

Tasting Event Planning Guide



Learn To Live

Anne Arundel County Department of Health

LearnToLiveHealthy.org

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Introduction

For over a decade the Anne Arundel County Department of Health has conducted tasting events. We've made fruit smoothies for summer camps, whole-wheat pizza for after-school programs and hosted fruit and vegetable tasting parties for entire schools! We know that children enjoy tasting events and trying healthy food because they ask for more and tell their parents to buy the items they've tried.

Over the years the Anne Arundel County Department of Health's Community Education and Health Disparities program has partnered with School Health, Anne Arundel County Public Schools' Division of Food and Nutrition Services and Division of Curriculum to develop and support school wide tasting events. Tasting events show students that eating fruits and vegetables is delicious and fun. Students taste samples of colorful fruits and vegetables during their lunch period. Check out this guide to learn about hosting a successful Tasting event at your school.

Did you know tasting events allow children to try new healthy foods in a positive and fun environment?

Tasting Event Planning Guide

Parent Coordinator Responsibilities prior to event:

- ❑ Obtain organization (i.e., PTA) approval to sponsor event. A large school that requires 700 servings (675 students and 25 teachers) has an estimated cost of \$360*. This includes food, paper products and balloons. This averages to approximately fifty cents per participant.
* Note: cost of produce will vary depending on the season.
- ❑ Obtain support from the Principal and schedule tasting event. Coordinate date with Cafeteria Manager and find out what day(s) produce is delivered. Ask the Principal to let teachers know about the event and to refrain from offering other items during the activity (i.e., cupcakes and doughnuts) that would compete with the tasting event.
- ❑ Complete contacts table below.

Contacts Table

| Title | Name | Phone Number | E-mail address |
|---|------|--------------|----------------|
| Parent Coordinator | | | |
| Principal | | | |
| AACo. Department of Health School Nurse | | | |
| AACPS Food and Nutrition Services Area Specialist | | 410-222-5900 | |
| School Cafeteria Manager | | | |

- ❑ Call the Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) Area Specialist to select the color of the tasting event. Available colors include green, red, yellow/orange and blue/purple. Provide Area Specialist with proposed date and order produce. FNS receives high quality, low cost produce that the sponsoring organization (i.e., PTA) may purchase. **See Produce and Supplies Worksheet.** **Note:** FNS requires

at least three weeks notice to order produce and payment by check the day of the event.

- ❑ Reserve **Tasting Event Kit** through the school nurse, who has access to Anne Arundel Healthy Kids website resources provided by the Anne Arundel County Department of Health. Kit includes a table drape, fruit and vegetable posters, and a few decorations.
- ❑ Recruit parent volunteers – recommend at least 1 to 2 parents present during each lunch period and 2 to 3 available the day before and day of the event to complete produce preparation in the kitchen. Parent volunteers prepare, plate and distribute samples. They also provide positive encouragement to students. **See Sample Parent Volunteer Request Letter.**
- ❑ Promote event within the school. For example, include in school newsletter, calendar and morning announcements.
- ❑ Encourage students and staff to wear clothing the color of the fruits and veggies you are tasting at the event.
- ❑ Let school nurse know what is being served so he/she can check on student allergies in advance.
- ❑ Print and distribute parent handout to classes and at PTA meeting.
- ❑ Print **student surveys** and provide to teachers to complete after tasting event.

Day Before Event

Coordinate with cafeteria manager for 2 to 3 parent volunteers to work in the kitchen to begin preparation.

- ❑ **See Fruit and Vegetable Preparation Chart** for recommended preparations.
- ❑ Designate bin or large bowl for produce waste if school has composting program.

Event Day

Coordinate for 2 to 3 parent volunteers to work in the kitchen to complete preparation.

- ❑ **See Fruit and Vegetable Preparation Chart** for recommended preparations.

1 hour prior to start of first lunch:

- ❑ Pre-plate samples. Include a serving size sample of the 4 items and salad dressing on each plate.
- ❑ Decorate 6-foot table in cafeteria with table drape, fruit and veggie posters, decorations and balloons. Also, set aside sample of produce for display.
- ❑ Schedule parent volunteers to arrive 30 minutes prior to start of lunch to allow time to communicate event details and instructions.

During event (lunch period):

- ❑ Parent Coordinator or school nurse will announce event at the beginning of each lunch period. Welcome the students and use the whole fruits and vegetables and one tasting plate to show them what will be offered. Encourage students to try everything. Let them know that the volunteers will be asking them which fruit and vegetable was their favorite.
- ❑ Once an entire table is seated, pass out samples to each student at the table using large serving trays or sheet pans.
- ❑ Parent volunteers will plate and pass out samples. They will also provide positive encouragement to students. **See Fruit and Vegetable Fact Sheet.**

After Event:

- ❑ Ensure produce payment has been made to Cafeteria Manager prior to leaving school the day of the event. Retain a check and invoice copy for your records. Make check out to Food & Nutrition Services.
- ❑ Clean-up kitchen.
- ❑ Inventory Tasting Event Kit contents and arrange return of kit.
- ❑ Surveys - Measure and document your success!
 - Student survey – Collect and tally surveys and report results in next school newsletter. This will remind parents of the event and they can ask their child what fruits and vegetables they liked.
 - Observations – Write down any notable observations and statements (i.e., many students asked for seconds or children that were reluctant to taste new items were positively encouraged by their peers, etc.) Add these items to school newsletter article.

Interested in more ways to support healthy eating at home, at school, and in your community?

Appendix E – Promoting a Healthy Environment & Healthy Events and Meetings

Documents that promote evidenced-based environmental and policy changes that can affect change and make a positive impact in our schools and community

- i. Promoting a Healthy Environment
 - a. Celebrations
 - b. Rewards
 - c. Fundraising
- ii. Healthy Events and Meetings
 - a. Checklist
 - b. Guidelines
 - c. Sample Policy

Appendices

Appendix A – Tasting of the Greens Event Planning Resources

- i. Produce and Supplies Worksheet
- ii. Produce Preparation Chart
- iii. Parent Volunteer Request Letter
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- v. Tasting of the Greens Student Survey

Appendix B – Tasting of the Reds Event Planning Resources

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- ii. Produce Preparation Chart
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- v. Tasting of the Reds Student Survey

Appendix C – Tasting of the Yellow/Orange Event Planning Resources

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- ii. Produce Preparation Chart
- iii. Parent Volunteer Request Letter
- iv. Yellow/Orange Produce Fact Sheet
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Appendix D – Tasting of the Blue/Purple Event Planning Resources

- i. Produce and Supplies Worksheet
- ii. Produce Preparation Chart
- iii. Parent Volunteer Request Letter
- iv. Blue/Purple Produce Fact Sheet
- v. Tasting of the Blue/Purple Student Survey

Appendix E – Promoting a Healthy Environment & Healthy Events and Meetings Documents that promote evidenced-based environmental and policy changes that can affect change and make a positive impact in our schools and community.

