

“yourCHOICE” Topics and Activities

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TOPIC 1: yourCHOICE It's Up to You!

Skill-Based Outcomes

Preteens who participate in this activity will be able to:

- ❖ Identify the values that affect their food and lifestyle choices.
- ❖ Practice goal-setting steps to manage eating and lifestyle decisions.
- ❖ Respect the different goals and choices others set for themselves.
- ❖ Prepare a simple, tasty snack.

In the following 10 sequential sessions, preteens will use skill-based outcomes to:

1. Set specific goals for healthful living.
2. Plan changes in their eating and physical activity patterns to promote growth and overall health.

Empowerment Messages

- ❖ Life is full of choices, including choices about food and physical activity. The quality of your life depends on decisions that affect your body, mind, and inner self.
- ❖ The right choice for you depends on your values, needs, and goals. It's important to respect the different choices people make.
- ❖ Decision-making and goal setting skills help you manage your life and your future.

Activity Summary

(Icebreaker) **Mirror Image** - Preteens pair up and mirror one another's movements. They see that it's hard to follow goals that aren't their own.

- 1 **Values Charades** - They act out what's important to them, then discuss how their values guide their actions and goals.
- 2 **"Roll" Play** - With a ball-rolling activity, they explore the power that their choices have in directing what happens in their lives.
- 3 **More "Roll" Play** - Preteens learn and practice goal-setting steps with one or two typical situations that many preteens face. Use the rolling ball to help them take turns with group discussion.
- 4 *(Afterschool Snack)* **Peanut Butter 'N Fruit-Wich** - They make a sandwich snack, as they explore why it's a good snack choice.

(Wrap up) **What's yourCHOICE?** - Each person comes up with personal steps to make goal-setting steps part of his or her life.

Getting Ready

● Read:

- ❖ Do You Know...? on the next page

● Display Posters:

- ❖ *It's Up to You*
- ❖ *Move It!*
- ❖ *FIGHT BAC!*

● Get:

For “Mirror Image”

- ❖ (Optional) tape recorder and audiotape or CD player and CD with upbeat music. Power Panther music can be downloaded from the Internet at www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/collection/collect_tools_2.html.

For “Roll’ Play” and “More ‘Roll’ Play”

- ❖ Ball

For “Peanut Butter ‘N Fruit-Wich” (snack activity)*

- ❖ Ingredients: whole-grain bread, peanut butter, apples, bananas, carrots
- ❖ Equipment: cutting board, knives, grater, paper plates with utensils to serve
- ❖ Table setting: paper plates, knives, napkins

* If your program has been approved to serve USDA’s Afterschool Snacks, the snack served as part of this activity may qualify for reimbursement. For each participant, **serve at least 1 slice of bread and 2 tablespoons of peanut butter.** Suggest serving with low-fat or fat-free milk.

For “Wrapping Up: What’s yourCHOICE?”

- ❖ “yourCHOICE” handout and folder** for each participant
- ❖ pens or pencils
- ❖ (Optional) some form of recognition for each participant

** Plan to keep the handouts in folders at your center so preteens can use them at each session.

Do You Know...?

In a society with so many choices and a bewildering array of options, it's important to learn about healthful eating and active living in several ways:

- ❖ **Learn** facts about food, nutrition, and physical activity.

- ❖ **Explore** ways to eat healthfully and move more.

- ❖ **Discover** what's personally important. Exploring your own values helps you apply what you learn to everyday choices and turn them into healthful living habits.

How can a values approach help preteens learn to make healthful eating and lifestyle choices? From the start, activities in *The Power of Choice* help preteens explore their values. They think about what's important in their lives and how these values guide what they do. That includes decisions about eating and active living. They'll learn to weigh the pros, cons, and outcomes of their options and to match what they do with what's important to them.

Exploring values is personal. These learning activities don't suggest right or wrong. Instead, they help preteens work through a *process* of doing what's right for them: knowing what's important, making choices (based on what they know and care about), and doing it! Knowing their own priorities helps preteens make food and lifestyle choices that help them be the best they can be.

Why address decision-making? Preteens face many decision-making situations each day. Some are part of the day's routine: for example, what to eat or wear, what to do after school, when to do homework. Other decisions may not seem so simple: what classes to take, who they want as a friend, whether or not to join a sports team or club, how to spend their money. Many decisions affect the direction of their lives. Values and goals, friends, family, money, time, feelings of self-worth, and health affect their choices.

As preteens get to know the process of decision-making and goal-setting, explore these questions together:

- ❖ With so many options, how do you make choices?
- ❖ How do you think your personal choices/decisions affect you now and in the future?
- ❖ What choices (food, everyday activities, etc.) affect your health?
- ❖ How do you avoid temptation?
- ❖ Why do people make different decisions? Is that okay?
- ❖ How do your values, surroundings, resources, goals, family, peers, etc., fit in?
- ❖ How can you respect the many different choices that your peers, family members, and others make?
- ❖ How can you make decisions that help you reach your goals?

Tips for Leaders:

Preteens might talk about appearance and body weight issues, as they explore what they think is important. Be careful about this. Growing preteens should not be preoccupied with weight. Weight loss is not recommended unless guided by a health care provider. Use the information on the Height Chart and the Body Mass Index (BMI) from the Team Nutrition website to help them understand more about their body size and to track how they are growing. Have them talk with their family and a doctor about their growth pattern. Help them seek advice from someone they can trust to give good advice. (See Team Nutrition web pages for guidance on adolescent weight and the BMI at teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/yourself.html.)

How can preteens put goal-setting steps in action? Using the case study on the following page, you'll see how goal-setting steps work. Enjoy reading Derek's case, and refer to his scenario as an example for the upcoming activities.

Tips for Leaders:

Refer to Additional Information on this disk for more about...

- ❖ *Young Adolescents: Healthier Lifestyles*
- ❖ *Goal-setting steps*
- ❖ *Decision-making steps*

Goal-setting steps

NAME: Derek, alias Mouse Potato

AFTERSCHOOL ACTIVITY: Surfing the 'net

HIS STORY:

Unknowingly Derek linked to a nutrition website and discovered that his meals and snacks are coming up short on fruits and vegetables. As he surfs the 'net, he mindlessly nibbles away until dinner, but fruits or vegetables rarely cross his lips. He also realized his in-line skates (that he saved 6 months to buy) are somewhere under his bed.

1 SET A REALISTIC GOAL.

Derek has two goals:

- (1) Eat at least 2 cups of fruits and 2½ cups of vegetables each day.
- (2) Spend plenty of time away from the computer being physically active at least 60 minutes most, preferably all, days of the week.

2 MAKE A PLAN.

Derek's steps:

- (1) Ask his family to have fruits and vegetables in the kitchen for snacks.
- (2) Have fruit juice at breakfast.
- (3) Eat a salad with dinner.
- (4) Make a point of using his in-line skates at least three times a week for at least 60 minutes each time. Added bonus: he hopes his plan will get him a new nickname!

3 PREPARE FOR CHALLENGES.

Derek doesn't want to spend time making afterschool snacks.

So, he decided to make a list of quick-to-fix snacks. The kitchen is loaded with all kinds of foods. For starters, he prepares a bowl of cereal with sliced fruit, pours a glass of milk, and cleans up. It takes him only 2 minutes and 15 seconds.

4 ASK FOR HELP.

Derek searched the Web for a snack site and downloaded a bunch of easy ideas.

He even participated in a snack chat with other hungry preteens. His parents were happy when he contributed his ideas to the family grocery list. His best friend found his skates, too, and joined him.

5 GIVE YOURSELF A BREAK.

It's okay for Derek to come up short on fruits and vegetables every so often.

He knows that it's what he eats over a few days that counts.

6 PAT YOURSELF ON THE BACK.

Derek feels good about eating more fruits and vegetables. For exercise, skating is great, especially with his friend. And his new nickname: "Skatestar."

yourCHOICE It's Up to You!

Topic 1 Activities

Getting Started: **Mirror Image**

*Start with an icebreaker that lets preteens know that **The Power of Choice** gets them involved. Turn on some music to add fun to the activity.*

To introduce the topic:

- ❖ **Have preteens stand face to face with a partner.** The one with the closest birthday is the leader.
- ❖ **Have them raise their hands** with palms out and several inches apart.
- ❖ **When you say “yourCHOICE,” leaders will move their hands and stretch their arms; others will follow as a mirror image.** Continue for about 1 minute. If some move faster than their partner, that’s okay – it’s part of the activity.
- ❖ **Now have them reverse their roles** and repeat the activity.

Talk about the experience as you introduce goal-setting. Keep the discussion open-ended. That helps preteens talk freely, and everyone gets a chance to share his or her thoughts. **ASK:**

- ❖ How does it feel to lead? To follow?
- ❖ Can you follow your partner? Why or why not?
- ❖ What did the activity show about making your own choices and setting goals?
- ❖ What happens when someone makes choices for you? Who is the best person to set goals and make choices for you? Why?
- ❖ Do you feel different about choices you make for yourself? How?
- ❖ What about goals you set for yourself? Do you try harder?

POINT OUT: The goals you set for yourself and what you do depend on your values. A value is personal; it’s a belief you care about a lot.

Activity 1: Values Charades

Play “charades” to help preteens share what is important to them—their personal values. (Optional: Keep the tape recorder or CD player on; perhaps change the music.)

Start by explaining the game of charades: A guessing game where each person acts out something without talking. Others try to guess what he or she is trying to express, such as reading or studying or playing a sport.

- ❖ **In small groups, have each person act out a personal value** or something he or she cares about.
- ❖ **Talk about each charade:**
 - From the charade, what do you think is important to (*person’s name*)?
 - Why is it important? How is it important? How might that value affect what you do? How can it affect your food choices? Your free time?

Help them reflect on their own values. As you talk together, share your own values, too. **ASK:**

- ❖ What (from your charade or not) do you care about? Why?
- ❖ Do you think your values match what you do? What you eat? How you spend your free time?
- ❖ Why or why not?
- ❖ What isn’t important to you? Why?
- ❖ What if a friend or someone in your family has different values than you do? What can you do? **POINT OUT:** It’s important to respect the different priorities and personal decisions people make. You can respect their choices without giving up what’s important to you.

Sum up their priorities that relate to health: for example, having energy, feeling good, feeling good about myself, looking good, having friends. Share your priorities, too. **ASK:** Why is it smart to take care of your body?

POINT OUT: Your body has something very special inside—YOU!

Activity 2: "Roll" Play

Use a ball-rolling demonstration to explore how changes and choices can affect the lives of preteens.

Start by asking:

- ❖ What's changing in your life? Encourage any answer.
- ❖ What changes can you control?
- ❖ What changes can't you control?
- ❖ **POINT OUT:** Your genes control the way your body grows; you control your chance to be your personal best.

Roll a ball three times without interfering with its direction. **ASK:**

- ❖ Is that where you want the ball to go?
- ❖ Can you change the direction of the ball without touching it?

Put the ball in front of the group without touching or moving it. **ASK:**

- ❖ Can you get the ball moving without touching it?

Roll the ball again. Have someone decide where he or she wants it to go, then kick it gently in that direction while it's rolling.

ASK: How does this demonstration apply to your life? To changes you might make? **POINT OUT:**

- ❖ Many things in life move along no matter what, but perhaps not in the direction you'd like.
- ❖ Other things may stay the same if you don't do anything about them.
- ❖ You can take charge of many changes in your life if you know what you want. Set goals and take action to reach your goals.

Activity 3: More "Roll" Play

Have preteens practice goal-setting steps by thinking through a scenario as a group. As they do so, they'll think of ways to eat and move more. Accept any answer.

(Tip: Do this activity again later as preteens learn more about eating and active living. They'll come up with more options, and judge their choices better.)

Name: Derek, alias Mouse Potato

Afterschool activity: Surfing the 'net

His story: Unknowingly Derek linked to a nutrition website and discovered that his meals and snacks are coming up short on fruits and vegetables. As he surfs the 'net, he mindlessly nibbles away until dinner, but fruits or vegetables rarely cross his lips. He also realizes his in-line skates (that he saved a long time to buy) are somewhere under his bed.

Sit in a circle on the floor. To give preteens a turn to talk, roll the ball to each person. Remember, preteens have the right to pass and then roll the ball to someone else.

Roll the ball to someone to read the scenario aloud. Explain:

- ❖ Derek has goals to work toward. As a group, help him use goal-setting steps to get there.
- ❖ Preteens first need to help Derek: (1) *set a goal*. **Have preteens roll the ball** to three people. Each will be asked to come up with an appropriate goal. As a group, choose one to focus on.

Continue to roll the ball to give preteens a turn to offer ideas for the next five goal-setting steps for the scenario. "Do You Know...?" on page 15 shows the steps and the types of answers they might give.

(2) *Make a plan.*

(3) *Prepare for challenges.*

(4) *Ask for help.*

(5) *Give yourself a break.*

(6) *Pat yourself on the back.*

ASK: What might happen if Derek just lets things happen with no goal-setting steps? How might that affect his chance of doing what is important to him?

(Option) If you have enough time, do Janine's scenario in "What's Your Goal?" found in yourSELF at the Team Nutrition site: teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/yourself.html, so preteens have more practice with goal-setting. Or they can break into small groups to come up with and work through their own case studies.

Activity 4: Peanut Butter 'N Fruit-Wich

Tie this afterschool snack into the scenarios that your group just discussed in Activity 3.

Prepare the snack together:

- ❖ **Give volunteer preteens a chance to wash their hands before handling food.** Talk about and practice this food safety tip. Refer to the messages on the *FIGHT BAC!* poster.

Food Safety-Smarts: Always wash your hands thoroughly in warm, soapy water before you make or eat a snack or meal—especially after using the bathroom or touching other things. Wash for 20 seconds to most effectively get rid of the bacteria on your skin.

- ❖ **Guide preteens in getting the snack ready:** Get out peanut butter and bread; slice bananas and apples (rinsed); peel and shred carrots; serve ingredients on paper plates with utensils; set paper plates, knives, and napkins on the table.
- ❖ **Have everyone put together his or her own Peanut Butter 'N Fruit-Wich as a snack.** Preteens can make their peanut butter sandwich with apple, banana, or carrot—or all three.

As they eat, have them think about Derek. Use the *It's Up to You* poster to talk about their sandwiches. Discuss:

- ❖ Why might the Peanut Butter 'N Fruit-Wich be a smart snack choice for Derek? How about you?
- ❖ What else can you put on this sandwich to meet your goals for eating?
- ❖ What other breads can you use?
- ❖ How can you make this snack at home?
- ❖ What might you do differently? Why?

Wrapping Up: What's yourCHOICE?

Wrap up by having each person think about his or her personal goals.

Review what they learned about this topic. (ASK:)

- ❖ What are the reasons for using goal-setting steps to make choices?
- ❖ How can you set goals and take steps to reach them?

