



5 A Day and School-Age Children

5 A Day Challenge

The 5 A Day Challenge is an activity that encourages participants to eat 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day and do a total of 30 minutes of physical activity each day. This activity could be done on many different levels, either as a challenge for one classroom at a time or as a competition (between classrooms, grades or even entire schools!). Don't forget to include parents, faculty and staff. The steps below would help organize a challenge for the entire school. Steps could be easily modified for fewer participants, such as a classroom-only activity.

Two months ahead

- Get the endorsement of the principal and administration.
- Designate a 5 A Day Challenge coordinator.
- Develop a team: teachers, school nurse, foodservice director and staff, parents/PTA, community agencies (Cooperative Extension, local hospitals, health department staff). Include all school departments, especially physical education, the library/media center, music and art teachers.
- Brainstorm for ideas that focus on both 5 A Day and physical activity.
- Schedule the event.
- Solicit participation from parents and community health organizations, such as the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, YMCA or local hospitals. See the **Create the Team** portion of this kit for more ideas.
- Arrange for prizes. Many local businesses are willing to donate prizes.
- Gather recipes, educational resources and other materials.

One month ahead

- Promote the Challenge with posters and flyers distributed to parents, faculty and staff.
- Work with teachers to encourage students to create slogans.
- Elicit parent participation by inviting parents for a school lunch that features new fruits and vegetables.

The week of the Challenge

- Have students perform 5 A Day-related songs during an assembly.
- Demonstrate ways to prepare fruits and vegetables that are easy and great after physical activity.
- Set up a taste-test and/or other 5 A Day activity in the cafeteria.
- Decorate the hallways with posters of fruits and vegetables and encouraging physical activity.
- Copy and distribute the logs to each student/family, teacher and staff member.
- Guide the students through the form each day.
- Remind them to complete the form each night with their family.

After the Challenge

- Tally results and recognize students' efforts.
- Give a certificate to each child/adult who participated. Consider recognizing the student/class/grade/school that ate the most fruits and vegetables, that did the most minutes of physical activity, that tried the most new fruits and vegetables.