- i. Promoting a Healthy Environment
 - a. Celebrations
 - b. Rewards
 - c. Fundraising
- ii. Healthy Events and Meetings
 - a. Checklist
 - b. Guidelines
 - c. Sample Policy

Appendix A – Tasting of the Greens Event Planning Resources

- i. Produce and Supplies Worksheet
- ii. Produce Preparation Chart
- iii. Parent Volunteer Request Letter
- iv. Green Produce Fact Sheet
- v. Tasting of the Greens Student Survey

Green Produce and Supplies Worksheet Sample

Calculate the total number of servings needed by adding the total number of students and the number of teachers/ school staff that will be present in the lunch room (~25).
 Number of servings needed: _____

Produce

Parent volunteer works with their schools Area Specialist to order produce.

| Item | How Packed | Servings per container | Quantity needed |
|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Food and Nutrition Area Specialist To Order: | | | |
| Kiwi | Flat – 30 kiwi per case | 120 servings per case | |
| Honeydew melon | 25 Pound Case – 6 melons per case | 180 servings per case | |
| Sugar Snap Peas | 10 lb Case | 200 servings per case | |
| Zucchini | 20 pound box – 10 squash per box | 800 servings per box | |
| Low-fat ranch dip | 1 Gallon – 128 ounces | 256 servings per gallon | |
| 1 oz soufflé cups (250/sleeve) | Sleeve – 250 cups per sleeve | 250 servings (cups) per sleeve | |

Paper Products and Balloons

Parent coordinator will arrange purchase of these items from a local party supply store.

| Item | Quantity |
|----------------------------|--|
| 6 inch paper plates | Based on # participants calculated above |
| 5 inch green paper napkins | Based on # participants calculated above |
| Green balloons | 12 |

Kitchen and Cafeteria Equipment

Parent Coordinator can ask the cafeteria manager to verify that the school kitchen has these items.

| Item | Quantity | Available (Yes/No) |
|---|-----------------|--------------------|
| Cutting Board | 2-3 | |
| Knife | 2-3 | |
| Large containers to store cut fruit prior to plating | 8-10 | |
| Plastic wrap to cover cut fruit | 1 | |
| Large colander | 2 | |
| Sink area for washing fruits and vegetables | 1 | |
| Large serving trays or sheet pans to pass out plated samples (12 pre-plated samples per tray) | Need @ least 10 | |
| One rolling tray cart | 1-2 | |
| 6 foot table without benches (reserve with office staff) | 1 | |
| Microphone (reserve with office staff) | 1 | |

Tasting of the Greens Fruit and Vegetable Preparation Chart

| Item | Day Before Event | Event Day To be completed 1 hour before first lunch |
|--|---|---|
| Sugar Snap Peas Serving Size: 2 peas | Step 1: Set aside two sugar snap peas for display Step 2: Wash Step 3: Trim off ends Step 4: Place in covered container or bag for the next day | |
| Zucchini Serving Size: 1 slice | Step 1: Set aside one whole zucchini for display Step 2: Peel off stickers Step 3: Wash Step 4: Cut off ends Step 5: Cut into ¼-inch slices Step 6: Place in covered container or bag for the next day | |
| Kiwi Serving Size: 1 quarter kiwi | Step 1: Set aside one whole kiwi for display Step 2: Peel off stickers Step 3: Wash | Step 4: Cut off ends Step 5: Quarter lengthwise Step 6: Place in shallow pan to avoid bruising and cover with plastic wrap |
| Honeydew Melon Serving Size: 1 mini wedge | Step 1: Set aside one whole honeydew for display Step 2: Peel off stickers Step 3: Wash | Step 4: Cut into 2-inch wedges Step 5: Slice rind off Step 6: Cut each wedge into 3 mini wedges Step 7: Place in pan and cover with plastic wrap |
| Low-fat Ranch Dressing | | Step 1: Fill 1-ounce soufflé cups ½ full with low-fat ranch dressing Step 2: Place on trays and cover with plastic wrap |

Parent Volunteer Request Letter

Tasting of the Greens

On _____ (date),
_____ (school)
will be participating in **Tasting of the Greens!** Students will taste two green fruits and two green vegetables during their lunch period. This event was created to promote eating fruits and vegetables every day.



We need **Parent Volunteers** to have this event. Please return the form at the bottom of this page if you can help for one or more lunch periods between _____ am to _____ pm. Also, we need help preparing the produce in advance. We will be working in the kitchen _____ (date, time).

Yes, I can volunteer to help with the Tasting of the Greens event.

Name: _____

Date/Time Available: _____

Phone Number: _____

Student Name: _____

Teacher: _____

Please respond by: _____ (date).



Tasting of the Greens Fruit and Vegetable Fact Sheet

Honeydew Melon

- Harvested in Maryland from July to October.
- High in vitamin C and a good source of potassium.
- When ripe, it is the sweetest of all melons.
- They grow on vines.

Kiwifruit

- Kiwifruit is grown in California and is harvested in October and November. Kiwifruit in New Zealand and Chile are harvested in April and May.
- High in antioxidant vitamin C and a good source of fiber, vitamin E and potassium.
 - Almost the same amount of vitamin C as two oranges or five lemons.
 - More vitamin E than an avocado.
 - The same amount of potassium as a banana.
- The skin of the fruit can be eaten or peeled.
- Kiwifruit is more than 700 years old.

Sugar Snap Peas

- Sugar Snap Peas are a good source of vitamins A, C, thiamin, riboflavin and niacin
- Sugar snap peas are a cross between garden peas and snow peas.
- Sugar snap peas were developed in the seventeenth century but did not become commonly available in the United States until the 1970's.
- They are a cool weather crop and are available from late spring to early summer.

Zucchini

- Zucchini is a summer squash. Harvested in Maryland from June to October.
- High in vitamin C. Zucchini is low in calories and contains vitamin A, folate, potassium and fiber.
- It can be yellow, green, or light green.

Tasting of the Greens Survey

Circle your answer

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|----|
| Did you like the Kiwi? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Honeydew Melon? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Sugar Snap Peas? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Zucchini? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |

Thank you!

Tasting of the Greens Survey

Circle your answer

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|----|
| Did you like the Kiwi? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Honeydew Melon? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Sugar Snap Peas? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Zucchini? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |

Thank you!

Tasting of the Greens Survey

Circle your answer

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|----|
| Did you like the Kiwi? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Honeydew Melon? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Sugar Snap Peas? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Zucchini? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |

Thank you!

Tasting of the Greens Survey

Circle your answer

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|----|
| Did you like the Kiwi? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Honeydew Melon? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Sugar Snap Peas? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Zucchini? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |

Thank you!

Appendix B – Tasting of the Reds Event Planning Resources

- i. Produce and Supplies Worksheet
- ii. Produce Preparation Chart
- iii. Parent Volunteer Request Letter
- iv. Red Produce Fact Sheet
- v. Tasting of the Reds Student Survey

Red Produce and Supplies Worksheet Sample

Calculate the total number of servings needed by adding the total number of students and the number of teachers/ school staff that will be present in the lunch room (~25).

Number of servings needed: _____

Produce

Parent volunteer works with the Area Specialist to order produce.

| Item | How Packed | Servings per container | Quantity needed |
|---|---|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Food and Nutrition Area Specialist To Order: | | | |
| Strawberry | 8, 1 pound containers | 160 servings per case | |
| Red apple | Approx. 125 apples per case | 500 servings per case | |
| Red bell pepper | 25 pound case – 50 peppers per bag | 500 servings per case | |
| Grape Tomato | 12 pints per case (~30 tomatoes per pint) | 120 servings per case | |
| Orange Juice | 8 ounce bottles | | 4, 8 ounce bottles |
| Low-fat ranch dip | 1 gallon (128 ounces) | 256 servings per gallon | |
| 1 oz soufflé cups (250/sleeve) | Sleeve – 250 cups per sleeve | 250 servings (cups) per sleeve | |

Paper Products and Balloons

Parent coordinator will arrange purchase of these items from a local party supply store.

| Item | Quantity |
|--------------------------|--|
| 6 inch paper plates | Based on # participants calculated above |
| 5 inch red paper napkins | Based on # participants calculated above |
| Red balloons | 12 |

Kitchen and Cafeteria Equipment

Parent Coordinator can ask the cafeteria manager to verify that the school kitchen has these items.