Pass out the “yourCHOICE” handout to each preteen. Explain:

- ❖ During the next sessions, you’ll write 10 personal eating and lifestyle goals on this paper. Under the columns, “more,” “less,” “enough,” you’ll write three simple action steps you can take to reach your goals.
- ❖ Each week you’ll also talk about the action steps you took.
(Optional) Give some form of recognition to each person who takes at least one step to manage his or her own health and future!

On their “yourCHOICE” handout, have preteens:

- ❖ **Write five things they value** (things that are important to them) on the backside.
- ❖ **Write one health-related goal that reflects their values** on the chart on the front of the handout.
- ❖ **Write three action steps** he or she can take this week to reach that goal. (Note: At the next session, ask them what actions they actually took.)
Tip: As a leader, share your own goal and action steps, too. Remind them: there’s “power in your choices!”
- ❖ **Write their names on the sheet.**

Collect the handouts to use in the upcoming sessions.

My goals...	More: I can...	Enough: I can...	Less: I can...	
To make smarter food and activity choices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	"yourCHOICE" Your name _____
To move more and sit less	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
To pay attention to how much I eat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
To use food labels	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
To choose foods with less fat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
To make smarter drink choices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
To make smarter snack choices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
To make smarter fast-food choices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
To avoid the urge to eat too much	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
To try new foods	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

It's Up to You!
Topic 1

TOPIC yourCHOICE 2: Get Up and Move!

Skill-Based Outcomes

Preteens who participate in this activity will be able to:

- ❖ Talk about the benefits of being physically active.
- ❖ Identify his or her own level of physical activity.
- ❖ Come up with ways to sit less and move more.
- ❖ Use the “talk-sing test” to find the right level of physical activity.
- ❖ Make being physically active fun!
- ❖ Prepare an easy, tasty snack drink.

Empowerment Messages

- ❖ A physically active lifestyle is good for your body. It also helps you make the most of your appearance.
- ❖ Being physically active helps you relax and feel less stress.
- ❖ Being physically active is a fun way to spend time with your family and friends.
- ❖ It’s easy to fit being physically active into your everyday life. You don’t need to be an athlete. Just find ways to sit less and move more.

Get Up and Move!
Topic 2

Activity Summary

(Icebreaker) **Untie the Knot!*** - Preteens “untie a human knot” to explore how to solve a problem, such as getting over obstacles to a physically active lifestyle.

- 1 **“Top 10” for Being Physically Active** - They brainstorm “top moves”—reasons and ways to move more.
- 2 **“Body Talk”** - Preteens get their bodies moving at different “body-talk” stations to see if they feel fit and if they need to consider how to boost their level of physical activity.
- 3 **Get Vertical!** - They check out the Physical Activity Pyramid on the *Move It!* poster for fun ways to sit less and move more—and so get enough, more, and plenty of the physical activities for fitness.
- 4 (Afterschool Snack) **Making a Juice Refresher** - Each person creates a thirst-quenching fruit juice blend to replace fluids after being physically active.

(Wrap up) **What’s yourCHOICE?** - Each person comes up with personal steps to move more and sit less—and so puts his or her “power of choice” in action.

*Adapted from *Activities That Teach*.

Getting Ready

● Read:

- ❖ Do You Know...? on the next page

● Display Posters:

- ❖ *It's Up to You*
- ❖ *Move It!*
- ❖ *FIGHT BAC!*

● Get:

For “Top 10’ for Being Physically Active”

- ❖ Large paper, marker, tape

For “Body Talk”

- ❖ One jump rope (or two ropes for double Dutch)*
- ❖ Two (15 ounces) unopened soup cans*
- ❖ Clock or watch with a second hand
- ❖ Tape recorder and audiotape or CD player and CD with fast music for dancing

* You'll need more if you have more than one person doing the activity at a time. (Have volunteer preteens help set up. They might also help others at each “body-talk” station during the activity.)

For “Making a Juice Refresher” (snack activity)**

- ❖ Ingredients: three or more types of fruit juices (orange, pineapple, grapefruit, apple, cranberry, grape, others), oranges and lemons (enough so each participant has a wedge when they're cut), ice cubes or crushed ice, graham crackers—reimbursable food item
- ❖ Equipment: cutting board, knife, stirring spoon, serving pitchers (optional), paper cups with forks to serve orange and lemon wedges, ice “scooper”
- ❖ Table setting: paper cups, spoons, napkins

** If your program has been approved to serve USDA's Afterschool Snacks, the snack served as part of this activity may qualify for reimbursement. For each participant, **serve at least 6 ounces of fruit juice and another food item such as 4 squares of graham crackers.**

For “Wrapping Up: What's yourCHOICE?”

- ❖ “yourCHOICE” handout*** and folder for each participant
- ❖ pens or pencils
- ❖ (Optional) some form of recognition for each participant

*** Reminder: Collect handouts for next session.

Do You Know...?

Why encourage preteens to keep moving? A physically active lifestyle promotes physical, social, and emotional health now and in the future.

Regular physical activity can help them...

- ❖ Have fun with their friends and family
- ❖ Improve relations with their family
- ❖ Cope with stress
- ❖ Get over the “blues”
- ❖ Sleep better
- ❖ Make the most of their appearance
- ❖ Improve their weight
- ❖ Build strength and endurance
- ❖ Move with more ease and flexibility
- ❖ Feel good about themselves
- ❖ Promote overall health
- ❖ Develop skills in sports

How much physical activity is enough? Getting most preteens to sit less and move more is the most appropriate goal. The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommend being physically active at least 60 minutes a day, most or all days of the week. Preteens can gain even more health benefits with increased amounts of time, as well as more intense activities such as running or one-on-one basketball. They can be active for 60 minutes at a time. Or, keep moving for 10-minute periods doing common activities like walking briskly or riding a bike.

How can you judge the level of physical activity?

- ❖ **Active Lifestyle** includes being physically active at a level equal to walking **more than 3 miles** at 3 to 4 miles per hour beyond day-to-day life activities.
- ❖ **Somewhat Active Lifestyle** includes being physically active at a level equal to walking **about 1½ to 3 miles** at 3 to 4 miles per hour beyond day-to-day life activities.
- ❖ **Inactive Lifestyle** includes only the light physical activity of day-to-day life activities.

How can you encourage preteens to move more? Many preteens do not get enough physical activity. Starting at age 13 or so, activity levels often spiral down. Help them come up with ways to stay active as they get older. See the next page for some suggestions for overcoming inactivity.

Do preteens need to join organized sports to get enough exercise?

No. Anyone can be physically active without being an athlete. Walking and riding a bike are easy ways to be active. Organized sports, self-directed activities (such as Frisbee, yard games, skating, even doing your chores at home), and everyday activities can all have plenty of health benefits. In fact, preteens are more likely to stay physically active as they grow up if they don't rely just on organized sports to keep moving. Organized sports can be harder to schedule as people get older.

What can someone suggest?

- ❖ “Consider this: Sitting around too much can give you flabby muscles and may result in weight gain.”
- ❖ “All you need are everyday things: for example, grassy field, sidewalk, running track, basketball court...and bricks, milk jugs, cans. We have them all here!”
- ❖ “Make it part of your daily routine: for example, walk as you talk on the phone, use stairs, walk with a friend, do something while you watch TV, walk to the store.”
- ❖ “Give it a chance. Try it for a while. Make an effort to enjoy it. Find an activity you like to do.”
- ❖ “We’ll try some things that might be fun for you.”
- ❖ “Find a friend in our group to be your exercise buddy.”
- ❖ “You aren’t alone. Others may be thinking more about what they’re doing than looking at you.”
- ❖ “Many everyday activities won’t make you sweat, mess up your hair, or break a nail. Even if they did, what’s more important: how you look for just a little while or your health for life?”

Why not move more?

- ❖ “It’s easier to sit around.”
- ❖ “There’s no equipment or place to do it.”
- ❖ “There’s no time.”
- ❖ “I don’t like to exercise.”
- ❖ “I don’t know what to do.”
- ❖ “Friends and family aren’t physically active.”
- ❖ “I’m embarrassed.”
- ❖ “I can’t stay looking good.”

How can preteens put action in their lives and have fun, too?

Preteens don’t need to be athletes or join a sports team to be active. Encourage them to spend less time sitting in front of the TV and playing computer games and to spend more time in active daily activities, such as walking, using stairs, and cutting grass. Developing habits for everyday activity is easier to sustain for a lifetime than going out for sports.

How do you know if your body is getting a good workout?

Use the “talk-sing test:”

- ❖ **If you can talk while doing a physical activity**, you’re probably moving at a pace that’s right for you.
- ❖ **If you’re too breathless to talk**, slow down.
- ❖ **If you can sing**, you may not be working hard enough—so get moving!

Ten Easy Ways to Get Physical

1 TAKE YOUR FEET.

Forget about asking your folks for a ride or taking the bus. Put your feet to the ground and start walking. Your feet will thank you, your heart will thank you, and Mother Nature will thank you for cutting down on pollution.

2 TRY IN-LINE SKATING.

Fun, fast, and easy to learn, skateboarding and in-line skating are great ways to spend a day outside with friends. Remember: wear the gear (helmet plus knee, wrist, and elbow pads).

3 TAKE THE STAIRS.

Forget the elevator. Take the stairs every chance you can. You'll get a workout without even thinking.

4 WALK THE DOG.

Whether you volunteer or get paid, dog walking is a fun, furry way to be physically active.

5 EARN EXTRA CASH.

That's right, make money while helping your body. Try mowing lawns, weeding gardens, shoveling snow, cleaning garages, and washing the family car or your bike.

6 BE A GOOD NEIGHBOR!

Help older people by walking their dog or volunteering to do household jobs.

7 TURN UP THE MUSIC.

Shake, rattle, and roll to your favorite tunes. It doesn't matter if you move to rap, hip hop, or salsa music, or do the twist—as long as you move as you groove.

8 GO OUT AND PLAY.

Rake a mountain of leaves; jump in it. Make a snowman. Fly a kite. Have a Hula-Hoop contest. Jump rope; try double Dutch with two ropes for more fun!

9 JOIN A CLASS.

Make your moves with aerobics, kickboxing, karate, yoga, tae kwon do, or dancing.

10 BABY-SIT.

Sounds silly, but if you've never kept up with a toddler, you're in for a surprise. They move, and they move fast. Keeping your eye on a tot can challenge even the quickest.

yourCHOICE Get Up and Move!

Topic 2 Activities

Getting Started: Untie the Knot!

Start with an icebreaker. By “untying a human knot,” they’ll explore how to overcome obstacles, including roadblocks to physical activity.

Have preteens stand in a circle, cross their arms, and hold hands with the person on each side.

- ❖ **Challenge them to unravel “the knot” without breaking the circle.** They’ll need to turn, twist, and step over hands without letting go. If a hand slips, they must reconnect the circle just as it was.
- ❖ **Encourage preteens to use problem-solving skills,** as they decide how to move to work out a solution. Encourage them, but avoid offering hints unless time becomes limited. Be sure they succeed.

When they’ve succeeded, challenge their thinking. Keep the discussion open-ended to help preteens talk freely. Give everyone a chance to share his or her thoughts.

- ❖ When did you last move your body more than 30 minutes? How often do you do it?
- ❖ What is a roadblock? (*Something that keeps you from doing something or that separates you from a goal.*)
- ❖ What roadblock were you just trying to overcome? (*Being tangled up when we needed to form a circle.*) **POINT OUT:** Even if you thought it was impossible to untie the knot, you tried until you did it—and you reached your goal.

Continue the discussion, applying the icebreaker to active living. **ASK:**

- ❖ What keeps you from moving more? Brainstorm a list of roadblocks. Give everyone a chance to name some personal roadblocks, such as being physically active every day.
- ❖ If you got \$500 to get rid of those roadblocks, how would you do it?
- ❖ What’s the difference between a roadblock and an excuse? Were any roadblocks to moving just excuses? **POINT OUT:** Some people make excuses for things they don’t want to do. Moving more may seem harder than it really is.

- ❖ **POINT OUT:** If you would take \$500 to move more, then you really don't have reasons (no roadblocks) to sit a lot. You just have hurdles to get over. Some hurdles are higher or more challenging than others.

- ❖ What do you think? Is "I don't like it" or "I'm not good at it" a roadblock or an excuse? **POINT OUT:** You may feel this way if you've had a bad experience. That doesn't mean you'd feel the same way about other fun ways to move more. There's probably something you'd enjoy and be good at.

Activity 1: "Top 10" for Being Physically Active

A simple brainstorming activity helps preteens come up with reasons why and ways to overcome roadblocks to a physically active lifestyle.

Have preteens brainstorm for their "Top 10" reasons to move more and sit less. Encourage them to have fun with their list. Explore how moving more fits with their own values. **POINT OUT:** To overcome hurdles for moving more, you may need to change your routine, or try activities you haven't done before.

Brainstorm and write ideas for "Top 10" reasons to move more...

- ❖ Have fun with my friends
- ❖ Get along better with my family
- ❖ Deal with stress
- ❖ Get over the "blues"
- ❖ Feel more relaxed
- ❖ Look better
- ❖ Get stronger
- ❖ Have more energy
- ❖ Be more flexible
- ❖ Enjoy my snacks
- ❖ Relieve boredom
- ❖ Feel better about myself

Help preteens identify their own level of physical activity based on:

- 1) *Active Lifestyle* includes being physically active at a level equal to walking **more than 3 miles** at 3 to 4 miles per hour beyond day-to-day life activities.
- 2) *Being Somewhat Physically Active* includes being physically active at a level equal to walking **about 1½ to 3 miles** at 3 to 4 miles per hour beyond day-to-day life activities.
- 3) *Being Physically Inactive* includes only the light physical activity of day-to-day life activities.

Ask:

Where do you fit?

- 1) Physically Active? 2) Somewhat Physically Active? 3) Physically Inactive?

How do you know if your body is getting a good workout?

POINT OUT: The "talk-sing test" gives you some guidance

- ❖ **If you can talk while doing a physical activity**, you're probably moving at a pace that's right for you.
- ❖ **If you're too breathless to talk**, slow down.
- ❖ **If you can sing**, you may not be working hard enough—so get moving!

Activity 2: "Body Talk"

Set up "body-talk" stations. Activities at each station give preteens a chance to consider how to move more and improve their fitness. There's no target goal for these activities. Instead, each activity is a starting point to help preteens set goals for moving more.

Before they start:

- ❖ **Play upbeat background music** to set the mood for a fun experience.
- ❖ **POINT OUT:** Each "body-talk" station is a fun activity to help you see what you can do and where you might improve. It's not a competition!

Have preteens take turns going from one "body-talk" station to another, perhaps in pairs. Invite the volunteer preteens who helped set up to explain what preteens need to do at each station.

❖ Station 1: Jumping rope

Check your balance and coordination. **Count how many times in a row you can jump rope** without missing or getting tired. You might have preteens jump double Dutch with two ropes.

