

Nutrition Education Activities



Healthy Wall of Food

Location

Attica Elementary School
Attica Consolidated School Corporation
Attica
www.attica.k12.in.us
765.762.7000



Icons Present:



What we did:

At the beginning of October letters were sent home with students along with a brick made out of construction paper. The letter explained that students were to write the name of a healthy food they liked to eat on the brick. The bricks were then to be returned to the students' teachers. The teachers had a discussion with each of their classrooms about the foods listed on the bricks. The bricks were taken to the cafeteria where they were added to the "Healthy Wall of Food". During the school's fall carnival the cafeteria manager and food service director hosted a booth in front of the wall where they distributed nutritional flyers, copies of MyPyramid (MyPlate), and stickers to students. Approximately 65% of students participated in the activity. Students were excited to see their bricks on the wall.

One mother stated she has always disliked eating vegetables and now she tried many different ones to show her daughter they are a good thing.

Best practice tip:

If additional floor space and volunteers are available, add a brick vs soda can demonstration. Have students build short towers using real bricks (representing "nutrient dense" foods) and empty soda cans (representing low nutrient, "empty-calorie" foods). With a tennis ball, students will knock down the weaker tower. Talk about how the Healthy Wall of Food was built using good nutrition principles.



Building a Nutritious Snack

Location

William Tell Elementary School
Tell City-Troy Township School Corporation
Tell City
www.tellcity.k12.in.us
812.547.9727



Nutrition
Education Activity

Icons Present:



1 LOW

What we did:

The kindergarten class gathered in the café. They learned about making healthy choices and discussed how making good choices can help keep your body and mind healthy. Various healthy foods were displayed and discussed so students could see what they looked like and touch them. Each student received a zip lock bag with samples of the snacks. The students were very attentive and enjoyed the snack.

Best practice tip:

It is important to offer age-appropriate nutrition messages to students. For example, younger students benefit from using their senses to explore foods. Older youth might benefit more from learning how certain foods can improve your performance on the athletic field.



Tracking Healthy Food Choices Using MyPyramid (MyPlate)

Location

Wakarusa Elementary School
Wa-Nee School Corporation
Wakarusa
www.wanee.org
574.862.2000



Nutrition
Education Activity

Icons Present:



1 LOW

What we did:

Each Monday during the month of November students took home a weekly tracker form and tracked their “energy in” (food choices from MyPyramid) and “energy out” (move 60 minutes daily). The tracker was turned in on the following Monday. Students did this for four consecutive weeks. Morning announcements included health tips, activity ideas, and suggestions for eating from MyPyramid. They also offered a food demonstration in the cafeteria which included apple cinnamon breakfast quesadillas and a superhero apple-cranberry smoothie. They included apples in each recipe because they were in season. Students learned about the benefits of purchasing produce in season. Each student was given an apple to take home for a snack.

Best practice tip:

By having the students track their foods it made them aware of their food choices over a period of time. At the end of each week they could review their tracker and identify where they made good choices and where they could use improvement.



What is it?

Bellmont Middle School
North Adams Community Schools
Decatur
www.nadams.k12.in.us
260.724.3137

Location



Nutrition
Education Activity

Icons Present:



What we did:

A display table of carved fruits and whole fruits was set up in the cafeteria during lunch in order to introduce 5th grade students to various fruits. The fruits were also placed on student tables throughout the cafeteria. A microphone was set up next to the display table in order to have a discussion with the students. A fruit was held up and the students were first asked to identify the fruit. They looked at the whole fruit and then it was cut open to display the center.



Questions were asked about similarities between fruits in terms of size of seeds, pits in the centers, skin on the outside, etc. The students enjoyed experimenting with mango, papaya, kiwi, and pomegranates. Students enjoyed this activity because it was interactive. The true success of the lesson was proven the next day. Mixed fresh cut fruit from our lesson was offered the next day at lunch as a “choice item”. The mixed fruit competed with three flavors of 100% juice, four flavors of apple sauce cups, strawberry cups, canned pineapple, carrot sticks, refried beans, and lettuce. 55% of the 123 students chose the fresh cut fruit.

Best practice:

Cafeterias can be a noisy place to offer nutrition education activities, but Belmont was well prepared and brought a microphone for this activity.



Dried Beans and Legumes MyPyramid (MyPlate) Lesson

Fishers Elementary School
Hamilton Southeastern Schools
Fishers
www.hse.k12.in.us
317.594.4160

Location



Nutrition
Education Activity

Icons Present:



1 LOW



What we did:

Ninety fourth graders participated in a 45-minute lesson in the cafeteria on MyPyramid (MyPlate). The discussion involved how protein foods, including dried beans, fit into the pyramid. Chickpeas (also called garbanzo beans) were used in a food demonstration to make hummus. The hummus was served with a variety of vegetables. Students were able to taste a chick pea/garbanzo bean and were given other recipe ideas for this legume. The students completed a 15 bean activity requiring the identification of different dried beans.

Best practice tip:

Offer nutrition education opportunities that are age appropriate. "I could have continued for another half hour, but at that point I would have lost student interest," reported one teacher.



After School Cooking Class And Fitness Challenge

Yorktown Middle School
Yorktown Community Schools
Yorktown
www.yorktown.k12.in.us
765-759-2260

Location



Nutrition
Education Activity

Icons Present:



What we did:

Fifth and sixth grade students were invited to participate in this 2 ½ hour event. The first 24 students from each grade level to turn in permission slips participated in the April cooking class and fitness challenge.

Prior to the event, the high school Nutrition and Wellness teacher, middle school Library Aide, and Director of Food Services, washed and prepared ingredients for the cooking class. On the day of the event students rode a designated bus to the high school. The corporation Librarian/Wellness Director and Director of Food Services greeted students at the door. Students were then led to the library where they were instructed to draw their favorite fruit and vegetable.