| Item | Quantity | Available (Yes/No) |
|---|-----------------|--------------------|
| Cutting Board | 2-3 | |
| Apple slicer (makes ~ 8 wedges) | 2-3 | |
| Knife | 2-3 | |
| Large containers to store cut fruit prior to plating | 8-10 | |
| Plastic wrap to cover cut fruit | 1 | |
| Large colander | 2 | |
| Sink area for washing fruits and vegetables | 1 | |
| Large serving trays or sheet pans to pass out plated samples (12 pre-plated samples per tray) | Need @ least 10 | |
| Rolling tray cart | 1-2 | |
| 6 foot table without benches (reserve with office staff) | 1 | |
| Microphone (reserve with office staff) | 1 | |

Tasting of the Reds Fruit and Vegetable Preparation Chart

| Item | Day Before Event | Event Day To be completed 1 hour before first lunch |
|---|--|--|
| Red bell pepper Serving Size: 2 spears | Step 1: Set aside one whole pepper for display Step 2: Peel off stickers Step 3: Wash Step 4: Cut into ¼-inch wide spears Step 5: Place in covered container or bag for next day | |
| Red grape tomato Serving Size: 2 tomatoes | Step 1: Set aside a few tomatoes for display Step 2: Wash Step 3: Place in covered container or bag for next day | |
| Strawberry Serving Size: 2 strawberries | | Step 1: Set aside a few strawberries for display Step 2: Wash Step 3: Place in pan and cover with plastic wrap |
| Red apples Serving Size: 2 wedges | Step 1: Set aside one whole apple for display Step 2: Peel off stickers Step 3: Wash | Step 4: Use apple slicer to cut into 8 wedges Step 5: Pour 4 (8oz) containers Orange Juice into mixing bowl. Place sliced apples into Orange Juice and remove with slotted spoon. Step 6: Place in pan and cover with plastic wrap |
| Low-fat Ranch Dressing | | Step 1: Fill 1-ounce soufflé cups ½ full with low-fat ranch dressing Step 2: Place on trays and cover with plastic wrap |

Parent Volunteer Request Letter

Tasting of the Reds

On _____ (date),
_____ (school)
will be participating in **Tasting of the Reds!** Students will taste two red fruits and two red vegetables during their lunch period. This event was created to promote eating fruits and vegetables every day.



We need **Parent Volunteers** to have this event. Please return the form at the bottom of this page if you can help for one or more lunch periods between _____ am to _____ pm. Also, we need help preparing the produce in advance. We will be working in the kitchen _____ (date, time).

Yes, I can volunteer to help with the Tasting of the Reds event.

Name: _____

Date/Time Available: _____

Phone Number: _____

Student Name: _____

Teacher: _____

Please respond by: _____ (date).



Tasting of the Reds Fruit and Vegetable Fact Sheet

Strawberry

- Berries are brimming with vitamin C, potassium, and fiber.
- On average, there are 200 tiny seeds on every strawberry.
- There are more than 600 varieties of strawberries, each with their own size, shape, and color.
- The peak season for fresh strawberries is between April and October.
- Over 80% of the strawberries produced in the United States are grown in California. They produce over 1 billion pounds of strawberries a year!

Red Apple

- Today, Americans eat about 120 apples apiece each year.
- There are about 2500 known varieties grown in the US.
- Available Year Round.
- The red apple is the favorite for eating.

Red Bell Pepper

- Great source of vitamins A and C.
- The variety of the pepper plant and the stage of the ripeness determine the flavor and color of each pepper. For example, a red bell pepper is simply a mature green bell pepper.
- Bell peppers are available and are in good supply all year, but they are more plentiful and less expensive during the summer months.

Grape Tomato

- Tomatoes are members of the fruit family, but they are served and prepared as a vegetable.
- Tomatoes are an excellent source of vitamin C and a good source of vitamin A.
- These yummy veggies were mistakenly thought to be poisonous until the nineteenth century.

Tasting of the Reds Survey

Circle your answer

| | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|----|
| Did you like the Red Bell Pepper? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Red Grape Tomato? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Strawberry? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Red Apple? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |

Thank you!

Tasting of the Reds Survey

Circle your answer

| | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|----|
| Did you like the Red Bell Pepper? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Red Grape Tomato? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Strawberry? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Red Apple? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |

Thank you!

Tasting of the Reds Survey

Circle your answer

| | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|----|
| Did you like the Red Bell Pepper? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Red Grape Tomato? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Strawberry? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Red Apple? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |

Thank you!

Tasting of the Reds Survey

Circle your answer

| | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|----|
| Did you like the Red Bell Pepper? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Red Grape Tomato? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Strawberry? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Red Apple? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |

Thank you!

Appendix C – Tasting of the Yellow/Orange Event Planning Resources

- i. Produce and Supplies Worksheet
- ii. Produce Preparation Chart
- iii. Parent Volunteer Request Letter
- iv. Yellow/Orange Produce Fact Sheet
- v. Tasting of the Yellow/Orange Student Survey

Yellow/Orange Produce and Supplies Worksheet Sample

Calculate the total number of servings needed by adding the total number of students and the number of teachers/ school staff that will be present in the lunch room (~25).
 Number of servings needed: _____

Produce

Parent volunteer works with the Area Specialist to order produce.

| Item | How Packed | Servings per container | Quantity needed |
|---|--|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Food and Nutrition Area Specialist To Order: | | | |
| Yellow Squash | 20 pound case (approximately 20-28 squash) | 300 servings per case | |
| Yellow Tomatoes | 12, 1 pint containers | 120 servings per case | |
| Pineapple | 6 pineapples/case | 120 servings per case | |
| Cantaloupe | 35 pound case (approximately 15 melons) | 150 servings per case | |
| 1 oz soufflé cups (250/sleeve) | Sleeve – 250 cups per sleeve | 250 servings (cups) per sleeve | |

Paper Products and Balloons

Parent coordinator will arrange purchase of these items from a local party supply store.

| Item | Quantity |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 6 inch paper plates | Based on # participants calculated above |
| 5 inch yellow/orange paper napkins | Based on # participants calculated above |
| Yellow/Orange balloons | 12 |

Kitchen and Cafeteria Equipment

Parent Coordinator can ask the cafeteria manager to verify that the school kitchen has these items.

| Item | Quantity | Available (Yes/No) |
|---|-----------------|--------------------|
| Cutting Board | 2-3 | |
| Knife | 2-3 | |
| Large containers to store cut fruit prior to plating | 8-10 | |
| Plastic wrap to cover cut fruit | 1 | |
| Large colander | 2 | |
| Sink area for washing fruits and vegetables | 1 | |
| Large serving trays or sheet pans to pass out plated samples (12 pre-plated samples per tray) | Need @ least 10 | |
| Rolling tray cart | 1-2 | |
| 6 foot table without benches (reserve with office staff) | 1 | |
| Microphone (reserve with office staff) | 1 | |

Tasting of the Yellow/Orange Fruit and Vegetable Preparation Chart

| Item | Day Before Event | Event Day To be completed 1 hour before first lunch |
|--|---|---|
| Yellow Squash Serving Size: 1 slice | Step 1: Set aside one whole squash for display Step 2: Peel off stickers Step 3: Wash Step 4: Slice into ¼" slices Step 5: Place in covered container or bag for next day | Take a few pictures of the plated yellow/orange fruits and vegetables |
| Yellow Tomato Serving Size: 2 tomatoes | Step 1: Set aside tomatos for display Step 2: Wash Step 3: Place in covered container or bag for next day | |
| Pineapple Serving Size: 2 pieces | Step 1: Set aside a pineapple for display Step 2: Slice in 10, ¼ inch slices Step 3: Quarter each slice Step 4: Place in covered container or bag for next day | |
| Cantaloupe Serving Size: 2 pieces | Step 1: Set aside one whole cantaloupe for display Step 2: Peel off stickers Step 3: Wash | Step 4: Cut into 2-inch wedges Step 5: Slice rind off Step 6: Cut each wedge into 3 mini wedges Step 7: Place in pan and cover with plastic wrap |
| Low-fat Ranch Dressing | | Step 1: Fill 1-ounce soufflé cups ½ full with low-fat ranch dressing Step 2: Place on trays and cover with plastic wrap |

Parent Volunteer Request Letter

Tasting of the Yellow/Orange

On _____ (date),
_____ (school)
will be participating in **Tasting of the Yellow/Orange!** Students will taste two fruits and two vegetables during their lunch period. This event was created to promote eating fruits and vegetables every day.