❖ Station 2: Can lifting

Check your arm strength. **Hold one unopened soup can tightly in each hand.** Now do two activities:

- **Try to raise your arms over your head 50 times** while holding the cans.
- **Put your arms straight out in front of you, and bring your hands up to your shoulders.**
- **ASK:** Can you do each activity 50 times all at once, in two sets of 25 or five sets of 10, or not at all?

❖ Station 3: Sitting up

Check your abdominal strength. Get a partner to help you.

- **Lie on a carpet or cushion with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor,** about 12 to 15 inches from your buttocks. Cross your arms in front of you.
- **Have your partner hold your feet flat while you bend to touch your knees with your elbows.** **ASK:** How many can you do in 1 minute?

❖ Station 4: Stretching out

Check your flexibility.

- Take off your shoes. **Face the wall, and sit on the floor with knees straight and locked.** Place your feet flat against the wall and approximately 12 inches apart. Without bouncing, **reach forward with your hands to touch the wall.** Leave your fingers there for 5 seconds. Do this three times.
- **ASK:** Can you touch the wall with your fingertips? With the palms of your hands?

❖ Station 5: Moving fast

Check your endurance with a game of indoor tag or by turning up some fast-paced music for rigorous dancing. Consider having everyone do this at the same time.

- First, **talk about the “talk-sing test”** as a way to decide if they’re getting a good workout. They should be able to talk not sing, as they play tag or dance. If they are too breathless to talk, slow down.
- Then, **take your pulse.** Before doing this activity, your pulse will probably be less than 120 beats per minute (BPM).

How to Take Your Pulse: Put the index and middle fingers of one hand on the wrist of the other hand where you can feel your pulse. Now, using a clock or watch with a second hand, count the number of beats for 6 seconds. Multiply by 10 to get your pulse for 60 seconds.

- **Warm up for 3 to 5 minutes.** Start by walking in place or around the room, and gradually move faster and faster.
- Now, **play tag or dance fast!** Keep it up as long as you can—up to 10 minutes if possible.
- **Take your pulse again.** After you’ve done the activity, your heart will beat faster.
- **Talk about the experience.** **ASK:** How long could you keep moving without being too tired? Could you talk? Sing?

Talk about how their bodies felt as they moved faster and more vigorously.

- ❖ **ASK:** How long did it take for your heart to beat faster? When did you breathe harder? Was your face warm or red? Did you sweat? What kind of shape are you in?
- ❖ **POINT OUT:** When your activity level goes up, your body naturally changes. Your heart needs to pump more blood to the muscles you use. You breathe harder because your muscles need more oxygen. Being active increases your body temperature so your face gets warm. You sweat as a way to cool down; it's okay to sweat!

Talk about how they did at each “body-talk” station. **ASK:**

- ❖ How did you do with each activity? What can you do to improve? Why will that be good for you?
- ❖ Encourage preteens to do “body-talk” activities at home—even help family members see what they can do and how they might improve.

Tip: Keep the “body-talk” equipment on hand during *The Power of Choice* sessions. That way, preteens can measure their progress as they add more physical activity to their everyday lives.

Activity 3: Get Vertical!

Explore how to put this sound health advice in action: sit less and move more. The *Move It!* poster is filled with messages to explore about moving more.

Have them react to this fitness tip: “Watching less TV each day can help keep you fit!” **ASK:**

- ❖ To cut your TV “sitting” time, what can you do? Come up with a list of ways. (For example: When watching your favorite shows, can you do something active while you watch?) **POINT OUT:** It doesn’t count to spend more time chatting over the phone and less time watching TV if you’re still sitting! You need to get vertical!
- ❖ What can you do instead of sitting by the tube and the phone? Ideas from the “Ten Easy Ways” (see page 17) lists fit here. **POINT OUT:** Walking to the store for a high-calorie snack instead of watching TV, may defeat the purpose.

Using the *Move It!* poster, ASK:

- ❖ What do you think this poster is saying? (*Don’t sit—move.*)
- ❖ Where do TV watching and computer games fit on the Activity Pyramid?
- ❖ From the lists we just came up with, which activities might you do “Enough?” “More?” “Plenty?”

Remind them to use the “talk-sing test” to see if their bodies are getting a good workout!

Activity 4: Making a Juice Refresher

To quench their thirst after these activities, have preteens concoct their own fruit juice drink.

Prepare the Juice Refresher together:

- ❖ **Give preteens a chance to wash their hands** before handling foods. Talk about the importance of hand washing to help ensure food safety. Refer to the messages on the *FIGHT BAC!* poster.

Food Safety-Smarts: Clean your cutting boards with hot, soapy water after you use them. Nonporous cutting boards can be put in the dishwasher.

- ❖ **Have two volunteer preteens help:** Shake juices and pour into separate pitchers; get out beverage cups, stirring spoon, and ice with “scooper”; rinse and cut orange/lemon wedges then serve in cups with forks; set individual spoons and napkins on serving table.
- ❖ **Have preteens mix two or more juices** in any way they’d like. They can add a squeeze from a lemon or orange wedge, too.

As they enjoy their Juice Refresher, talk about how this fruit refresher helps keep them healthy.

- ❖ **POINT OUT:** Fluids are important anytime—including after being active—to replace fluids they lose with sweat.
- ❖ **Have them look at the foods** within the food groups on the *It’s Up to You* poster to see how fruit juice fits in a healthful way of eating. (Save discussion on the food label’s guidance until later.)

Wrapping Up: What's yourCHOICE?

Wrap up by making “yourCHOICE” action plans for being more physically active.

Review what they learned about this topic. **ASK:**

- ❖ Why is it smart to move more and sit less?
- ❖ What are some easy ways you can do that?
- ❖ What choices can you make to move more and sit less? Why? **Talk about the goals and actions** they can take to be more physically active. *(For example, GOAL: Spend less time sitting in front of the TV. Actions: Take a walk each week with a friend. Substitute 1/2 hour of TV watching each day for doing something fun with my pet or family. Watch TV while helping around the house.)*
- ❖ **POINT OUT:** Be physically active for at least 10 minutes at a time. Many types of moderate or more intense physical activities are okay. Being involved in team or school sports isn't necessary.

On their “yourCHOICE” handout, have each person write a goal and three steps he or she can take this week to sit less and move more. (Note: At the next session, ask them what actions they actually took.)

Have the participants see how they did with the goal and action steps.

TOPIC 3: yourCHOICE

How Much Do You Eat?

Skill-Based Outcomes

Preteens who participate in this activity will be able to:

- ❖ Identify common measures such as 1 cup, ½ cup, 1 tablespoon.
- ❖ Visually estimate amounts of foods compared to common measures or familiar items.
- ❖ Compare amounts of foods to Serving Sizes on food labels and to the amounts of MyPyramid recommendations for 2,000 calories for a day.
- ❖ Tell someone why it's smart to pay attention to how much food he or she eats.
- ❖ Explain why being physically active helps use food energy (calories) from the food they eat.
- ❖ Prepare an easy, tasty snack.

Empowerment Messages

- ❖ Recognize the amounts and kinds of foods MyPyramid recommends for 2,000 calories for a day. The amount of food you eat may be bigger or smaller than the Serving Size shown on the food label.
- ❖ Eat different kinds of foods. You'll improve your chances of getting the many nutrients your body needs for energy and for growing strong and healthy.
- ❖ Eating too much may add up to more food energy (calories) than your body needs to grow and move. Extra calories are turned into body fat.

Optional content to explain the "Amounts of Food for YOU" for individual (preteen and teen boys and girls of various ages and activity levels) is provided on page R-68 of *Reproducibles*. Complementary and similar content is also provided in *Nutrition Essentials Teaching Tools for Healthy Choices*. See: teamnutrition.usda.gov under Resource Library for both publications.

Activity Summary

(Icebreaker) **Size “Squared”*** - Preteens explore the concept of the amount of a Serving shown on a food label with what seems an unrelated activity: taking several toilet paper squares (or paper clips), the number depending on their own choice. They’ll also review what they observed when they participated in previous *Power of Choice* activities.

- 1 **Some or the Whole Thing?*** - Preteens pour out what they usually eat for a snack and then measure how much it is compared to the label’s Serving Size. By using visual cues they can learn to estimate common measures.
- 2 **Snacks—How Much in a Package?** - Using different packages of snacks, preteens discover why they need to pay attention to label information. They can compare amounts of Serving Sizes on food labels to the total amounts of MyPyramid food group recommendations.
- 3 **Visual Cues** - Preteens use visual cues such as a baseball shown on the *How Much Do YOU Eat?* poster. They also can use the *Nutrition Facts Cards* to explore Serving Sizes and the MyPyramid amounts of foods for 2,000 calories.
- 4 **Dance Snack Calories Away!** - Preteens “dance away” snack calories, as they discover how much they need to move to use up the food energy (calories) from an estimated amount of their snack.
- 5 (Afterschool Snack) **Stuffing a Pocket Sandwich** - As they make their afterschool snack, they consider how much they tuck inside a Stuffed Pocket Sandwich.

(Wrap up) **What’s yourCHOICE?** - To put their own “power of choice” in action, they come up with their own ways to pay attention to how much they eat.

*Adapted from *Go Girls!*

Getting Ready

● Read:

- ❖ Do You Know...? on the next page

● Display Posters:

- ❖ *It's Up to You*
- ❖ *How Much Do YOU Eat?*
- ❖ *Move It!*
- ❖ *MyPyramid*
- ❖ *READ IT before you EAT IT!*
- ❖ *FIGHT BAC!*

● Get:

For "Size 'Squared' "

- ❖ Large toilet paper roll with perforated squares (or large container of paper clips)

For "Some or the Whole Thing?"

- ❖ Two large bags of dry snack foods: regular and low-fat
- ❖ Several sizes of bowls
- ❖ Measuring cup

For "Snacks—How Much in a Package?"

- ❖ Candy bars: regular and larger sizes
- ❖ Potato chips: 1 ounce, 1.5 ounces, 2 ounces
- ❖ Pretzels: 1 ounce, 1.5 ounces, 2 ounces
- ❖ *Nutrition Facts Cards*
 - Single foods work best, such as oranges/bread/juice, not mixed foods such as pizza.

For "Visual Cues"

- ❖ Deck of cards, baseball, 9-volt battery, small computer mouse, compact disk (CD)
See "Do You Know...?" on the next page for ideas.

For "Dance Snack Calories Away"

- ❖ Tape recorder and audiotape or CD player and CD with music for slow and fast dancing

For "Stuffing a Pocket Sandwich" (snack activity)*

- ❖ Ingredients: pocket bread or whole-wheat bread, cheese slices, sliced meat,** lettuce, tomato, low-fat salad dressings
- ❖ Equipment: cutting board, knives, grater, paper plates with utensils to serve ingredients
- ❖ Table setting: paper plates, forks, napkins

* If your program has been approved to serve USDA's Afterschool Snacks, the snack served as part of this activity may qualify for reimbursement. For each participant, **serve at least 1 piece pocket bread or whole-wheat bread and 1 ounce cheese slices.**

** *Vary the sandwich, making it a veggie pocket made with beans instead of sliced meat.*

For "Wrapping Up: What's yourCHOICE?"

- ❖ "yourCHOICE" handout*** for each participant
- ❖ (Optional) some form of recognition for each participant

*** Reminder: Collect handouts for next session.

Do You Know...?

Paying attention to both the amounts of Serving Sizes and MyPyramid guidance helps you find out if you eat enough or too much of some foods.

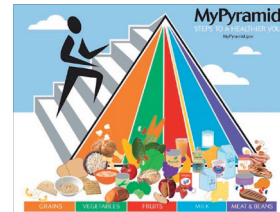
Visual cues can help you estimate how much you eat. Use visual cues shown on the *How Much Do YOU Eat* poster? to estimate common measures of the foods you eat.

Baseball	=	about 1 cup
Computer mouse (small)	=	about ½ cup
Deck of cards	=	about 2 to 3 ounces of meat
9-volt battery	=	about 1 tablespoon
Two 9-volt batteries	=	about 1½ ounces hard cheese
CDs (equal to ½" thick)	=	about 1 ounce slice of bread
8-ounce carton of milk	=	1 cup
4-ounce juice box	=	½ cup

The amount of food you usually eat may be bigger or smaller than common measures. Portions are the amounts of foods a person eats at a single time. Compare how much you eat to the MyPyramid guidance and to label Serving Sizes.

How much do you need of different kinds of foods?

MyPyramid tells you how much of different foods you need based on your activity level, age, and gender. Each day eat the amounts of foods you need from all five major food groups. Everyone needs 3 cups of low-fat or fat-free milk or equivalent foods from the milk group each day. For some food groups, you need larger amounts than for others. Growing preteens and teens often have bigger appetites and may need snacks between meals.



Both the *It's Up to You* and *How Much Do YOU Eat?* posters show the MyPyramid recommended amounts for 2,000 calories a day. This is about the right amount for many teen girls and some boys. More food is needed by most boys and by more active people. Go to MyPyramid.gov to find more precise amounts based on age, gender, and physical activity levels. (Optional) Check out the chart entitled *Amounts of Food for YOU* on page R-68 of *Reproducibles*.

What is a food label Serving Size? It's a measured amount of food shown on food labels that is given in a common household measure. Just by looking, most people often don't know how to determine how big a label Serving Size is.

MyPyramid Food Groups Amounts are shown below for 2,000 calories a day

2 cups • Fruits Group

Choose whole or pieces of fruits more often than juices.

½ cup equivalent is about:

- ❖ 1 small banana or orange
- ❖ 16 seedless grapes
- ❖ ½ cup fruit (canned, cooked, or raw)
- ❖ ¼ cup dried fruit
- ❖ ½ cup fruit juice

2½ cups • Vegetables Group

Choose a variety of different vegetables, especially dark green and orange.

½ cup equivalent is about:

- ❖ 1 cup raw, leafy vegetables
- ❖ ½ cup vegetables (cooked or raw)
- ❖ ½ cup vegetable juice

3 cups • Milk Group

Choose low-fat or fat-free milk products.

1 cup equivalent is:

- ❖ 1 cup milk or yogurt
- ❖ 1½ ounces natural cheese
- ❖ 2 ounces processed cheese

5½ ounces • Meat & Beans Group

Choose lean or low-fat foods.

1 ounce equivalent is about:

- ❖ 1 ounce of lean meat, fish, or poultry
- ❖ ¼ cup cooked dry beans
- ❖ 1 egg
- ❖ 1 tablespoon peanut butter
- ❖ 2 to 3 ounces cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish

6 ounces • Grains Group

Choose whole grains at least half the time.

1 ounce equivalent is about:

- ❖ 1 tortilla, waffle, or pancake
- ❖ 1 cup ready-to-eat cereal
- ❖ 1 1-ounce slice of bread
- ❖ ½ cup cooked rice, pasta, or cereal
- ❖ ½ bagel, hamburger bun, English muffin

How can you recognize the amounts of food you eat?