Before the students were released to the cooking class and physical fitness challenge, the importance of proper hand washing was discussed and the students were divided into two groups - one reported to the nutrition/wellness classroom to begin the cooking class while the other made their way to the fitness challenge.

The high school Cross Country Coach and his wife supervised the fitness challenge. Students stated they had fun participating in the challenges and interacting with high school students.

The cooking class was a huge hit! The students were seated at one of five tables with an adult. The ingredients to prepare a recipe were laid out on the table. After the adult demonstrated how to prepare the recipe the students were directed to the "kitchen" lab area where they prepared the recipe. The students rotated to each kitchen until all of the recipes were prepared. The students made and sampled the following recipes: easy pizza, peanut butter and banana burrito, black and red ants on a log, pasta salad, cubed cheese porcupines, and fruit smoothies.

Best practice tip:

Teachers, coaches, and volunteers were integral to the success of this event.

Fun fact:

The favorite recipe was the peanut butter and banana burrito.

Nutrition Education and Food Demonstrations in the Classroom

Location

Rockville Jr.
High School
Rockville School Corporation
Rockville
www.rockville.k12.in.us
765-569-5686



Nutrition
Education Activity

Icons Present:



What we did:

Rockville Jr. High School partnered with Purdue Extension to offer ideas for preparing healthier versions of favorite foods to 7th and 8th grade students as part of their health class. Food demonstrations were a key to students' acceptance of the recipes.

Best practices tip:

Forming community partnerships can assist your school in achieving their wellness goals. "Having partnerships, like Purdue Extension, is a must now in schools. It brings the community into our schools, which helps the students and teachers," expressed the school nurse.



Indiana Department of Education
SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS

TV Food Network Visits Eads School

Location

James B. Eads Elementary School
School Town of Munster
Munster
www.munster.k12.in.us
219.836.8635



Nutrition
Education Activity

Icons Present:



What we did:

Bi-weekly TV food demonstrations were conducted over a two-month period. A professional chef (or special person dressed as a chef) introduced a food/food group to the entire school during morning announcements via a school television broadcast. Students learned how the food was made and where it was grown. Tasting stations staffed by PTO volunteers were set up in the cafeteria during lunch for all students to taste if they desired. The food demonstrations included:

- (1) Tropical fruits: mango, papaya, kiwi
- (2) Hummus with vegetables and whole grain crackers
- (3) Vegetables in a glass (juiced)
- (4) Dairy: mini yogurt/fruit parfaits and yogurt tubes

Best practice tip:

Offering activities at multiple venues provides the opportunity to hear nutrition messages multiple times. Eads Elementary showcased the TV Food Network demonstrations during their Fun Fair Night. Food samples and nutritional information sheets were offered to parents and students who attended.



Nutrition Scavenger Hunt and Yoga

Location

Orchard Park Elementary School
Carmel Clay Schools
Indianapolis
www.ccs.k12.in.us
317.848.1918



Icons Present:



What we did:

Students in Kindergarten thru 5th grade went on a scavenger hunt for different categories of foods or food groups. They were given clues for each category as follows:

- Water
- Garbanzo beans (Protein)
- Pomegranate (Fruit)
- Cornflakes (Grains)
- Bread with olive oil (Fats/Oils)
- Sugar snap peas (Vegetables)
- Cheese sticks (Dairy)
- Potato chip (High calorie/high fat)

Students in kindergarten and first grade had different clues than the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th graders. When the students arrived at the room where their food was displayed, they had the opportunity to taste the food. Following the scavenger hunt students proceeded to the gym and cafeteria to do yoga. The various grade levels participated in age-appropriate yoga exercises led by a community yoga instructor.

Best practice tip:

Teachers will feel more invested in the activity if they have a role. “Teachers made promotional signs for the activity, helped make the scavenger hunt clues, set up the rooms, and escorted the students from room to room,” shared the school nurse.



Tray Liners: High Five to Hit Five

Location

Riverside Jr. High School
Hamilton Southeastern School
Fishers
www.hse.k12.in.us
317.915.4280



Nutrition
Education Activity

Icons Present:



What we did:

Riverside Jr. High School created a tray liner to be used at various times throughout the school year to remind students to fill their plate with food from all the food groups. If they did so, they received an “I got my Game On!” rubber bracelet to show they received a “high five for all five” (selecting a variety of foods from the food groups).



Best practice tip:

Involve the students. Riverside Jr. High School plans to have the students design the tray liners next year.

Think Your Drink

James B. Eads Elementary School
School Town of Munster
Munster
www.munster.k12.in.us
219.836.8635

Location



Icons Present:



What we did:

During a designated school day in spring, students in Kindergarten thru 2nd grade visited the gym (one class at a time) for a 40 minute activity. Students heard a simple talk about the importance of exercise and rehydration after exercise. Then the students did a few warm up stretches and participated in an obstacle course. After being rehydrated with water they completed another set of exercises and rehydrated again. PTO and community volunteers organized and participated in this activity.

Eads Elementary conducted a similar event with the 3rd thru 5th grade students in the fall. The high school football players were able to assist with this activity and served as role models for the younger students.

Best practice tip:

Communicate with parents. A letter was sent home to parents/caregivers before and after the activity. Parents were to remind their children to dress appropriately for a gym exercise on the day of the activity. Parents received a handout about proper hydration, especially during the summer months.

Benjamin Franklin Middle School (Valparaiso) offered a similar event. Track coaches continued to reinforce the “think your drink” message throughout the track season by including information in communications sent home to parents and given to athletes.