We need **Parent Volunteers** to have this event. Please return the form at the bottom of this page if you can help for one or more lunch periods between _____ am to _____ pm. Also, we need help preparing the produce in advance. We will be working in the kitchen _____ (date, time).

Yes, I can volunteer to help with the Tasting of the Yellow/Orange event.

Name: _____

Date/Time Available: _____

Phone Number: _____

Student Name: _____

Teacher: _____

Please respond by: _____ (date).



Tasting of the Yellow/Oranges Fruit and Vegetable Fact Sheet

Yellow Squash

- They belong to the plant family that includes melons and cucumbers.
- George Washington and Thomas Jefferson were enthusiastic squash growers.
- Today squash is available in numerous shapes, sizes and colors, such as white, yellow, orange, green-brown, gray and even striped.
- New England colonists gave this vegetable its name from several Native American words, of which all meant “something eaten raw”.

Yellow Tomato

- Tomatoes are members of the fruit family, but they are served and prepared as a vegetable.
- Tomatoes are an excellent source of vitamin C and a good source of vitamin A. These yummy veggies were mistakenly thought to be poisonous until the nineteenth century.

Pineapple

- The Hawaiian Islands are the leading producers of pineapple.
- There are four types of pineapples mainly found in the marketplace. These include the Gold, smooth Cayenne, Red Spanish and Sugar Loaf.
- The Gold variety features an extra sweet flavor, golden color, and higher vitamin C content.

Cantaloupe

- Good source of vitamin A, C and potassium.
- Contain a high water content.
- Cantaloupe is a variety of fruit from the melon family.
- Cantaloupe, which is actually called a muskmelon, is the most common melon within the United States.
- The majority of cantaloupe produced in the United States is grown in California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas.
- Cantaloupe is available year-round but their peak season is June through August.

Tasting of the Yellow/Orange Survey

Circle your answer

| | | |
|---------------------------------|-----|----|
| Did you like the Yellow Squash? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Yellow Tomato? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Pineapple? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Cantaloupe? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |

Thank you!

Tasting of the Yellow/Orange Survey

Circle your answer

| | | |
|---------------------------------|-----|----|
| Did you like the Yellow Squash? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Yellow Tomato? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Pineapple? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Cantaloupe? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |

Thank you!

Tasting of the Yellow/Orange Survey

Circle your answer

| | | |
|---------------------------------|-----|----|
| Did you like the Yellow Squash? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Yellow Tomato? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Pineapple? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Cantaloupe? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |

Thank you!

Tasting of the Yellow/Orange Survey

Circle your answer

| | | |
|---------------------------------|-----|----|
| Did you like the Yellow Squash? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Yellow Tomato? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Pineapple? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Cantaloupe? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |

Thank you!

Appendix D – [Tasting of the Blue/Purple](#) Event Planning Resources

- i. Produce and Supplies Worksheet
- ii. Produce Preparation Chart
- iii. Parent Volunteer Request Letter
- iv. Blue/Purple Produce Fact Sheet
- v. Tasting of the Blue/Purple Student Survey

Blue/Purple Produce and Supplies Worksheet Sample

Calculate the total number of servings needed by adding the total number of students and the number of teachers/ school staff that will be present in the lunch room (~25).

Number of servings needed: _____

Produce

Parent volunteer works with the Area Specialist to order produce.

| Item | How Packed | Servings per container | Quantity needed |
|---|------------------------------|--|-----------------|
| Food and Nutrition Area Specialist To Order: | | | |
| Purple Grapes | 18 pound case | 250 servings per case | |
| Plums | 70 – 80 plums per case | 150 servings per case | |
| Purple Carrots | 5 pound bag | 150 servings per bag | |
| Purple Cabbage | 2, 5 pound bags per case | 300 servings per case | |
| Low-fat ranch dip | 1 Gallon – 128 ounces | 256 servings per gallon | |
| 1 oz soufflé cups (250/sleeve) | Sleeve – 250 cups per sleeve | 250 servings (soufflé cups) per sleeve Note: Need 2 soufflé cups per person (1 for dip and 1 for shredded purple cabbage) | |

Paper Products and Balloons

Parent coordinator will arrange purchase of these items from a local party supply store.

| Item | Quantity |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 6 inch paper plates | Based on # participants calculated above |
| 5 inch blue/purple paper napkins | Based on # participants calculated above |
| Blue/Purple balloons | 12 |

Kitchen and Cafeteria Equipment

Parent Coordinator can ask the cafeteria manager to verify that the school kitchen has these items.

| Item | Quantity | Available (Yes/No) |
|---|-----------------|--------------------|
| Cutting Board | 2-3 | |
| Knife | 2-3 | |
| Large containers to store cut fruit prior to plating | 8-10 | |
| Plastic wrap to cover cut fruit | 1 | |
| Large colander | 2 | |
| Sink area for washing fruits and vegetables | 1 | |
| Large serving trays or sheet pans to pass out plated samples (12 pre-plated samples per tray) | Need @ least 10 | |
| Rolling tray cart | 1-2 | |
| 6 foot table without benches (reserve with office staff) | 1 | |
| Microphone (reserve with office staff) | 1 | |

Tasting of the Blue/Purple Fruit and Vegetable Preparation Chart

| Item | Day Before Event | Event Day To be completed 1 hour before first lunch |
|--|--|--|
| Purple Grapes Serving Size: 3 – 4 grapes | Step 1: Set aside a few grapes for display Step 2: Wash Step 3: Take off vine Step 4: Place in covered container or bag for next day | <i>Take a few pictures of the plated blue/purple fruits and vegetables</i> |
| Plums Serving Size: ½ plum | Step 1: Set aside a plum for display Step 2: Remove stickers Step 3: Wash Step 4: Place in covered container or bag for next day | Step 5: Cut plums in half and remove pit Step 6: Place in container and cover with plastic wrap |
| Purple Carrot Serving Size: 1 carrot | Step 1: Set aside a carrot for display Step 2: Wash Step 3: Soak in water bath Step 4: Place in water bath and cover for the next day | Step 5: Drain water and cover with plastic wrap |
| Purple Cabbage Serving Size: 1 ounce | | Step 1: Fill 1-ounce soufflé cups ¾ full with shredded cabbage Step 2: Place on trays and cover with plastic wrap |
| Low-fat Ranch Dressing | | Step 1: Fill 1-ounce soufflé cups ½ full with low-fat ranch dressing Step 2: Place on trays and cover with plastic wrap |

Parent Volunteer Request Letter

Tasting of the Blue/Purple

On _____ (date),
_____ (school)

will be participating in **Tasting of the Blue/Purple!** Students will taste two fruits and two vegetables during their lunch period. This event was created to promote eating fruits and vegetables every day.



We need **Parent Volunteers** to have this event. Please return the form at the bottom of this page if you can help for one or more lunch periods between _____ am to _____ pm. Also, we need help preparing the produce in advance. We will be working in the kitchen _____ (date, time).