Try this:

- ❖ Use the visual cues to estimate amounts of foods.
- ❖ Skip the urge to eat from the bag. Measure out an amount you want; put the rest away.
- ❖ Buy single-serving packages or containers instead of big bags or containers. If you buy several small containers—perhaps chips, sodas, candies, or cookies—eat one, and put the rest away.
- ❖ Pay attention to the MyPyramid guidance on amounts of food from each food group for 2,000 calories a day.

What happens if you consume fewer or more calories (food energy) than your body uses?

You need to know how much you eat. Portions are the amounts of foods a person eats at a single time.

- ❖ *If you don't eat enough*, you may not get all the nutrients you need for energy and for growing strong and healthy. When you eat less food (calories) than your body needs, you lose weight.
- ❖ *If you eat too much*, you may get more food energy (calories) than you need to grow and move. Then you gain weight. If you move more, your body uses up more food energy. Preteens concerned about weight loss should talk to a doctor or health provider about their weight. Eating right—*not dieting*—can help them reach the right weight, while supporting growth.

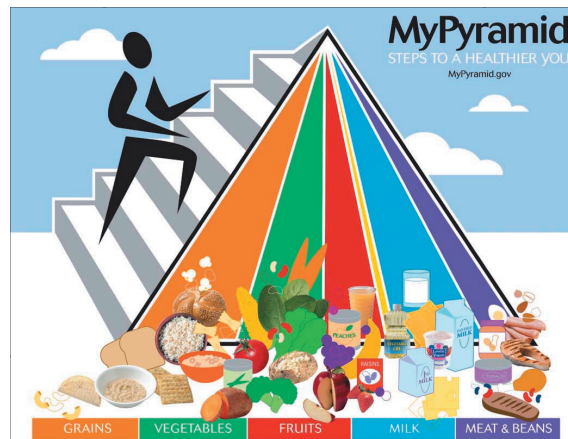
Tips for Leaders:

Encourage teens to avoid extreme diets.

Skipping meals or following unhealthy diets can keep teens from getting the nutrients they need to grow and stay healthy. Very-low-calorie diets are not advised for adolescents during their growth spurt years. Teens who diet during early adolescence, ages 9-14, may have higher weights after their teen years than those who did not diet (1). Advise all teens they need 3 cups of low-fat or fat-free milk (or equivalent foods) every day for their growing bones.

(1) Relationship between dieting and weight change among preadolescents and adolescents. Field et al, *Pediatrics*. Vol. 112, #4, Oct 2003, p. 900-906. <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/reprint/112/4/900>

MyPyramid



yourCHOICE Helpings vs. Servings**Topic 3 Activities****Getting Started: Size "Squared"**

Start with an icebreaker to get preteens thinking about amounts, and review what they learned last time you met.

Start focusing their thinking and talking on choices as preteens take a simple prop—a roll of toilet paper (or a bowl of paper clips)! Now...

- ❖ Pass around the roll of toilet paper or bowl of paper clips. Ask everyone to take some; avoid telling why.
- ❖ Talk about last week's session as preteens take their toilet paper squares or paper clips. Perhaps from Topic 2, what did it take to get you to move more and sit less?
- ❖ Continue talking until the toilet paper roll or paper clip bowl has gone around the group. By nature, some preteens will take more squares or paper clips than others.
- ❖ Have them count their toilet paper squares/paper clips. For each square/clip preteens have, they can tell one thing they already learned about themselves and about staying healthy since they started *The Power of Choice*. Encourage them *not* to repeat. Any personal observations count as something they've learned.

When everyone has shared, continue talking. Keep the discussion open-ended so preteens talk freely, and everyone gets a chance to share his or her thoughts.

- ❖ Would you have taken a different number of squares/clips if you had known what we would use them for? More? Less? Why?
- ❖ Why didn't everyone take the same amount of squares/clips?
POINT OUT: We see things in different ways because our needs are different.

Activity 1: Some or the Whole Thing?

By measuring their snack, preteens see that they may eat more than they think! Use a large bag of dry snacks (pretzel bag, for example) to make this activity more successful; they'll probably take more from a bigger bag.

Involve preteens in the measuring demonstration with the bag of snacks, several bowls, and measuring equipment.

- ❖ **Get several volunteer preteens to fill a bowl with the amount they usually serve themselves.** Then have them measure the amount. Try to give everyone a chance.
- ❖ **Have them compare the amounts they poured out.** **POINT OUT** that everyone had a different idea of the amounts they choose to eat.
- ❖ **Have someone volunteer to check the serving size on the package.**

ASK:

- How does that label Serving Size compare to the amount you chose? **Talk about** the Serving Size, the number of Servings in the whole bag, the number of calories in a Serving Size, and the number of calories in the whole bag.
- How many of you have read a food label? What did you look at? **POINT OUT:** Even if people read the label, they usually don't pay attention to the Serving Size that's written at the top.

Challenge their thinking:

- ❖ How much of this snack do you usually eat?
- ❖ What happens to the calories and other nutrients when you eat that much? What if you eat the whole bag?
- ❖ Why pay attention to Serving Size? **POINT OUT:** When you eat more than the Serving Size on the label, it changes the amount of calories and nutrients in what you eat.
- ❖ How does this activity connect with what we just learned with our toilet paper squares/paper clips? **POINT OUT:** Amount makes a difference.
- ❖ How can you decide how much you will eat of this or any other snack?
- ❖ Why do you think amount or type of food makes a difference? **POINT OUT:** If you eat more food (calories) than you need, the extra calories get stored as body fat. If you don't eat enough, you might not get enough energy to move and grow or enough nutrients to grow and stay healthy.

If time permits, repeat the activity with a low-fat snack. Let them see that a large amount of a low-fat snack can still add up to a lot of calories!

Activity 2: Snacks—How Much in a Package?

Small, medium, or large? Preteens compare calories and fat in different-sized packages of common snack foods.

Distribute a set of Nutrition Facts Cards to the preteens. Also, put out several compact packages of candy, pretzels, and chips to talk about.

❖ **ASK:**

- Would you eat the whole snack at one time if you had picked these snacks, or would you save some?
 - How many Servings does each package have? (Guess without looking at the label.)
 - Where does the label tell you how many Servings in a package?
 - How big is the Serving?
- ❖ Have them check each label to find out how many Servings the package has and how many calories and how much fat one Serving of each snack has.

Challenge their thinking:

- ❖ Now that you've checked the label, what do you think about eating the whole thing at one time? **POINT OUT:** Although small packages look like one Serving, they may be more.
- ❖ How can you decide whether or not to eat the whole thing? **Encourage them:** Look at how many Servings a package has before deciding to eat the whole thing.
- ❖ What can you say to a friend if he or she asks for your advice about eating several packages or deciding to eat just part of one?

Activity 3: Visual Cues

Use visual cues to help preteens estimate amounts of foods for Serving Sizes and the MyPyramid recommended amounts.

Put a deck of cards, baseball, small computer mouse, 9-volt battery, and a CD where everyone can see them. Display the *How Much Do YOU Eat?* poster. Explain: each item helps you estimate amounts of foods. Each item shows a common measure of foods used by the label's Serving amount. Visual cues are also useful to estimate the MyPyramid recommended amounts for the food groups.

- ❖ **Have preteens organize the *Nutrition Facts Cards* based on Serving Sizes.** They will place the cards next to the visual cue that represents the amount they think they would be likely to eat of that food.
- ❖ **Talk about the Serving Sizes and common measures for each item.** Let preteens see if they can figure out the common measure for each visual cue: for example, 3 ounces, 1 cup, ½ cup, 1 tablespoon. (Check “Do You Know...?” on page 30.)
- ❖ **Let them use the Serving Size information on the *Nutrition Facts Cards* to see how close they came to judging the amounts of the Serving Sizes for these foods.** **(POINT OUT:** The *It's Up to You* poster also shows common measures for the recommended amounts from each food group for 2,000 calories for a day.

Talk about the activity:

- ❖ Were you surprised by the Serving Sizes? Why?
- ❖ Do you think you usually eat more or less than a Serving Size for this snack?
- ❖ What happens to the amount of nutrients if you eat bigger amounts?
- ❖ How can you use these visual cues to estimate the amounts you eat?

Have preteens use the *It's Up to You* poster to decide how foods from the *Nutrition Facts Cards* fit in a healthful way of eating. **(ASK:** How can you use information about Serving Sizes to eat enough fruits, vegetables, and whole-grain foods? More calcium-rich foods? Why is that a good idea?

(ASK: How can you use information about common measures and Serving Sizes to estimate the amounts of foods recommended by MyPyramid?

Activity 4: Dance Snack Calories Away!

Have preteens “dance away” snack calories, as they explore the link between the food energy from what they eat and the energy their bodies use.

Get moving—you, too, if you can!

- ❖ Start with 2 or 3 minutes of slow music to warm up muscles.
- ❖ Turn up the beat for 10 minutes of fast dancing.
- ❖ Cool down with slower dancing.

When the dancing is over, **ASK:**

- ❖ With 10 minutes of fast dancing, do you think you used up the food energy (calories) from a candy bar or bag of chips? (See Activity 2.) If not, how much longer do you think you’ll have to dance? **POINT OUT:** Ten minutes of fast dancing can use about 50 to 60 calories depending on how fast you move. Depending on your size, slow dancing uses up about 20 calories in 10 minutes.
- ❖ How long will you need to do fast dancing (no stopping) to use up the food energy from a whole package of candy or chips? How about slow dancing? **POINT OUT:** It may take more effort than you think to use up food energy from larger amounts of food! You’ll need to move longer and with more effort.
- ❖ How long will you need to dance if you eat one Serving compared to eating the whole package?
- ❖ Now, what are the benefits of moving more and sitting less? **POINT OUT:** It’s fun to do physically active things, and moving your body is good for you.
- ❖ What else besides dancing can you do to move more and use up snack calories?

If time permits, invite preteens who joined in “Get Up and Move!” (Topic 2 Activities) to share more reasons to move more and sit less.

Activity 5: Stuffing a Pocket Sandwich

Have preteens make stuffed pocket sandwiches, talking about how much they tuck inside. (Option: make this sandwich with whole-wheat bread instead of pita.)

Prepare Stuffed Pocket Sandwiches:

- ❖ **Give preteens a chance to wash their hands before handling food.**
Talk about and practice this food safety tip. Refer to the messages on the *FIGHT BAC!* poster.

Food Safety-Smarts: Wash cutting boards with hot, soapy water if you used them to cut meat, poultry, or fish *before* you cut vegetables and fruits. Rinse fruits and vegetables with cold water before cutting.

- ❖ **Have several volunteer preteens help get the snack ingredients ready:**
Rinse tomatoes and lettuce; slice pocket bread/whole-wheat bread and tomatoes; shred lettuce; cut meat and cheese into strips; serve each ingredient on paper plates with utensils; shake and open salad dressings; set paper plates, forks, and napkins on the table. Place the *Nutrition Facts Cards* beside each ingredient.
- ❖ **Have everyone “stuff” ingredients in their pocket bread.** Encourage them to think about how much they put inside.

As they eat their Stuffed Pocket Sandwich, **ASK:**

- ❖ How would you rate a Stuffed Pocket Sandwich as a snack choice? They can refer to the *It's Up to You* and the *READ IT before you EAT IT!* posters.
- ❖ How much of each ingredient did you stuff inside? How did it compare to a Serving Size?
- ❖ What type of Stuffed Pocket Sandwich can you make at home? What else can you put inside? How much? **Encourage** them to use enough vegetables and perhaps fruits. They can make an all-veggie stuffed pocket (no meat) with beans, and ask their families to get whole-grain bread or pita to make it!

Wrapping Up: What's yourCHOICE?

Wrap up by making “yourCHOICE” action plans that help preteens pay attention to how much food they eat.

Review what they learned about this topic. Many people eat larger amounts of foods than they realize or than they need. **ASK:**

- ❖ How can you figure out how much you eat?
- ❖ Why might you decide to eat less or more?
- ❖ How can you make changes? **Talk about the goals and actions** they can take to watch how much they eat. *(For example, GOAL: Cut back on how much soda I drink. Actions: Order water rather than a large or super-sized drink at a fast-food place. Measure out my drink into a cup at home instead of drinking from the bottle or can. Choose water or a calorie-free beverage instead of one containing sugar. Or, choose a small can, not a large bottle.)*

On their “yourCHOICE” handout, have each person write a goal and three steps he or she can take this week to be mindful of how much they eat. (Note: At the next session, ask them what actions they actually took.)

Have the participants see how they did with the goal and action steps each person wrote on their own “yourCHOICE” handout for the last topic. They can check (✓) the steps they took so far. (Optional) Each person who took at least one action receives some form of recognition.

Collect their handouts to use in upcoming sessions.

How Much Do You Eat?
Topic 3

TOPIC
.....4: *your*CHOICE
Are You
Label Able?

Skill-Based Outcomes

Preteens who participate in this activity will be able to:

- ❖ Use Serving Sizes and number of Servings on Nutrition Facts labels to be aware of the amount or volume of food and food energy (calories) they choose to eat.
- ❖ Identify nutrients they need to “get less” and those they need to “get enough.”
- ❖ Compare foods to see if the foods are “high” or “low” in different nutrients.
- ❖ Identify that the first three items on Ingredient Lists make up the largest parts of foods.
- ❖ Use food labels to make informed food choices.
- ❖ Make an easy, tasty snack.

Empowerment
Messages

- ❖ Food labels can help you make positive choices and get the food energy (calories) and nutrients you need.
- ❖ Nutrition Facts on a food label tell how many calories (energy) and nutrients you get from one Serving.
- ❖ Nutrition Facts show the amount of the Serving. Larger amounts of foods give you more calories.
- ❖ The % Daily Value (DV) on the Nutrition Facts label is a number that allows you to know whether there’s a lot or a little of a nutrient in a Nutrition Facts Serving of food. A quick guide is: 5% DV or less of a nutrient is LOW; and 20% DV or more is HIGH.
- ❖ To promote your health, Nutrition Facts can help you: (1) choose foods with *Less* fat (especially saturated fat, *trans* fat, cholesterol) and sodium; (2) choose foods with *Enough* fiber, vitamins A and C, calcium, and iron.

Activity Summary

(Icebreaker) **How Much?** Preteens pour and then measure their usual amount of ready-to-eat cereal. Then they discover what's on the Nutrition Facts panel.

