on them.

Have a small box, bowl or large envelope to hold slips

- | | | | |
|----------|-----------|----------|---------|
| • Red | • White | • Fuzzy | • Chewy |
| • Green | • Orange | • Smooth | • Round |
| • Yellow | • Crunchy | • Sour | • Bumpy |
| • Blue | • Juicy | • Sweet | • Hard |

Activity 2- **Teacher-Led Demonstration**

Collect pictures **or** one food item from each of the following lists:

- **Dark Green or Other Leafy** vegetable such as broccoli, Romaine or other lettuce (not iceberg), kale, collards, chard, spinach, etc.
- **Orange** Vegetable: Carrots, pumpkin and other winter squashes, sweet potatoes, etc.
- **Cooked Dry Beans:** Black beans, lentils, pinto beans, black-eye peas, garbanzo/chick peas, etc.
- **Starchy** Vegetables: Potatoes, corn, peas
- **Other** Vegetables: Tomatoes, cucumbers, green beans, peppers, summer squash and more

1 cup dry measuring cup, ½ cup dry measuring cup, clear glass or plastic bowl or a large zipper bag, 5 clear drinking cups

Activity 3 - **I Can Eat a Rainbow**

- Pencils
- Index cards or writing paper

Divide youth into small groups. Give each group a card or sheet of paper with a simple menu (below) for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack written on the top half. Group will add variety to their menu by listing more fruits and vegetables to add to their menu.

Ex: Snack 1 is modified to Cheese Nachos, Salsa, Refried Beans, 1 cup Apple Juice

Breakfast 1 – Cereal, milk, toast

Lunch1 – Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwich,
milk

Dinner 1 – Baked chicken, potatoes, roll

Snack 1- Cheese Nachos

Breakfast 2 – Waffles, milk

Lunch 2 – Ham and Cheese Sandwich and Iced
Tea

Dinner 2 – Pizza and Soda

Snack 2 – Granola Bar

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Sources/References:

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Jump Into Foods and Fitness, Michigan State University Extension, 2009

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