Yes, I can volunteer to help with the Tasting of the Blue/Purple event.

Name: _____

Date/Time Available: _____

Phone Number: _____

Student Name: _____

Teacher: _____

Please respond by: _____ (date).



Tasting of the Blue/Purples Fruit and Vegetable Fact Sheet

Purple Grapes

- The grape is one of the oldest fruits to be cultivated going back as far as biblical times.
- Spanish explorers introduced the fruit to America approximately 300 years ago.
- Grapes are about 80 % water.
- Grapes come in more than 50 varieties in black, blue, blue-black, golden, red, green, purple, and white colors with a juicy pulp inside.
- Good source of fiber.
- Most U.S. grapes are grown in California.

Plums

- There are more than 140 varieties of plum sold in the United States.
- Plum season extends from May through October.
- Plum trees were brought to California from Asia in the 1870's.
- Good source of vitamin C.

Purple Carrots

- Excellent source of Vitamin A, which is necessary for healthy eyesight, skin, growth, and also aids our bodies in resisting infection.
- Carrots are available and in season all year long.

Purple Cabbage

- Rich in fiber and vitamin C and helps fight cancer.
- There are at least a hundred different types of cabbage grown throughout the world.
- Cabbage is available in many varieties: red or purple, green and Napa cabbage.
- Cabbage is one of the oldest vegetables, dating back to the 1600's.

Tasting of the Blue/Purple Survey

Circle your answer

| | | |
|----------------------------------|-----|----|
| Did you like the Purple Grapes? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Plums? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Purple Carrot? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Purple Cabbage? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |

Thank you!

Tasting of the Blue/Purple Survey

Circle your answer

| | | |
|----------------------------------|-----|----|
| Did you like the Purple Grapes? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Plums? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Purple Carrot? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Purple Cabbage? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |

Thank you!

Tasting of the Blue/Purple Survey

Circle your answer

| | | |
|----------------------------------|-----|----|
| Did you like the Purple Grapes? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Plums? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Purple Carrot? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Purple Cabbage? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |

Thank you!

Tasting of the Blue/Purple Survey

Circle your answer

| | | |
|----------------------------------|-----|----|
| Did you like the Purple Grapes? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Plums? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Purple Carrot? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |
| Did you like the Purple Cabbage? | Yes | No |
| Would you eat it again? | Yes | No |

Thank you!

Appendix E – Promoting a Healthy Environment & Healthy Events and Meetings Documents that promote evidenced-based environmental and policy changes that can affect change and make a positive impact in our schools and community.

- i. Promoting a Healthy Environment
 - a. Celebrations
 - b. Rewards
 - c. Fundraising
- ii. Healthy Events and Meetings
 - a. Checklist
 - b. Guidelines
 - c. Sample Policy

Promoting a Healthy Environment

Celebrations

Fun and Healthy Celebrations

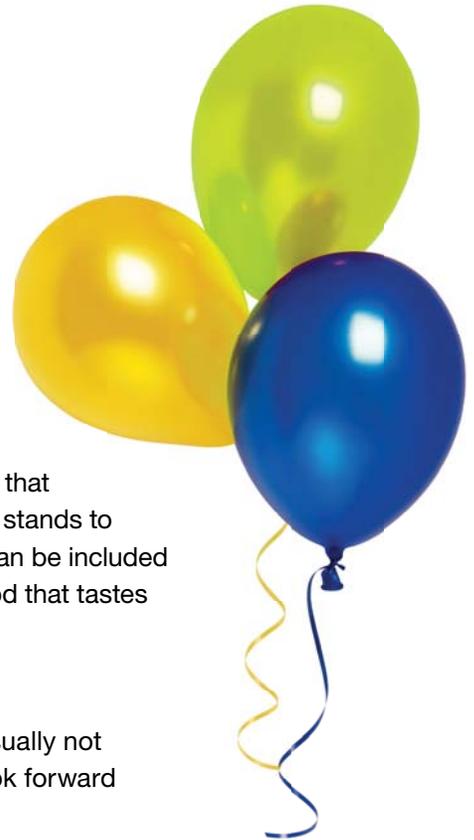
From birthday to holiday parties throughout the school year, children and teachers have numerous reasons to celebrate. Celebrations are a great way for children to feel part of the school community. When the learning environment is made festive, children, teachers and parents can come together to enjoy a break from the routine.

Traditionally, school celebrations center around food. Foods such as cupcakes, cookies, candy, chips and beverages are often the central components of the school party menu. While these foods, in moderation, can be part of a healthy, well-balanced diet, these unhealthy choices have almost become daily norms in the classrooms rather than exceptions.

The Anne Arundel County Public Schools' Wellness Policy Team understands that children who are well-nourished are better learners and are better behaved. It stands to reason that school parties are an avenue through which healthy alternatives can be included in the fun. Schools can take advantage of classroom celebrations to serve food that tastes great, is nutritious and allows for nutrition education for the students.

Why Offer Healthy Alternatives at School Celebrations?

- Children love the idea of a party and a break from the routine. They are usually not concerned about the foods that are offered at school parties. Children look forward to sharing free time with teachers, parents and their friends.
- Healthy alternatives at school parties provide a consistent message which supports important lessons about health, instead of contradicting healthy messages.
- When school parties promote health, schools are helping to positively change eating behaviors of children and parents.
- Children are excited about new and different things, including healthy party activities (see reverse) and healthy party snacks.
- When school parties include fruits, vegetables, whole grain snacks, low-fat or fat-free milk, cheese, or yogurt — even if cupcakes are offered — children learn that party food can also be healthy.



The message is simple: Lifelong health choices begin now. Why not make school parties an opportunity for creating positive healthy habits?

Healthier School Celebrations: Teachers and Parents Working Together

The Anne Arundel County Public Schools' Wellness Policy Team encourages teachers to serve as role models for healthy choices and to help children develop lifelong habits of eating well and being active. School parties provide an excellent opportunity for teachers and parents to work together toward these goals. Parents look forward to being with their children during the school day and usually are the ones planning school parties. Often, teachers must lead the way in helping parents understand the importance of healthy alternatives to traditional party treats.

Fun and Healthy Options at School Celebrations

- For an upcoming party, send a list home asking for parents to sign up to bring juice boxes, veggie platters, fruit trays, whole grain pretzels or crackers along with cupcakes OR cookies. Such a list lets parents know you think nutritional balance is important even during celebrations.
- Parents can contact the cafeteria manager at the school to see what healthy food options they can provide.
- Let the children plan a healthy party menu and prepare the food for their party. Ideas like orange smoothies, trail mix with raisins, cereal and dried fruit, and fruit salad are easy no-cook party fare. Parents can bring supplies.



- Plan a thematic craft for the party. For example, painting pumpkins for Halloween, or Valentine mailboxes for holding cards children will receive. Parents can be asked to bring in supplies.
- Party games are always a hit. Having a Back-to-School scavenger hunt where children look for school supply items is a lot of fun! Children love to hunt for treasure.
- Take some time to go outside — kids will appreciate the extra free time and fresh air built into the party.
- For goody bags, have parents bring pencils, erasers, or small toys and stickers instead of candy.
- Have a parent come and read special books related to the celebration. Children love hearing stories from someone new!

Promoting a Healthy Environment

Rewards

Healthy Rewards for Kids

Why Healthy Rewards in the Home and Classroom?

Kids are offered foods as reward for “good behavior” in many settings. Often these foods have little or no nutritional value, but are easy and cheap — such as candy and chips — and bring about only short-term behavior change.