- 1 What's on a Label?** - Preteens see how many different things they can learn about a mystery food (macaroni and cheese) by reading the Nutrition Facts and Ingredient Lists on food labels.
- 2 Serving Sizes on the Label** - Preteens explore Serving Sizes on labels by comparing Serving Sizes for the different foods on the *READ IT before you EAT IT!* poster and measuring out a 1-cup amount of food.
- 3 Nutrients—The “5-20% DV” Guide** - Preteens get to know the “5-20% DV” guide to food labeling, and use it to compare foods they pick from the *READ IT before you EAT IT!* poster.
- 4 Balancing Food Choices for the Day** - Preteens learn to use %DVs and Ingredient Lists to fit their food choices into healthful eating for the whole day.
- 5 Shake Up the Grocery Bag!** - Using *Nutrition Facts Cards* DVs and Ingredient Lists for a variety of foods, preteens practice using the “5-20% DV” guide to food labeling. In the process, they move around!
- 6 (Afterschool Snack) Make a Cereal “Sundae”** - Preteens use *Nutrition Facts Cards* and Ingredient Lists to pick toppings to put on the Cereal “Sundae” snack. Then they make their sundae.

(Wrap up) **What's yourCHOICE?** - To put their “power of choice” in action, preteens come up with personal steps for using Nutrition Facts to make their own food choices.

Getting Ready

● Read:

- ❖ Do You Know...? on the next page

● Display Posters:

- ❖ *MyPyramid*
- ❖ *How Much Do YOU Eat?*
- ❖ *FIGHT BAC!*
- ❖ *It's Up to You*
- ❖ *READ IT before you EAT IT!*

● Get:

For "How Much?"

- ❖ Ingredients: corn flakes or other ready-to-eat cereal (enough for each preteen to pour some cereal, which may be 2 cups or more depending on his or her appetite). Keep the cereal box.
- ❖ Small cereal box (1 ounce)
- ❖ Measuring cups
- ❖ Bowls for cereal, one per participant plus one more for the demonstration

For "Servings on the Label"

- ❖ Ready-to-eat cereal and 1 cup measuring cup (from "icebreaker" activity)

For "Balancing Food Choices for the Day"

- ❖ One or more sets of *Nutrition Facts Cards*

For "Shake Up the Grocery Bag!"

- ❖ Copy and cut apart one or more sets of *Nutrition Facts Cards and Ingredient Lists* reproducibles. (Use only single foods, such as bread, and no mixed foods, such as pizza.)
- ❖ Add 12 or more Ingredient Lists from food packages.
- ❖ Grocery bag

For "Make a Cereal 'Sundae'"

(snack activity)*

- ❖ Ready-to-eat cereal (in bowls from "icebreaker" activity)
- ❖ Ingredients: canned or fresh fruits (peaches, pineapple, other), low-fat yogurt, nuts, other cereal toppings, or low-fat or fat-free milk as an option to yogurt
- ❖ Equipment: cutting board, knives, bowls and spoons to serve ingredients, measuring cups
- ❖ *Nutrition Facts Cards and Ingredient Lists*: corn flakes or other cereal, fruits (e.g., canned or fresh peaches, pineapple, other), yogurt, mixed nuts, low-fat milk. Choose cards that match the foods and Ingredient Lists from the packages you provide.
- ❖ Table setting: spoons, napkins, pens/pencils

* If your program has been approved to serve USDA's Afterschool Snacks, the snack served as part of this activity may qualify for reimbursement. For each participant, **serve at least 1 ounce ready-to-eat cereal and ¾ cup canned or fresh fruit. (Specific reimbursement rules exist when yogurt is served in USDA's Afterschool Snacks in the National School Lunch Program.)**

For "Wrapping Up: What's yourCHOICE?"

- ❖ "yourCHOICE" handout**
- ❖ (Optional) some form of recognition for each participant

** Reminder: Collect handouts for next session.

Do You Know...?

How can you use food labels to eat healthfully?

Use both the Nutrition Facts and Ingredient Lists. They both give you useful and different information. The Ingredient List tells you what other foods or substances are found in a specific food. Nutrition Facts on food labels tell the food energy (calories) and nutrients in one Serving of the food inside the package. You can use Nutrition Facts for different reasons, including:

- ❖ To know the nutrient content in one Serving.
- ❖ To know what happens to calorie and nutrient amounts when you eat larger or smaller amounts of foods.
- ❖ To find foods with less or more of certain nutrients. That's helpful in two ways:
 - (1) if you want to cut back on some nutrients, such as total fat, saturated fat, *trans* fat, cholesterol, sodium;
 - (2) if you want to consume more of the nutrients that often come up short, such as fiber, vitamins A and C, calcium, iron.
- ❖ To compare calories (food energy) and nutrients in similar foods, such as two kinds of chips or cheeses.
- ❖ To help you make choices within the food groups.

What nutrition information can you find on a food label?

- ❖ **Serving Size and number of Servings** in the package.
- ❖ **Calories** in one Serving Size.
- ❖ **Nutrients** that need your attention.
- ❖ The %DV on the Nutrition Facts label is a number that allows you to know whether there's a lot or a little of a nutrient in a Serving of food.
- ❖ **Footnote** on the bottom, which shows how much or how little of some key nutrients an average person might need each day. You may need more or less depending on your energy needs.*
- ❖ **Ingredients** show ingredients from largest to smallest amount (by weight). The first three ingredients make up the largest part of a food.

How big is a Serving Size? The Serving Size on food labels varies for different foods. It may be more or less than what you usually eat. You'll find the Serving Size at the top of the Nutrition Facts label. The food label also tells how many Servings the package contains.

* Show footnote on *READ IT* Poster.

What do Nutrition Facts tell you about food energy?

Calories are a measure of how much energy you get from food. Nutrition Facts tell how many calories you get from one Serving. They also tell how many of those calories come from fat. If you eat two Servings, you also get twice the calories. Additionally, as a frame of reference: 1) 100 calories or less per serving is low and 2) 400 calories or more per serving is high.* Pay attention to this information if you need to cut back on calories, perhaps to maintain a healthy weight.

What nutrients need your special attention? All nutrients are important to health. Some need special attention:

- ❖ **Nutrients to get less of:** Choose less solid fats, such as saturated fat and *trans* fats. Choose foods with less cholesterol and sodium. Eating too much of these nutrients can increase the chance of getting certain chronic diseases, such as heart disease.
- ❖ **Nutrients to get enough of:** fiber, vitamins A and C, calcium, and iron. Eating enough of these nutrients can improve your health and help reduce the chances of getting some chronic diseases and conditions, such as osteoporosis (brittle bone disease) from limited calcium and tiredness or anemia from too little iron.

How can you use Nutrition Facts to get less of some nutrients and get enough of others?

Look at the % Daily Values (%DVs), and use the “5-20% DV” guide for comparing nutrients in similar foods and for judging a food’s nutrient contribution to the amount of nutrients people need each day. The %DV show specific amounts of nutrients for each food. The %DVs make it easier to compare the amounts of nutrients in a food to the amount of nutrients people need each day.

- ❖ **5% DV or less is low:** For nutrients you want to get less of (such as saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium, and total fat), try to choose foods with a low %DV.
- ❖ **20% DV or more is high:** For nutrients you want to consume more of (such as calcium or fiber), try to choose foods with a high %DV.

Note: Keep it simple. Stay focused on the %DV and Serving Size. Many foods naturally containing iron have less than 5% DV. Iron fortified foods have higher levels. The %DV does not exist for sugars, *trans* fat, or protein.

*See the Food and Drug Administration’s CFSAN Web site: www.cfsan.fda.gov/labelman for *How to Understand and Use the Nutrition Facts Label*.

What do Ingredients Lists tell you?

The first three ingredients in the Ingredient List make up the largest part of a food. Ingredients are listed in order of weight with the largest amount first and the smallest amount last. Use the Ingredient List to choose to get more or less of certain ingredients. Choose:

- ❖ Foods made with more whole grains.
- ❖ Foods containing less added sugars or solid fats.

yourCHOICE Are You Label Able?

Topic 4 Activities

Getting Started: How Much?

A simple measuring activity gets preteens thinking about food labels and about how much they eat.

Involve preteens in measuring and becoming aware of the amount of food they eat.

- ❖ Let them each pour some ready-to-eat cereal into a bowl.
- ❖ Have them estimate the amount then measure it.
- ❖ Ask someone to find the Nutrition Facts on the food label of the cereal box. **ASK:**
 - Has anyone ever seen Nutrition Facts on a label?
 - What information is there? (*nutrition information about the food in the package, Serving Size, etc.*)
 - How big is one Serving of cereal? (*1 ounce*) Show them a small 1-ounce box of cereal.
 - Have someone pour the contents into another bowl.
 - Is the amount of cereal each of you poured bigger, smaller, or the same as the Serving Size on the food label?

Challenge their thinking: Keep the discussion open-ended so preteens talk freely, and everyone gets a chance to share his or her thoughts.

- ❖ Will it matter if you eat more or less than the Serving amount on the label? Why?
- ❖ Will it be important for anyone in your family to pay attention to the amounts of foods they eat?
- ❖ How will knowing the Serving Size for cereal or any other food help you make food decisions?
- ❖ Before *The Power of Choice*, did you ever pay any attention to nutrition information on food labels? Why or why not?

Have preteens cover their bowls of cereal with a napkin, and write their names on the napkins. Then set the cereal aside for the snack activity later.

Activity 1: What's on a Label?

Preteens explore a Nutrition Facts label on the **READ IT before you EAT IT!** and the **It's Up to You** posters to see how much they can discover about the food inside the package.

Have preteens pair up to see how many things they can find out about the food (macaroni and cheese) on the **READ IT before you EAT IT!** poster just by looking at its Nutrition Facts. **POINT OUT:** The Nutrition Facts on the poster models what they'll see on almost any food package. For fun, let them guess what food it might be. (For example, the calcium amount suggests it might fit partly in the Milk Group.)

As a group, talk about what they found.

❖ **Talk until their list includes the following:**

- Serving Size
- Servings in the package
- Calories in a Serving
- Nutrient amounts in a Serving
- How much you need of some nutrients
- Ingredient Lists

❖ **ASK:**

- What's HIGH and what's LOW in this food? How do you know?
- What ingredients are in this food? How do you know?
- Is it a good meal choice?
- Where does this food fit in the food groups on the *It's Up to You* poster?

Brainstorm to come up with ways they can use this information. Use their ideas to probe discussion and reinforce messages later in the session.

Activity 2: Servings on the Label

Continue to use the **READ IT before you EAT IT!** poster to go step by step through the Nutrition Facts for macaroni and cheese, starting at the top: *Serving Size and Servings per container.*

Have preteens look at the poster to find out about Serving Sizes.

- ❖ How big is a Serving of this food? (*1 cup*)
- ❖ Do you think that's smaller or bigger than what you normally eat?
Using the ready-to-eat cereal from the previous activity to represent macaroni and cheese, have someone measure 1 cup of cereal to see how much 1 cup is.
- ❖ How many Servings would this package of macaroni and cheese have? (*2 Servings of 1 cup each*)

Have them each pick two other food labels on the **READ IT before you EAT IT!** poster. **ASK:**

- ❖ What can you tell about Serving Sizes for these foods? **Reinforce:** Different foods have different Serving Sizes. The label tells you how many.
- ❖ How can you use the Serving Size information on the food label to pick your afterschool snacks? Something to drink?

Have preteens see what they can find out about calories in a food using the food label. **ASK:**

- ❖ You know food gives you energy (measured in calories). What can a food label tell you about the calories in macaroni and cheese? **Probe** if you need to.
- ❖ How many calories does one Serving of macaroni and cheese have? (*250 calories*)

Activity 3: Nutrients— The “5-20% DV” Guide

Move down the Nutrition Facts panel again. This time go to the nutrients, as preteens learn an easy way—the “5-20% DV” guide—to spot nutrients to get less of and nutrients to get enough of.

Have preteens use the **READ IT before you EAT IT!** poster to discover and discuss:

- ❖ What else do you see on the food label? (*nutrients*) **POINT OUT:** These nutrients need your special attention. Foods have other nutrients, too.
- ❖ Why do you think you need to pay attention to these nutrients? (*to stay healthy, to prevent getting too many of some nutrients and not enough of others*)
- ❖ Which nutrients do you need to get less of? (*total fat, saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, sodium*) **POINT OUT:** Eating less of these nutrients reduces your chances for some health problems as you get older, such as heart disease. Now is a good time for you to start eating less of these nutrients to help protect your health.
- ❖ Which nutrients do you need to get enough of? (*fiber, vitamins A and C, calcium, iron*) **POINT OUT:** Eating enough of these nutrients can improve your health and help reduce your chances for some health problems as you get older. Now is a good time for you to start eating enough of these nutrients to help protect your health.
- ❖ Which nutrients in macaroni and cheese are HIGH, and which ones are LOW?
- ❖ How do you know if a food is high or low in a nutrient? **Probe** until the discussion leads to the %DV. **POINT OUT:** The “5-20% DV” guide makes it easy to see if a food has a little or a lot of a nutrient.
 - LOW is when a nutrient for one Serving has 5% DV or less.
 - HIGH is when a nutrient for one Serving has 20% DV or more.
 - The %DV show specific amounts of nutrients for each food. The %DVs make it easier to compare the amounts of nutrients in a food to the amount of nutrients people need each day.
- ❖ How can you use the “5-20% DV” guide to pick snacks, drinks, or other foods? (*For nutrients you need to get less of, eat foods with plenty of LOWS. For nutrients you need to get enough of, eat foods with plenty of HIGHS.*)

Have preteens pair up. Have them each pick at least two foods they like from the **READ IT before you EAT IT!** poster, then tell each other about them using the “5-20% DV” guide.

Activity 4: Balancing Food Choices for the Day

Preteens don't need to give up their food favorites! Instead, help them learn how to use %DVs and Ingredients Lists to fit their food choices into healthful eating for the whole day.

Discuss: You don't have to give up a favorite food if it's HIGH in fat or LOW in fiber or calcium. Here's what you can do instead: (1) When you eat a lot of saturated fat or *trans* fat, cut back on the amount of high-fat foods for the rest of the day. (2) If you don't get enough calcium by noon, be sure to eat calcium-rich foods in the afternoon and evening.

Have preteens start exploring for how much fat different foods and beverages have.

- ❖ Using the *Nutrition Facts Cards*, have them choose five foods or beverages then total the %DV for saturated fat from a Serving of each.
- ❖ **ASK:**
 - What was the total amount of saturated fat from one Serving of each of these five foods?
 - Was it more or less than 100% DV for saturated fat?
 - Would you eat more than one Serving of any of these foods? If so, add the extra %DV of saturated fat onto your total.
 - Now, was your total %DV for calcium more or less than 100% DV?
- ❖ **POINT OUT:** Your goal is to get no more than 100% DV for saturated fat a day from all the foods you eat.

Have preteens start exploring for how much calcium different foods and beverages have.

- ❖ Again using five *Nutrition Facts Cards*, have them add up the total %DV for calcium from a Serving of each.
- ❖ **ASK:**
 - What was the total amount of calcium from one Serving of these five foods?
 - Was it more or less than 100% DV for calcium?
 - Would you eat more or less than one Serving of any of these foods? If so, adjust the %DV for calcium on your total.
 - Now, was your total %DV for calcium more or less than 100% DV?
- ❖ **POINT OUT:** Your goal is to get at least 100% DV for total calcium a day from all the foods you eat.

What do Ingredient Lists tell you?

The first three ingredients in the Ingredient List make up the largest part of a food. Ingredients are listed (by weight) from largest to smallest.

Using the *It's Up to You* poster, help them link nutrient amounts and types of ingredients on food labels to the *MyPyramid* food groups when choosing foods.

Identify the Ingredient List guidance to choose to get more or less of certain ingredients:

- ❖ Choose foods made with more whole grains:
 - oats, whole wheat, brown rice, whole corn meal, bulgur
- ❖ Choose foods containing less added sugars or solid fats:
 - syrup, corn sweetener, fructose, honey, butter, stick margarine, hydrogenated oils, animal fats

ASK: For the food labels you just picked, where do these foods fit in the food groups? How can you use food labels to follow advice from the Vegetables and Fruits Groups? Get enough from the Milk Group and Meat and Beans Group?

If you eat macaroni and cheese, where will it fit in the food groups? (*Grains and Milk Groups*)

What other food can you eat with macaroni and cheese to make it a meal with more variety? **Encourage** them to enjoy foods from other food groups, too.

Activity 5: Shake Up the Grocery Bag!

Get preteens moving, as they practice using % Daily Values to spot foods HIGH and LOW in different nutrients. Fill a grocery bag with Nutrition Facts Cards and at least a dozen Ingredient Lists from the Ingredient List Reproducible or from food packages (choose foods with only a few ingredients) before you start.

Have preteens reach into the grocery bag and take out a **Nutrition Facts Card** or **Ingredient List**. Or have them each pick one *Nutrition Facts Card* for a snack they like.

Designate two areas in the room: one as LOW and one as HIGH with a spot in between.

Ask for a volunteer to call out these nutrients randomly, one at a time.

Nutrients to get “less” of:

- ❖ Total Fat
- ❖ Saturated Fat
- ❖ *Trans* Fat
- ❖ Cholesterol
- ❖ Sodium

Nutrients to get “enough” of:

- ❖ Fiber
- ❖ Vitamin A
- ❖ Vitamin C
- ❖ Calcium
- ❖ Iron

As each nutrient is called out, encourage preteens to decide where they *think* the food fits. They can read the Nutrition Facts on the card and use the “5-20% DV” guide. For example, if a type of fat is named, the preteen will move to the:

- ❖ HIGH area if he or she thinks the food is high in one or more types of fats
- ❖ LOW area if he or she thinks the food is low in one or more types of fats
- ❖ “MIDDLE” if he or she thinks the food is neither HIGH nor LOW

Remember: The “5-20% DV” guide is simply a helpful tool that provides a way for preteens to balance their food choices for the day. It does not turn foods into good or bad foods.

Ask for a volunteer to call out ingredients randomly, one at a time.

Ingredients to get less of:

- ❖ Added Sugar: syrup, corn sweetener, fructose, honey
- ❖ Solid Fats: butter, stick margarine, hydrogenated oils, many animal fats

Ingredients to get enough of:

- ❖ Whole Grains: oats, whole wheat, brown rice, whole corn meal, bulgur

Once everyone is in place:

- ❖ Continue to shake up the grocery bag as preteens look at the high amounts and low amounts of nutrients and ingredients in their food!
- ❖ For both HIGHS and LOWS, have each preteen call out the name of his or her food with its Serving Size. Talk about what they learned about the foods by seeing where their foods fit in the food groups.
- ❖ **ASK:** Do we need to eat less of this nutrient or ingredient, or eat more of it? They can check the *READ IT before you EAT IT!* and *It's Up to You* posters to find out.
- ❖ Using the *It's Up to You* poster, help them link nutrient amounts and types of ingredients on food labels to the MyPyramid food groups when choosing foods.

Activity 6: Make a Cereal "Sundae"

For more practice with label reading and making an easy snack, have preteens use *Nutrition Facts and Ingredient Lists* to decide what to put on their Cereal "Sundae."

Prepare Cereal "Sundaes" (using cereal measured out for "icebreaker" activity):

- ❖ **Give preteens a chance to wash their hands before handling foods.**
Talk about this food safety tip. Refer to the messages on the *FIGHT BAC!* poster.

Food safety-smarts: Clean up with paper towels or a clean, cloth towel that has just been laundered. With paper towels, bacteria go right in the garbage can!

- ❖ **While the group continues with the grocery bag activity, have two volunteer preteens get the snack ingredients ready:** Rinse and cut fruits; place fruits and nuts in bowls; open yogurt (milk—optional); serve ingredients with spoons; set spoons, napkins, and pens/pencils on the table.
- ❖ **In front of each food, have them place the package and a *Nutrition Facts Card* and the appropriate *Ingredient List* from the package or from the *Reproducible Lists*.**
- ❖ **Have preteens choose and measure toppings to put on their cereal,** using information from the *Nutrition Facts Cards* and the *Ingredient Lists* from food packages.

As they enjoy their snack together, talk about the nutrition in their creation and why they chose that topping. Use the *Nutrition Facts Cards*, *Ingredient Lists*, and the *It's Up to You* poster to prompt discussion. **ASK:**

- ❖ Do the toppings have added sugars or solid fats?
- ❖ Are any of the toppings made from whole grains?
- ❖ Are the toppings high or low in any nutrients?
- ❖ How can you tell? **ASK:**
- ❖ What made your Cereal "Sundae" a healthful snack choice?
- ❖ Does it add a new combination of foods to your food choices?
- ❖ How can you use *Nutrition Facts* and *Ingredient Lists* at home?
- ❖ What might you do differently if you make a Cereal "Sundae" at home?
Why?
- ❖ How will the foods you might use compare?

Wrapping Up: *What's yourCHOICE?*

Wrap up by making “yourCHOICE” action plans to use Nutrition Facts to make food choices.

Review what they learned about this topic by having preteens sum up the messages on the *READ It before you EAT IT!* and the *It's Up to You* posters. **ASK:**

- ❖ How can you use the food label to make food choices during the day?
 - ❖ How can label reading help your family make better food choices?
- Why? **Talk about the goals and actions** they can take to use Nutrition Facts. **POINT OUT:** You don't need to know everything on the label. Pick just one or two things to look at. (For example, *GOAL: Use Nutrition Facts to pick snacks to get less saturated fat and trans fats. Actions: Use Nutrition Facts labels to pick between chips or another dry snack. Use Ingredient Lists to check for added sugars and solid fats. Also, check Serving Sizes and %DV for types and amounts of fats to choose what to eat.*)

On their “yourCHOICE” handout, have each person write a goal and three steps he or she can take this week to use Nutrition Facts and Ingredient Lists on food labels to make healthier food choices. (Note: At the next session, ask them what actions they actually took.)

Have the participants see how they did with the goal and action steps each person wrote on their own “yourCHOICE” handout for the last topic. They can check (✓) the steps they took so far. (Optional) Each person who took at least one action receives some form of recognition.

Collect their handouts to use in upcoming sessions.

Are You Label Able?
Topic 4

TOPIC 5: *your*CHOICE

Tastes Great, Less Solid* Fat!

Skill-Based Outcomes

Preteens who participate in this activity will be able to:

- ❖ Use food labels to spot foods with more or less total fat, especially solid fats.
- ❖ Tell someone why it is healthy to choose some types of fats less often or in smaller amounts.
- ❖ State simple ways they can eat lower amounts of saturated fats, *trans* fats, and cholesterol in foods more often.
- ❖ Choose foods containing oils (unsaturated fats) in place of those with saturated and *trans* fats.
- ❖ Make an easy snack low in solid fats.

*Solid fat refers to saturated and *trans* fat throughout this document.

Empowerment Messages

- ❖ Fats and oils provide both flavor and energy.
- ❖ Energy from fats and oils is measured in calories; a gram is a weight that is used to measure the amount of fat in foods.
- ❖ Check the food label's Nutrition Facts and Ingredient List to compare the calories and the amounts and types of fats in foods.
- ❖ Choose foods more often that are low in solid fats like saturated fat and *trans* fats.

Activity Summary

(Icebreaker) **What's on Your Spud?** - Preteens brainstorm their favorite baked potato toppers as they start to become aware of the types of fats in foods.

- 1 **What Do Food Labels Say About Total Fats?** - Preteens quickly review what they learned about food from the fat facts on food labels. They use this skill for the next activity.
- 2 **"Scoop" Fat Facts** - They scoop and measure fats in their food favorites and/or potato toppers to see that foods have different amounts and types of fats.
- 3 **Check It Out: High or Low in Solid Fat?** - They practice using the *Nutrition Facts Cards* and Ingredient Lists, as an easy way to spot foods with different types of fats.
- 4 *(Afterschool Snack)* **Turn Up the "Salsa" With Sals-y Spuds!** - Preteens make a Sals-y Spud (snack with a low-fat topping) to apply what they've learned. As volunteer preteens prepare the ingredients, others do some salsa dancing!

(Wrap up) **What's yourCHOICE?** - To put their "power of choice" in action, preteens come up with personal steps for eating foods with solid fats less often or in smaller amounts.

Getting Ready

● Read:

- ❖ Do You Know...? on the next page

● Display Posters:

- ❖ *READ IT before you EAT IT!*
- ❖ *It's Up to You*
- ❖ *How Much Do YOU Eat?*
- ❖ *Move It!*
- ❖ *FIGHT BAC!*

● Get:

For "What's on Your Spud?"

- ❖ One baked potato for demonstration
- ❖ Several *Nutrition Facts Cards* (baked potato, butter, stick or hard margarine, soft tub margarine, sour cream, bacon, gravy, cheddar cheese shreds, salsa, and chili)

For "What Do Food Labels Say About Fat?"

- ❖ One or more boxes of standard-sized metal paper clips

For "'Scoop' Fat Facts"

- ❖ *Nutrition Facts Cards*
- ❖ Solid fat such as hydrogenated shortening, lard, or stick margarine
- ❖ Sets of measuring spoons, spatulas, knives, or rubber scrapers
- ❖ Clear plastic sandwich bags
- ❖ Markers

For "Check It Out: High or Low in Solid Fat?"

- ❖ One or more sets of *Nutrition Facts Cards* (at least six cards per person)

For "Turn Up the 'Salsa' With Sals-y Spuds!" (snack activity)*

- ❖ *Ahead of time, bake potatoes in the oven or microwave oven.*

(Refrigerate and reheat to at least 165 °F, or keep at or above 140 °F.)

- ❖ Tape recorder and audiotape or CD player and CD with dancing music (perhaps salsa music)
- ❖ Ingredients: small baking potatoes** (one per participant), prepared salsa (2 tablespoons per participant), cheddar (or mozzarella) cheese (1 ounce per participant)
- ❖ Equipment: cutting board, small knife, grater, and bowls for salsa and cheese with spoons to serve
- ❖ Table setting: paper plates, forks, napkins

* If your program has been approved to serve USDA's Afterschool Snacks, the snack served as part of this activity may qualify for reimbursement. For each participant, **serve at least one small (6 ounces) baked potato and 1 ounce cheese.**

** As an alternative snack option to baked potatoes, offer **4 whole-wheat crackers.**

For "Wrapping Up: What's yourCHOICE?"

- ❖ "yourCHOICE" handout*** for each participant
- ❖ (Optional) some form of recognition for each participant

*** Reminder: Collect handouts for next session.

Do You Know...?

With today's snack and fast food choices, most preteens eat too many high-fat foods, perhaps more than they think. At the same time, foods, especially

fruits and vegetables, often come up short. Choose foods often that are low in saturated fat, *trans* fat, and cholesterol.

Why make food choices for less solid fat? Fat is a nutrient that provides both flavor and food energy (calories), and it helps the body use some vitamins. Choose plant oils in place of solid fats. Fats that are solid at room temperature include: 1) the saturated fats in many foods from animals and 2) hydrogenated vegetable oils containing *trans* fats.

- ❖ Many very high-fat foods provide few other nutrients. Very high-fat foods may crowd out other foods from the *MyPyramid* Food Groups that supply nutrients preteens need as their bodies grow and develop.
- ❖ Over time, a lifelong eating pattern that's high in saturated fat, *trans* fat, total fat, and cholesterol can lead to health problems, such as heart disease.
- ❖ In the short run, eating too much solid fat and too many high calorie foods can result in being overweight.

Which foods have more solid fat; which have less? Pay attention to types and amounts of fats...

- ❖ Ingredients Lists will show you when various fats (including butter, lard, or other animal fats, hydrogenated fats, and oils) are used in the process of making a food.
- ❖ Many foods such as butter, stick margarine, gravy, and some candies are high in solid fat. Many desserts and snacks (cookies, cake, thick shakes, fast-food "pies," nachos with cheese sauce) are also made with ingredients containing solid fats.
- ❖ Frying adds fat to vegetables (French fries, potato chips, onion rings) and to chicken and fish, as well as to some grain products (doughnuts, funnel cakes).
- ❖ Use the food label to choose foods lower in saturated fat and *trans* fats.
- ❖ Fruits, vegetables, low-fat and fat-free foods made from milk, lean meat and poultry, fish, and many grain foods may have less solid fat. They may fill you up more, too, without adding a lot of calories.
- ❖ Cooking in a microwave oven, a steamer, or on a grill doesn't add fat.
- ❖ Low-fat or fat-free foods, such as fat-free cookies, aren't necessarily low in calories. To find out, you will need to check the calories per Serving on the Nutrition Facts label.

How can you choose foods to cut back on solid fats?

Use the “5-20% DV” guide as you check Nutrition Facts on food labels to find foods with less solid fats (saturated fat and *trans* fats) and to compare the fat content in food choices. To get less of a particular nutrient in your eating pattern (such as total fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium), try to choose foods with a lower %DV. As a guide, foods with:

- ❖ 20% DV or more for a nutrient—that’s a lot
- ❖ 5% DV or less for a nutrient—that’s a little

Read the Ingredient Lists to choose foods based on their amounts and types of fats in foods. The first three items on Ingredient Lists make up the largest parts of foods. Choose foods without added butter, lard, most types of animal fats, stick margarine, or shortening made from hydrogenated oils.

How much is enough?

Everyone needs some fats and oils. The amounts depend on a person’s energy needs. The DV on a food label is 65 grams for total fat; for saturated fat, it is 20 grams. That’s based on a 2,000-calorie daily diet. For each individual, the %DVs for these fats may be higher or lower depending on your energy needs. Try to keep the amount of saturated fat in your overall food choices to 100% DV or less per day.

How can you make choices about fats in foods without giving up foods you like?

Counting fat grams or adding up %DVs isn’t appropriate for most people. You don’t have to cut out all high-fat foods. Instead, make changes one step at a time to eat less fat overall. Try these easy steps:

- ❖ Eat smaller amounts of food favorites that have more fat.
- ❖ Choose moderate amounts of total fat and lower amounts of saturated and *trans* fats.
- ❖ Substitute. Choose a similar food with less solid fat.
- ❖ Use Nutrition Facts on food labels to compare.
- ❖ Choose oils (liquid fats) that come from plants instead of solid fats that are found in many animals or added as hydrogenated oils as an ingredient.
- ❖ Find lower fat favorites.

yourCHOICE Tastes Great, Less Solid Fat!