There are many disadvantages to using unhealthy food as rewards:

- It teaches kids to eat as a reward, even when they are not hungry.
- It sends the message that achievements should be marked by eating.
- It may add unnecessary calories, sugar and fat to the child’s diet, which can cause weight gain and lead to an unhealthy weight.
- It can undermine healthy nutrition practices being taught at home or at school.
- It can establish poor dietary habits that may last a lifetime.

Children learn and behave better when they eat well and are active!

Children respond to healthy rewards with improved behavior and stronger achievement in school. Kids naturally enjoy eating healthy and being physically active. It is important for families, schools and communities to provide kids ample opportunities to develop lifelong habits for better health. If you choose to reward children with food, consider healthy options like an apple, banana, carrot sticks, string cheese or even low-fat or fat-free chocolate milk.

Choosing Healthy Rewards at Home

- Have your child take a walk with a parent or caregiver.
- Read a favorite book together or play a board game of your child’s choice.
- Take a special trip to a museum or park.
- Listen to music of your child’s choice (and dance!).
- Work together on a project of your child’s choosing.
- Play an outdoor game together (a water balloon or snowball fight, hide and seek, tag).
- Create a treasure box for small items such as stickers, special pencils, small toys, craft kits, sidewalk chalk, fun erasers, plastic jewelry and plastic bugs/animals from which your child can choose.



Children appreciate and are rewarded by quality time with parents and caregivers. Create a sticker chart to allow your child to earn these healthy rewards.

Anne Arundel County Public Schools' Wellness Policy: A Move in the Right Direction

The Anne Arundel County Public Schools' Wellness Policy Team encourages teachers to manage classrooms with healthy rewards such as those listed here. These relationship and activity-based rewards help teach children that unhealthy foods do not have to be a reward for academic success and good behavior.

Choosing Healthy Rewards at School

Students may

- Walk with the teacher at lunch.
- Read outside with a buddy.
- Be a helper in another classroom.
- Have a special item on their desk.
- Listen to music at lunch.
- Be able to use the teacher's desk.
- Have a homework-free night.
- Have lunch with the teacher or principal.
- Have extra recess.
- Read to a younger class.
- Choose from a classroom treasure chest for items such as pencils, stickers, small toys and other items.

Some teachers use a voucher system to allow students to earn "play money" or tokens to purchase non-food rewards.

Teachers, parents and community members have an incredible opportunity to work together to improve the physical and emotional health of children by consistently offering healthy rewards, plentiful opportunities for physical activity and quality time together.



Adapted with permission from Action for Healthy Kids, Virginia. Partial funding for this project was provided by the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and is supported by the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant (3B01DP009025) from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Promoting a Healthy Environment

Fundraising

Healthy, Creative Ideas for Fundraising

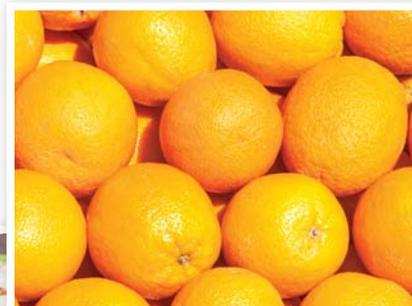
Each year, schools around the country create plans for fundraising endeavors; often times these efforts are coordinated by parents and Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) or Organizations (PTOs). Candy, cookie dough, chocolate and soft drink sales provide money for a variety of necessary school improvements and scholarships. Schools use these funds to purchase playground equipment, classroom materials such as updated globes and maps, subsidize costly field trips, and many more important items. Switching gears from traditional candy sales to healthier products can be a difficult decision to make, given the perceived success and profitability of longstanding fundraising efforts. Still, it is important to try.

Why not sell candy if it raises money?

- Purchasing candy and cookie dough, as well as other foods or beverages of limited nutritional quality, promotes poor dietary habits for those who purchase and consume these items.
- School fundraising efforts should support the well-being of children and their loved ones.
- Fundraising with healthy foods and non-food items demonstrates a school commitment to promoting healthy behaviors. It supports the classroom lessons students are learning about health, instead of contradicting them.
- Parents, family members and friends may want to support fundraising efforts and feel obligated to buy them, but may feel uncomfortable about the options.
- There are numerous alternatives that not only promote health, but also raise money for schools.

You can support healthy eating for the whole family through the sale of foods that are low in fat, sugar and sodium such as:

- Bottled water
- Fresh fruit (fresh citrus is especially popular in the winter months)
- Popcorn
- Trail mix
- Pretzels
- Individual (aseptic) milk boxes
- Whole grain baking mixes
- High fiber, low sodium soup mixes



Raising Funds without Food

The Anne Arundel County Public Schools' Wellness Policy Team encourages schools and their PTAs/PTOs to think creatively about fundraising efforts. Some schools have gone so far as to ban the sale of any food item, regardless of health value. What options exist for those schools looking for alternatives to food sales?

Items That Can Be Sold

- Candles
- Gift wrap
- Magazine subscriptions
- Housewares
- Books
- Calendars
- First aid kits
- Yearbook engraving
- Stationery
- Jewelry
- Holiday ornaments
- Cookbooks
- Raffle donations
- Hats
- T-shirts



Sales, Raffles and Auctions

- Ask local businesses to donate items, services or gift baskets for a silent auction.
- Have parents donate plants from their gardens for a plant sale.
- Have a school-wide yard sale and ask parents to donate items.



Have a "Fun-a-Thon"

Have students obtain sponsors for a bike-a-thon, walk-a-thon, hop-a-thon, dance-a-thon or even a read-a-thon. Make it a school-wide event. The kids will have a blast raising money.

Draw on the Strengths of Your Community

Some schools earn funds by selling parking spaces for various events. It just takes parent and faculty volunteers to manage parking. It is a great opportunity for schools to raise money without food sales.

Healthy Events & Meetings

Checklist

This checklist is useful for any organization to provide a **Healthy Event Environment** that promotes **healthy eating** where foods or beverages are served and promotes **active living** where physical activity is integrated into events when possible.

Let's Eat for the Health of It

- Ensure food and beverages are necessary at your event. Use incentives other than food to motivate attendance. Consider replacing a snack break with a physical activity break.
- If you are serving a meal or snack, include at least three of the five major food groups (grains, vegetables, fruits, dairy and protein) in the meal and at least two of the five in the snack. Focus on fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, and lean meat and non-meat protein options.
 - Make sure most of the food is low-fat, low-calorie, low-sodium and/or low-sugar.
 - Present foods in smaller portion sizes.
 - Provide condiments on the side, such as salad dressings, sandwich toppings or sauces.
 - Consider including nutritional information next to the food being served with facts such as serving size and calorie count.
- Offer water and healthy drinks (100% fruit or vegetable juices, low-fat milk).
 - Avoid soda and sugary juice drinks.
 - Provide tea, as well as coffee.
- Keep food safe to eat.
 - Wash hands before serving food.
 - Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.
 - Do not leave foods at room temperature for more than two hours.

Sample Breakfast Items:

Fresh fruit, low-fat yogurt, unsweetened whole grain cereals or whole grain toast

Sample Lunch Items:

Salads with low-fat dressing on the side, soups that are vegetarian broth-based, 4-ounce meat options with at least two vegetables, whole-grain breads and rolls, baked potatoes with low-fat or vegetable toppings on the side

Sample Snack Items:

Raw vegetables with low-fat dip, whole grain muffins cut in half or dried fruit/trail mix

Sample Dessert Items:

Naturally sweet fruit salad or whole pieces of fruit. If serving sweets, use smaller sizes, such as individual chocolates, rather than large cakes or cookies.

Create a Healthy Environment — Don't Just Sit There

Breaks during events are great ways for people to get physical activity built into their day. Physical activity breaks during a meeting sustain participant focus and attention. Remember to be safe and have fun.