Topic 5 Activities

Getting Started: What's on Your Spud!

Focus interest on exploring fat in preteens' food choices by talking about the toppers they put on baked potatoes.

Start by putting a whole, plain baked potato on the table. **ASK:**

- ❖ Do you eat baked potatoes?
- ❖ What do you usually put on top? As preteens name a topper, put a *Nutrition Facts Card* for the topper by the potato, for example:
 - soft or tub margarine
 - butter or stick margarine
 - sour cream
 - bacon
 - gravy
 - cheddar cheese shreds
 - salsa
 - vegetarian chili
- ❖ **ASK:** Except for salsa and chili, what do the other potato toppers have in common? (*They are full of flavor and high in both calories and fat. Most contain solid fats.*)

Challenge their thinking. Keep the discussion open-ended so preteens talk freely, and everyone gets a chance to share his or her thoughts.

- ❖ Suppose you want a topping for your baked potato that tastes great and has less solid fat. How will you make your decision?
- ❖ How can you cut down on solid fats? (*Use some toppings less often or in smaller amounts.*)
- ❖ Why does less solid fat matter to you?
- ❖ Will it be important to anyone in your family?
- ❖ How about your friends? Why?
- ❖ Where can you find the amounts of the different fats in foods?

Activity 1: What Do Food Labels Say About Solid Fat?

Using the *READ IT before you EAT IT!* poster, quickly review what preteens already know about food labels—including fat facts—from Topic 4.

Have them pair up and pick any food from a set of the *Nutrition Facts Cards*. Encourage them to tell each other at least three facts the *Nutrition Facts* label tells them about their favorite foods. For example:

- ❖ Serving Size
- ❖ Servings in the container
- ❖ Calories in one Serving
- ❖ Total, saturated, and *trans* fats in one Serving

Label Lingo for the Nutrients to “Get LESS”

- **Total Fat** – all the types of fat, including saturated fat and *trans* fats in foods
- **Saturated Fat** – fat that is solid (not liquid) at room temperature; mostly in fatty foods from animals
- **Trans Fats** – are usually vegetable oils that are hydrogenated to make them solid at room temperature. (Remember—no %DV is given for *trans* fats.)
- **Mono unsaturated fats and poly-unsaturated fats** – may be listed voluntarily. They are usually from plants and may reduce blood cholesterol levels and the risk of heart disease.
- **Cholesterol** – a fat-like substance but not a fat itself

Continue focusing on the fat content of food.

- ❖ **Discuss:**
 - How much is 1 gram? Give a paper clip to each person. A paper clip weighs about 1 gram.
 - Does that feel like a lot?
 - For the food you picked, how many fat grams does one Serving have? How many paper clips is that?
- ❖ **Have preteens pick the food with the most fat per Serving, then make a paper clip chain to show how much fat that food has.** **ASK:**
 - How many grams are shown for saturated fat?
 - Why is it important to pay attention to the amount of solid fats in food?
 - Does it matter if the fat is from a plant or animal? **POINT OUT:** Saturated fats from animal sources are solid at room temperature.

Activity 2: "Scoop" Fat Facts

This hands-on activity helps preteens see the amount of fat in their everyday food choices, and it's fun for preteens to do!

Start with a quick demonstration. Have them measure the fat in one Serving of the food from a Nutrition Facts label.

- ❖ **POINT OUT:** 1 teaspoon of fat weighs the same as 4 paper clips. **ASK:** If you measure one Serving of this food, how many teaspoons of fat will it have?

1 paper clip = 1 fat gram

4 fat grams in 1 Serving of any food = **1 teaspoon fat** (shortening)

12 fat grams in 1 Serving of any food = **3 teaspoons fat** (shortening)

Have preteens scoop and measure fat in different foods, perhaps their food favorites and/or potato toppers mentioned earlier. Here's how:

- ❖ **Use the Nutrition Facts on the poster or Nutrition Facts Cards to find the fat grams in one Serving.**
- ❖ **Measure shortening** into a plastic bag to see how much fat it has.
- ❖ **Identify the food:** Write the food name, Serving Size, and number of fat grams on the bag. Put the *Nutrition Facts Card* next to it.
- ❖ **Talk about the types of fats in all their foods.** For example:
 - Are you surprised by how much fat any of these foods has? Why?
 - How do they compare for total fat and types of fats? For calories and other nutrients?
 - What happens to fat and calories when the amount you eat gets bigger?
 - When you add fat to food—such as more gravy, salad dressing, or butter or margarine—what happens to calories? (*Calories go up*)
 - Why pay attention to the amounts and types of fats in food? Why will that information be important for someone in your family?

Activity 3: Check It Out: High or Low in Fats?

Now that they've "scooped and measured," preteens apply the "5-20% DV" guide to food labeling as a practical, easy way to identify fats in their food favorites. Refer to Topic 3 for more about the "5-20% DV" guide.

Have preteens sort Nutrition Facts Cards into three piles: foods they think have a little fat, foods they think have a lot of fat, and foods that fit somewhere in between.

Have them use the "5-20% DV" guide to talk about the foods in each pile.

- ❖ Use the *READ IT before you EAT IT!* poster to review the "5-20% DV" guide to food labeling: for one Serving, 5% DV or less is low for fat, and 20% DV or more is high for fat.
- ❖ Encourage them to practice using the "5-20% DV" guide to see if they put all the *Nutrition Facts Cards* in the right pile. **POINT OUT:** You can find this same information about fat on food labels for foods you buy in stores or from vending machines.
- ❖ (Optional) For more practice, have preteens find their food favorites from the *Nutrition Facts Cards* and determine types of fats and whether each fat is a high amount, low amount, or in between amount.

Have them explore how they can choose foods using the label. **ASK:**

- ❖ Which foods are the best choices for you? Why or why not? How can you use the "5-20% DV" guide to pick snacks for the types and amounts of fats?
- ❖ How can you use the food label to pick foods from each food group? Encourage them to use the *It's Up To You* poster and the *Nutrition Facts Cards*.
- ❖ How can you show your family how to use the "5-20% DV" guide to pick foods with less fat? Why?
- ❖ Why is it smart to eat mostly foods lower in saturated fat? **POINT OUT:** Many people eat more saturated fat than they need. Eating too much fat, especially saturated fat, isn't good for you. To help stay healthy, choose lower fat foods often.
- ❖ Are foods with a little fat always low in calories? Use *Nutrition Facts Cards* for cookies and fat-free cookies, and compare. **POINT OUT:** "Low-fat" and "fat-free" don't necessarily mean "low calorie"; you need to read food labels to find out.

Activity 4: Turn Up the "Salsa" With Sals-y Spuds!

Turn on dancing music, perhaps "salsa" music. While some dance, others get snack ingredients ready for easy-to-make super Sals-y Spuds.

Have fun with salsa dancing! Encourage preteens to show some new dance steps to others. Using the *Move It!* poster, talk about dancing as a fun way to move more and sit less.

Prepare Sals-y Spuds:*

- ❖ **Give preteens a chance to wash their hands before handling foods.** Talk about this food safety tip. Refer to the messages on the *FIGHT BAC!* poster.

Food Safety-Smarts: Consider using paper towels to clean up kitchen surfaces. If you prefer cloth towels, machine wash them often in hot water.

- ❖ **While preteens are dancing, have volunteers help get the snack ingredients ready:** Reheat baked potatoes; shake salsa, shred cheddar cheese, and serve each in bowls with spoons; set paper plates, forks, and napkins on the table.

Have everyone put together their own super Sals-y Spud by topping their spud with salsa and cheddar cheese.

As they eat, have preteens use Nutrition Facts Cards and the Its Up to You poster to talk about their "stuffed spud." **ASK:**

- ❖ Why is this Sals-y Spud a healthful snack choice?
- ❖ How much saturated fat will the potato have if you use other toppings, such as gravy or regular sour cream?
- ❖ How can you enjoy a higher fat food, such as cheese, yet still get less fat from your food choices?
- ❖ How will you make this snack at home? Why? **POINT OUT:** Chopped veggies taste great on baked potatoes! **ASK:** Which ones will you try?
- ❖ How will the amount of fat compare with different toppings? Encourage preteens to use *Nutrition Facts Cards* to decide.

* *Optional activity variation:* Offer different kinds of toppings with less fat (vegetables such as corn or onions, salsa) and more fat (cheese, sour cream, gravy). Give preteens a chance to pick toppings and decide on amounts to avoid overdoing on fat in their "stuffed-spud" snack. *Nutrition Facts Cards* provide information about the types and amounts of fats.

Wrapping Up: *What's yourCHOICE?*

Wrap up by making “yourCHOICE” action plans for making food choices with less fat.

Review what they learned about this topic by having preteens sum up the messages about eating foods with less solid fat. **ASK:**

- ❖ What foods do you eat that have a lot of solid fat?
- ❖ What’s the reason for trying to cut back on solid fat in your overall food choices?
- ❖ How can you do that? **Talk about the goals and actions** they can take to cut back on fat in their overall food choices. *(For example, GOAL: Pick lower fat foods when I eat out. Actions: Order pizza with lower fat toppings. Get a small order of fries not the big one.)*

On their “yourCHOICE” handout, have each person write a goal and three steps he or she can take this week to make food choices for each day with less fat. (Note: At the next session, ask them what actions they actually took.)

Have the participants see how they did with the goal and action steps each person wrote on their own “yourCHOICE” handout for the last topic. They can check (✓) the steps they took so far. (Optional) Each person who took at least one action receives some form of recognition.

Collect their handouts to use in upcoming sessions.

TOPIC
.....

6: Make Drinks Count!

yourCHOICE

Make Drinks Count!
Topic 6

Skill-Based Outcomes

Preteens who participate in this activity will be able to:

- ❖ Use Nutrition Facts on food labels to compare drink choices.
- ❖ Use Ingredient Lists to identify types of added sugars.
- ❖ Explain why sodas shouldn't crowd out beverages with more nutrients.
- ❖ Tell how they can enjoy more milk, juice, water, or calorie-free beverages.
- ❖ Prepare an easy, nutrient-rich drink.

Empowerment Messages

- ❖ By drinking lots of beverages high in added sugars, you may get less of the nutrients you need for good health.
- ❖ Choose beverages sensibly to consume fewer drinks high in added sugars. Cut back on *how much* of the sweetened beverages you drink at one time and *how often* in a day.
- ❖ Do not let soda crowd out other beverages, such as milk, that have nutrients you need to stay healthy. Choose milk or juice at home, school, fast-food places, or from vending machines instead of soda.
- ❖ Drink water or calorie-free drinks.

Activity Summary

(Icebreaker) **How Much Soda?** - As an icebreaker, preteens become aware of how much they drink at one time by using different-sized beverage cups.

- 1 Make Mine Orange!** - Preteens uncover the differences among orange-flavored beverages by making their own orange soda, low-calorie orange soda, and orange drink with 10% juice. They use *Nutrition Facts Cards and Ingredient Lists* to compare them with orange juice.
- 2 Which Drink? Check the Facts!** - In small groups, they discuss their beverage choices for situations they face each day.
- 3 Okay to Sweat!** - With an exercise break ("jump rope for health"), preteens work up a sweat then talk about why fluids are important.
- 4 (Afterschool Snack) Chill Out With Juice Floats!** - To quench their own thirst, they make and talk about an easy, healthful snack drink: Juice Floats, made with a mixture of fruit juices and a scoop of frozen-fruit yogurt. (Frozen yogurt is not a reimbursable item. Offer graham crackers with this drink to make a reimbursable snack.)

(Wrap up) **What's yourCHOICE?** - Each person comes up with personal steps for making smart drink choices.

Getting Ready

● Read:

- ❖ Do You Know...?
on the next page

● Display Posters:

- ❖ *MyPyramid*
- ❖ *How Much Do YOU Eat?*
- ❖ *READ IT before you EAT IT!*
- ❖ *Move It!*
- ❖ *It's Up to You*
- ❖ *FIGHT BAC!*

● Get:

For "How Much Soda?"

❖ 4 fast-food cups: 8 ounces, 12 ounces, 16 ounces, 20 ounces
(Ask preteens a week ahead to bring in their plastic or paper drink cups and glasses, so they can become familiar with the volumes of different containers.)

For "Make Mine Orange!" (four preteens per group)

- ❖ 36 ounces club soda
- ❖ 1/2 cup sugar
- ❖ Sugar substitute (amount depends on type)
- ❖ Yellow and red food coloring
- ❖ Orange extract (found near the vanilla extract in the baking section of your supermarket) or a packet of sugar-free orange Kool-Aid
- ❖ 12 ounces orange juice
- ❖ 1 liquid measuring cup, measuring spoons
- ❖ 4 clear cups (12 ounces)
- ❖ 1 mixing spoon per group
- ❖ Small tasting cups (enough for each participant)
- ❖ Recipe cards for 4 orange beverages
- ❖ *Nutrition Facts Cards* and the *Ingredient Lists* from bottles for: orange juice, orange drink with 10% juice, orange soda, low-calorie orange soda, milk, and several other beverages.

For "Which Drink? Check the Facts!"

- ❖ *Nutrition Facts Cards* for beverages: different types of flavored and unflavored milks, milk shake, fruit juices, iced tea with sugar, sports drink, water, sodas, low-calorie sodas, fruit drinks

For "Okay to Sweat!"

- ❖ Jump ropes (several)
- ❖ Small pieces of paper, pencils
- ❖ (Optional) tape recorder and audiotape or CD player and CD

continued on next page

continued from previous page

For “Chill Out With Juice Floats!” (snack activity)*

- ❖ Ingredients: three or more fruit juices (for example, orange, grape, apple, pineapple, mango), frozen-fruit yogurt (about 4 ounces per participant), graham crackers—(reimbursable food item)
- ❖ Equipment: ice cream scoop or large spoon, serving pitchers (optional)
- ❖ Table setting: 12-ounce paper or plastic cups, spoons, napkins
- ❖ *Nutrition Facts Cards*: different types of juices and frozen yogurts

* If your program has been approved to serve USDA’s Afterschool Snacks, the snack served as part of this activity may qualify for reimbursement. For each participant, **serve at least $\frac{3}{4}$ cup juice and another food item, such as 4 squares of graham crackers. (Frozen yogurt is not a reimbursable food from USDA’s Afterschool Snacks.)**

For “Wrapping Up: What’s yourCHOICE?”

- ❖ “yourCHOICE” handout** for each participant
- ❖ (Optional) some form of recognition for each participant

** Reminder: Collect handouts for next session.

Do You Know...?