- Schedule at least one five-minute stretch break per hour.
 - Simple stretches and yoga poses
 - Chair exercises such as leg lifts and back twists
 - Arm circles

Organization Name: _____

Event Title: _____ Date: _____

Event Coordinator Name: _____ Event Coordinator Signature: _____



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Healthy Events & Meetings

Guidelines

The Anne Arundel County Department of Health, along with its community partners, aims to promote healthy eating and active living. A key part of this goal is ensuring that all county residents have access to healthy food and beverage choices and to physical activity. These guidelines, which apply the ideas recommended by the Dietary and Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, can be used when planning and purchasing food for any event or meeting.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans help individuals make smart choices about food, beverages and physical activity. The Dietary Guidelines emphasize two main goals: 1) balance caloric intake with physical activity to achieve and sustain a healthy weight; and 2) consume more nutritious foods and beverages, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meats, low-fat dairy, while consuming less unhealthy fats (e.g., saturated, trans fat), sugar and sodium.

The Physical Activity Guidelines are designed to provide information and guidance on the types and amounts of physical activities that provide substantial benefit for Americans.

This guide offers ideas and examples on how to make events and meetings healthier. It includes suggested foods and beverages to consider when discussing refreshment options with caterers, choosing restaurants or sites to hold events, or asking volunteers or attendees to prepare or purchase food and beverages for events and meetings. It also includes suggestions and tips on how to incorporate physical activity.



Events and meetings offer excellent opportunities to provide healthy foods and beverages and options for physical activities to participants.

Ideas for Healthy Foods and Beverages at Events and Meetings

Healthy eating and active living help to reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, some cancers and obesity. Incorporating healthier food choices at events and meetings is a simple way to help keep attendees healthy.

Please reference the Appendix for other menu considerations.

A Healthy Meal Is:

- Well balanced — it includes fruits, vegetables, protein, whole grains and dairy. Visit www.choosemyplate.gov for more information on creating a balanced plate.
- Limited in foods high in solid fats, added sugars and salt.
- Delicious!

A Healthy Meal does NOT need to:

- Be restricting in any way.
- Leave individuals feeling hungry afterwards.
- Be boring or bland.

The following pages include some ideas for healthy food choices for events and meetings. These lists are simply suggestions and can be mixed and matched to create a delicious meal full of nutrients and variety. Remember to include an abundance of fruits and vegetables to help keep attendees focused and full of energy. Also note that condiments and smaller portion sizes can make or break a healthy meal! A sample menu is included in the Appendix; however, please feel free to be creative when planning a healthy meal for an event or meeting!



Snacks and Light Refreshments

- Bite-sized fruits and vegetables in-season like grapes, cherries, strawberries, baby carrots, cherry tomatoes and broccoli florets.
- Whole fresh fruits like apples or bananas.
- Cut-up fresh fruits including honeydew melon, cantaloupe and watermelon.
- Pre-packaged fruit cups and dried fruits, which can provide a tasty treat when refrigeration is not available.
- Cut-up fresh vegetables like celery, squash and bell peppers, served with low-fat or fat-free dips.
- Nonfat or low-fat dips or hummus.
- Plain popcorn or whole-wheat crackers or pita chips.
- Baked tortilla chips and salsa.



Beverages

Serve beverages that are low-calorie, low-fat or have no added sugar such as:

- Water: sparkling, bottled, spring or calorie-free flavored water.
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice, 8 oz. servings or less.
- Regular and decaffeinated coffee or tea.
- Nonfat or low-fat milk.



Breakfast and Brunch

- Include a variety of seasonal or local fresh fruit.
- Flavored nonfat or fat-free yogurt.
- 100% whole grain mini bagels. Serve with low-fat cream cheese, jam or jelly.
- Whole grain mini muffins, fruit bread, or fruit and nut granola bars — try to find options with 5 grams of fat or less per serving.

Lunch and Dinner

- Include a variety of seasonal or local fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Broth- or vegetable-based low sodium soups.
- 100% whole grain breads.
- Vegetable sandwiches or a sandwich tray with lots of fresh veggies, sliced low-fat cheese, lean meats (chicken, turkey, fish) and low-fat spreads.
- Low-fat sandwich spreads and condiments.
- Salads containing a variety of vegetables and fruits. Serve with low-fat dressing on the side.
- Pastas with olive oil, tomato or other vegetable-based sauces.
- Vegetarian alternatives such as bean-based soups and casseroles or vegetable lasagna.
- Serve entrees and side dishes with tasty beans, peas and lentils.
- Choose foods that are baked, broiled, poached, grilled, roasted or steamed.
- Provide at least two vegetables seasoned with fresh herbs at every meal.



Ideas for Fun, Safe Physical Activities at Events and Meetings

Breaks are great ways for attendees to get some physical activity built into their day. Physical activity during events and meetings sustains participant focus and attention. An activity leader does not have to be a certified exercise instructor to lead a physical activity break, participants simply need to have fun and remember to be safe. These guidelines are simply suggestions. They offer easy ways to incorporate physical activity into events and meetings and are not all-inclusive. Some of the tips below may need to be adjusted based on special consideration for participants with physical limitations (see Appendix for suggestions). Be creative with integrating physical activity into your event or meeting. Include information about physical activity opportunities (e.g., walking routes, scheduled stretch breaks) in materials that are sent to attendees in advance of the event or meeting.



A Physical Activity Break Is:

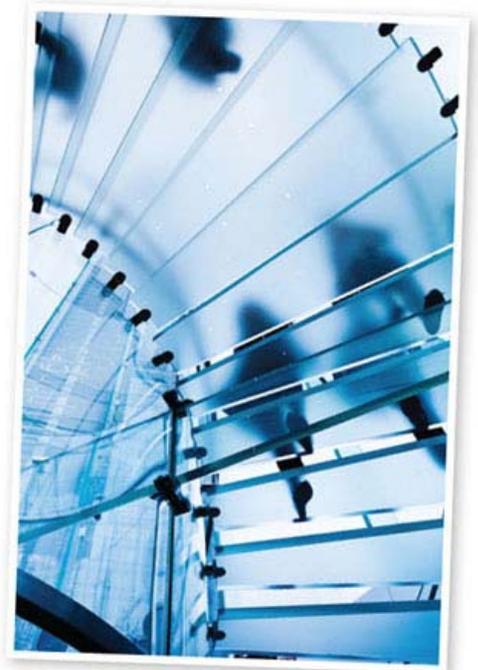
- Completely voluntary!
- 3-10 minutes long to get muscles moving and the heart pumping.
- Done at each individual's pace, does not cause pain and is meant to be comfortable.
- An energizer for the rest of the event or meeting!

A Physical Activity Break does NOT need to:

- Make participants sweat.
- Cause any pain or discomfort.
- Be led by a professional or an organization.

Short Events and Meetings

- Encourage attendees to use the stairs, if possible. Work with the facility to place signs near the elevators showing where the stairs are located.
- Schedule a brief activity, 3-10 minutes, before the event or meeting starts and at its conclusion. Some examples that can be done seated or standing are:
 - Slowly stretch neck, shoulders, arms, hands, legs and feet. Avoid bouncing or jerking movements.
 - Move arms, head or torso in slow circles.
 - March in place or pump arms up and down.



Half-Day Events and Meetings

- Choose a location where attendees can safely and easily take a walk.
- Schedule brief activity breaks every 2 hours. Participants can walk around independently or someone can lead interested participants in a brief physical activity. Consider labeling this time as a “Stretch Break” or “Walk Break” to cue participants to action.

Multi-Day Events and Meetings

- Choose a location where attendees have access to physical activity opportunities, e.g., a park, walking trail or fitness facility.
- Organize early morning physical activity opportunities. These may include, but are not limited to: group walks, jogs, runs or classes such as yoga or Pilates. Include this information in agendas. Remember to select safe and easily accessible routes if participants engage in a group walk, jog or run.
- Encourage networking by suggesting people take a walk together, either inside or outside, and have them talk about their common interests.
- Look for places where attendees can walk to dinner, shop or enjoy other forms of entertainment.
- If participants plan on eating out as a group, look for a local restaurant within walking distance. Remember to select a safe and easily accessible route so that all may participate.
- Provide participants with maps of nearby attractions and walking trails.



APPENDIX

1. Sample Menu A

Breakfast

- 100% whole grain mini bagels
- Low-fat cream cheese and spreads
- Whole grain cereal and nonfat milk
- Low-fat or nonfat yogurt with granola and/or fruit

Lunch

- Vegetable platter with low-fat dip
- Bean or broth-based low-salt soup
- Lean turkey/veggie/tuna rollups on whole grain tortilla
- Salad with low-fat dressing on the side
- Fruit kabobs

Dinner

- Baked chicken, seasoned with herbs rather than salt
- Spinach salad with low-fat dressing on the side
- Baked sweet potato
- Whole grain rolls with nonfat or low-fat spread

Snacks & Desserts

- Fruit and vegetable platters
- Baked tortilla chips and salsa

1. Sample Menu B

Breakfast

- Vegetable omelets cooked with low-fat methods or without egg yolk
- Whole grain mini muffins with low-fat spreads
- Cut up fresh fruit and low-fat yogurt dip
- Nonfat or 1% milk

Lunch

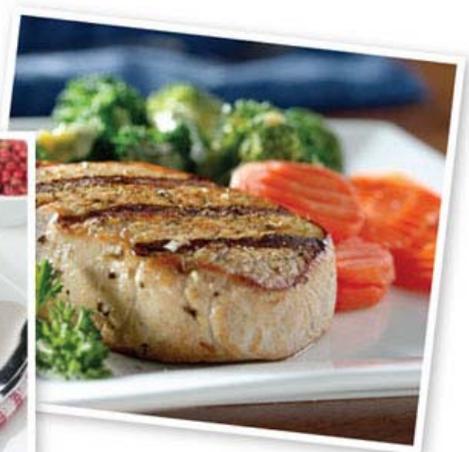
- Grilled or baked chicken sandwich on whole grain bread
- Sliced seasonal fruit
- Green salad full of a variety of colorful veggies with oil and vinegar dressing on the side
- Vegetable platter with low-fat dip

Dinner

- Baked pork chops, seasoned with herbs rather than salt
- Steamed seasonal vegetables
- Brown rice
- Green salad with low-fat or nonfat dressing on the side
- Whole grain rolls with low-fat spread

Snacks & Desserts

- Air popped popcorn with no added butter or salt
- Fresh fruit with low-fat or nonfat yogurt topping
- Sugar-free angel food cake with fresh strawberries



2. Special Nutrition Considerations

A. How to Accommodate Those with Specific Dietary Needs:

- Give attendees the opportunity to share any dietary needs or restrictions (e.g., vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, allergies, sugar-free) before the event or meeting and make sure to pass this information on to the meal provider.
- Ask the meal provider about lower-fat or fat-free preparation methods.
- Minimize food served in oil and with high sodium.

B. Other Menu Considerations:

- Talk to the meal provider about including seasonal or local produce when possible.
- Label nutrition information when possible, in alignment with FDA regulations.
- Provide small or appetizer sized plates to encourage participants to eat smaller portion sizes.
- Choose low or nonfat and low salt condiments (salad dressings, ketchup, mustards, etc.) and serve them on the side.

3. Special Physical Activity Considerations

A. How to Accommodate Those with Physical Limitations:

- There are no rules regarding how to assist people with physical limitations in participating in physical activity. The most important thing is to listen to the individual's needs and never pre-judge his or her requirements.
- Below are two examples of how to accommodate participants with physical limitations.
 - When planning walking activities, choose routes with sidewalks of ample width and that include many curb cuts so that those with mobility devices can participate.
 - If an activity does not work for everyone's abilities, it might just need a minor modification, such as slowing down the pace, or sitting rather than standing, so that everyone can participate.
- Be creative when planning activities so that all can participate!

B. Other Physical Activity Considerations:

- See if a local gym or a wellness or fitness center would be willing to send an instructor to lead activities.
- Consider adding a reminder in registration materials for attendees to bring or wear comfortable shoes and clothing to the event or meeting.



4. Tips on Leading a Physical Activity Break

- Ensure that each participant has sufficient space and clearance in order to avoid injury.
- Advise participants to do only what is comfortable and to stop immediately if they feel any pain or discomfort.
- Make sure that attendees know participation is completely voluntary. There is no pressure to join in.

5. Resources

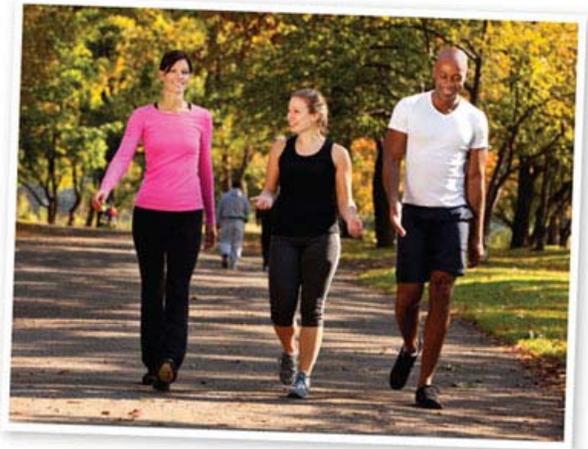
Learn To Live, Anne Arundel County Department of Health
www.LearnToLiveHealthy.org

Healthy Anne Arundel Coalition
www.HealthyAnneArundel.org

Choose MyPlate, United States Department of Agriculture
www.ChooseMyPlate.gov

2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans
www.health.gov/paguidelines

2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans
www.cnpp.usda.gov/dietaryguidelines.htm



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Healthy Events & Meetings

Sample Policy

For use within any organization to foster an environment that promotes **healthy eating** where foods or beverages are served and promotes **active living** where physical activity is integrated into events when possible.

Whereas:

_____ (organization name) is concerned about the health of our members/employees;

Whereas:

People are interested in healthy eating and moving more;

Whereas:

Heart disease, cancer and stroke — the top three causes of death in Anne Arundel County — are largely affected by what we eat and how active we are;

Whereas:

Many positive health benefits, such as prevention or delayed onset of various chronic diseases can be attributed to eating foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy products and increasing physical activity;

Therefore:

Effective _____ (date), it is the policy of _____ (organization name) that all activities and events sponsored or supported by this organization (e.g., meetings, potlucks, catered events, community-sponsored events, celebrations) will always include opportunities for healthy foods and beverages and physical activity by:

- Offering water as a beverage option and omitting sugar-sweetened beverages
- Serving low-fat, low-calorie, low-sodium and/or low-sugar food choices
- Serving fruits and/or vegetables
- Serving fat-free/low-fat milk and dairy products
- Serving foods made from whole grains
- Identifying restaurants/caterers where healthy and/or local choices are available
- Ensuring food safety
- Offering healthy options in vending services
- Including opportunities for physical activity breaks at meetings, conferences and events
- Having organizational leadership serve as role models for healthy food choices and promote healthy lifestyles by encouraging healthy food and physical activity policies

Name: _____ Title: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Organization Name: _____



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