Why are beverages important? Top reason: they're mostly water, which is a nutrient that's essential to your life. In fact, a lot of *your body* is water: as much as half to three quarters of your total body weight. Getting to specifics, about 83 percent of your blood, 73 percent of your muscles, about 25 percent of body fat, and 22 percent of your bones are water! In one way or another, every body function depends on water. You can only live a few days without it.

How much? On an average day, your thirst and normal drinking behavior will help you replace the amount of liquids you lose through sweat, urine, and your breath. When you sweat a lot, you need even more. Why sweat? It's your body's natural way to cool down—especially on a hot day or when your body gets a real physical workout.

When you sweat, you need to replace the fluids used to cool you down. Without fluids, your body just overheats. Drinking enough liquids before, during, and after physical activity replaces fluid loss. And these fluids help keep you from dehydration and the tiredness that goes with it. Thirst is one sign that you need fluids. But don't wait to

feel thirsty before you drink something. Sometimes your brain doesn't get the thirst signal.

What's a smart beverage choice?

Make drinks count for healthful drink choices! Pick "more" drinks that have a lot of calcium (Milk Group) or vitamin C (Fruits Group and Vegetables Group) and "fewer" drinks that supply mostly just food energy (calories) from added sugars. You can use the "5-20% DV" guide to food labeling to make your choices. If a beverage has 20% or more Daily Value for calcium or vitamin C in one Serving, that's a lot.

Drink water often. It's convenient and thirst quenching.

What if you drink a lot of soda? Sodas are mostly water, sugar or sugar substitute, and a little flavoring. From them, you may get food energy but not much else.

Drinking sodas with added sugar or calorie-free sodas with meals and snacks often crowds out beverages with more nutrients. Without milk or juice, the nutrients they supply—calcium and vitamin C—typically come up short. Preteens need enough calcium for their growing bones, since ages 11 to 18 are when their bones grow the most. Vitamin C helps fight infection and keeps you healthy in other ways.

What do Ingredient Lists tell you?

The first three items on the Ingredient Lists make up the largest parts of foods. Choose less often drinks containing added sugars such as: corn syrup, fructose, corn sweetener, dextrose, fruit juice concentrates, glucose, invert sugar, sucrose, and syrups. Consider the Ingredient Lists for the drinks we've made compared to other beverages.

What can you do to make smart drink choices?

Choose **Enough** milk (3 cups a day) or equivalent foods

- ❖ Pick milk to wash down fast-food meals.
- ❖ Choose flavored *low-fat or fat-free* milk—chocolate, strawberry, or other flavors—for a sweet and fun treat.
- ❖ Make a Cool Smoothie fast in the blender: *low-fat or fat-free* milk, or yogurt, plus juice, and/or cut-up fruits.
- ❖ Choose 1% milk for the same amount of calcium but less fat and fewer calories than whole milk.
- ❖ Choose *low-fat or fat-free* milk with school lunch.
- ❖ Ask your family to keep *low-fat or fat-free* milk on hand.

Choose **Some** juice (but not too much):

- ❖ Drink 100% fruit juice.
- ❖ Choose juice at a vending machine.
- ❖ Mix two different juices for an easy snack drink.
- ❖ Make a Juice Float for an easy and delicious thirst quencher: several fruit juices and frozen-fruit yogurt.
- ❖ Freeze boxes or cans of juice; tuck them in your backpack for later.
- ❖ Ask your family to keep juice on hand.

Choose **Less** soda and other sweetened drinks:

- ❖ Drink sodas as a snack not as a meal beverage.
- ❖ Pour one glass of soda, rather than drink from a large bottle.
- ❖ Drink water if you like to sip while you read, watch TV, or work on the computer.
- ❖ Order the regular-sized drink at a fast-food place instead of the large, jumbo, or super-sized cup.
- ❖ Cut down to one soda or less a day.

yourCHOICE Make Drinks Count!

Topic 6 Activities

Getting Started: How Much Soda?

Start with an icebreaker that gets preteens thinking about how much they drink. The activities also reinforce what they learned earlier about estimating amounts of foods.

Start this way:

- ❖ **If you bring cups, put the four different-sized cups where everyone can see them. Talk about:**
 - Which cup would you use if you were ordering or pouring a soda? Why?
 - Which cup would you use for a glass of milk? Juice? Why?
- ❖ **If preteens bring cups, have them put their cups where they can be seen. Talk about:**
 - What kind of beverage would you drink from each of your cups? Would you use these same cups for something else (milk, juice, etc.)?

Continue keeping the discussion open-ended so preteens talk freely and everyone gets a chance to share his or her thoughts:

- ❖ Why did we have different ideas about how much to drink?
- ❖ Which one of these cups is for just one Serving of milk or soda?
- ❖ How big is a Serving Size? (8-ounce cup) **Have them check the Nutrition Facts on the READ IT before you EAT IT! poster to find out.**
- ❖ Do you usually drink more or less than a Serving?
- ❖ Why does it make a difference if you drink a lot or a little?
- ❖ How will you know how much soda or other beverage you really drink?

Using the READ IT before you EAT IT! poster, have preteens pair up to tell each other what they know about Serving Sizes. Compare the different Serving Sizes with the amounts they drink. Use this chance to go over what they already learned about Nutrition Facts on food labels, including the “5-20% DV” guide.

Activity 1: Make Mine Orange!

By making and comparing orange drinks, preteens discover what's different but seemingly similar in beverages they drink.

Divide into groups, giving each group the “recipes” for four beverages. Don't reveal the names of the beverages yet. Just provide the “recipes” from the duplication master on the next page. They'll mix each drink in a 12-ounce clear cup. (Amounts of juice and soda are slightly adjusted to make the activity easier to do.)

Recipe 1

❖ *Orange Soda:* 12 ounces club soda, 11 teaspoons sugar, 2 drops red food coloring and 3 drops yellow food coloring, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon orange extract or powdered orange flavoring

Recipe 2

❖ *Low-Calorie Orange Soda:* 12 ounces club soda, sugar substitute (amount to equal sweetness of 11 teaspoons sugar), 2 drops red food coloring and 3 drops yellow food coloring, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon orange extract or powdered orange flavoring

Recipe 3

❖ *Orange Juice Drink With 10% Juice:* 1 ounce (2 tablespoons) orange juice, 11 ounces ($1\frac{1}{4}$ cup + 2 tablespoons) club soda, 10 teaspoons sugar, 2 drops red food coloring and 3 drops yellow food coloring, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon orange extract

Recipe 4

❖ *Orange Juice:* 12 ounces orange juice

Recipe 1



12 ounces club soda
11 teaspoons sugar
2 drops red food coloring
and 3 drops yellow food coloring
1/4 teaspoon orange extract
or powdered orange flavoring

Recipe 2



12 ounces club soda
sugar substitute (amount to equal sweetness of
11 teaspoons sugar)
2 drops red food coloring
and 3 drops yellow food coloring
1/4 teaspoon orange extract
or powdered orange flavoring

Recipe 3



1 ounce (2 tablespoons) orange juice
11 ounces (1-1/4 cup + 2 tablespoons) club soda
10 teaspoons sugar
2 drops red food coloring
and 3 drops yellow food coloring
1/4 teaspoon orange extract

Recipe 4



12 ounces orange juice

Before they taste, talk about the drinks they made:

- ❖ Which one would you buy? Why?
- ❖ What do these drinks have in common? (*orange flavor*) What makes them different?
- ❖ What popular beverages do you think you just made? Now's the time to reveal the name of the drink they made.
- ❖ How do the calories and nutrients compare? How do you know? (*Use Nutrition Facts on food labels; pay attention to Serving Size.*) **Have them check the Nutrition Facts Cards for each drink** using the "5-20% DV" guide to see the benefit of orange juice. (*Orange juice has a lot of vitamin C.*)
- ❖ What food group does each of these beverages fit in on the *It's Up to You* poster? Why? What does that tell you? **POINT OUT** that only *orange juice* fits in the *Fruits Group*.

Pour and taste samples of each beverage. Discuss:

- ❖ How do the flavors compare? **POINT OUT** that these are the basic recipes that beverage manufacturers use, although the type of sugar and the flavorings might be a little different.
- ❖ What do you think about the amount of sugar in the orange soda and juice drink? **POINT OUT** that this is the basic recipe for other sodas and fruit drinks, too.
- ❖ **What do Ingredient Lists tell you?** Discuss: The first three items on the Ingredient List make up the largest parts of foods. Choose less often drinks containing added sugars such as: corn syrup, fructose, corn sweetener, dextrose, fruit juice concentrates, glucose, invert sugar, sucrose, and syrups.
- ❖ Compare the orange drinks' ingredients to other beverages' Ingredient Lists. (*What are the first three ingredients listed for most of the beverages' Ingredient Lists?*)
- ❖ Now that you've compared, which will you pick for breakfast? For a snack? To offer friends? Why?
- ❖ How many teaspoons of sugar do you think are in the sodas and fruit drinks you have each week? How can you cut back on sugary drinks? Why? **POINT OUT** that sugary drinks often crowd out drinks that have more nutrients, such as juice and milk.

Activity 2: Which Drink? Check the Facts!

Get preteens thinking about what's important to them, as they make drink choices to help reach their goals. By ranking their beverage options then explaining their choices, they practice decision-making.

Form groups of three or four. Give each group Nutrition Facts Cards for beverages. The cards have information to help them rank their choices. (Preteens can also rank their choices independently.)

For each situation, have them rank their top three drink options, based on what's important to them. Each group will need to come to a consensus. For each situation, have them talk about their rankings and the reasons for their choices. These are the situations:

- ❖ You're planning a party for your friends.
- ❖ You're thirsty after playing volleyball or basketball.
- ❖ After school, you want something to drink at home.
- ❖ It's breakfast time.
- ❖ You're ordering a drink to go with fast food you eat at the mall.
- ❖ You're in the school cafeteria; it's lunchtime.

Extend the discussion to learn more. **ASK:**

- ❖ During your preteen and teen years, your bones grow a lot even after you stop getting taller. Your bones need a lot of calcium to do that. Using the "5-20% DV" guide, which drinks have a lot of calcium? How do they compare for calories, fat, and other nutrients?
- ❖ Why do you think many preteens drink less milk? How can you make milk an "in" drink?
- ❖ Using the "5-20% DV" guide, what can you say about other drink choices?
- ❖ Which drinks will you drink more of? Less of? Why? How will you do that?
- ❖ What happens when soda crowds out milk and juice? (*Miss out on beverages with vitamin C and bone-building calcium.*)

Activity 3: Okay to Sweat!

Give preteens an exercise break as they “jump rope for health.” They’ll work up a sweat and get a chance to discuss why fluids are important.

Have them each set up a personal challenge. Each preteen should compete with himself or herself, rather than against each other.

- ❖ Ask them to jot down their name and decide on a number. The number will represent how many times they think they can jump rope without missing. They don’t need to reveal their number.

With several ropes, get preteens to jump rope. Give them each three or four chances to meet and exceed his or her goal *and* until each works up a sweat. Turn on music to make jumping rope more fun.

Talk about their jump-rope experience and the goal of doing their personal best. **ASK:**

- ❖ What’s the benefit of jumping rope or just getting up and moving more? (See “Get Up and Move” on page 13.)
- ❖ How did your body feel the longer you jumped rope? (*Sweaty, harder breathing, warmer face, faster heartbeat*) **POINT OUT:** Sweating helps your body cool down. When you’re moving a lot, you need to drink a lot of fluids.
- ❖ When you’re thirsty or sweating a lot, what do you drink? What would be a good drink choice? Why? **Talk about** the benefits of plain water.

Tip for Leaders:

Keep the jump ropes where preteens can easily find them. That may encourage them to enjoy some “pickup” jump rope before and after your afterschool sessions.

Activity 4: Chill Out With Juice Floats!

To quench their thirst and give preteens an easy alternative to sodas, have them mix up their own Juice Float.

Prepare the Juice Float:

- ❖ **Give preteens a chance to wash their hands before handling food.** Talk about and practice this food safety tip. Refer to the messages on the *FIGHT BAC!* poster.

Food Safety-Smarts: Sometimes you want a taste as you prepare a food or beverage—just to check the flavor. Always use a clean tasting spoon so you don't spread bacteria from your mouth to the food or drink.

- ❖ **Have volunteer preteens help you get the ingredients ready:** Shake and pour juices into pitchers (optional); open frozen-fruit yogurts; place 12-ounce drink cups, ice cream scoop or large spoon for serving, individual spoons for mixing, and napkins on the serving table. (Note: this drink doesn't use a blender.)
- ❖ **Have them each concoct their own Juice Float as a snack:** Put a scoop or large spoonful of frozen-fruit yogurt in your cup; pour one or more types of fruit juices on top; mix with spoon.

As they drink, **have them use the *Nutrition Facts Cards* and the *It's Up to You* poster to talk about their mixture of juices and frozen-fruit yogurt. Discuss:**

- ❖ Why is this Juice Float a healthful drink choice? How does it compare to a soda? **Talk about** the calorie and nutrient differences.
- ❖ How will it change if you use different ingredients? What if you try fruit, milk, or yogurt, and mix in a blender? Talk about how this kind of drink will help them consume more fruit and milk.
- ❖ If you make this drink at home, will you do it differently? How?
- ❖ How will you make this for your friends or family? When will you drink it? Why?

Wrapping Up: *What's yourCHOICE?*

Wrap up by making “yourCHOICE” action plans for making smart drink choices.

Review what they learned about this topic. **ASK:**

- ❖ Why is it smart to pay attention to what and how much you drink?
Talk about calories, nutrients, and the importance of water.
- ❖ What quick, easy choices do you have—besides a soda—at a fast-food place, at school, at home, with friends?
- ❖ How can you enjoy sodas without crowding out milk and fruit juice?
- ❖ What changes can you make in what you drink with meals and snacks?
Why? **Talk about the goals and actions** they can take this week to make smarter drink choices. (For example, *GOAL: Drink water, low-fat or fat-free milk, and less soda. Actions: Order a carton of fat-free milk to go with my fast-food burger. Have low-fat chocolate milk at snack time when I want something sweet.*)

On their “yourCHOICE” handout, have each person write a goal and three steps he or she can take this week to make smarter drink choices.

(Note: At the next session, ask them what actions they actually took.)

Have the participants see how they did with the goal and action steps each person wrote on their own “yourCHOICE” handout for the last topic. They can check (✓) the steps they took so far. (Optional) Each person who took at least one action receives some form of recognition.

Collect their handouts to use in upcoming sessions.

TOPIC **7**: *yourCHOICE* Snacks: “Chews” for Health

Skill-Based Outcomes

Preteens who participate in this activity will be able to:

- ❖ Choose snacks for different reasons, and consider the reasons for the choices.
- ❖ Use food labels to make healthful snack choices.
- ❖ Tell how to enjoy snacks without overdoing on the amount.
- ❖ Make an easy food-group snack.

Empowerment Messages

- ❖ Snacking the right way helps you get enough food to grow and stay healthy. Choose foods that are low in solid fats and added sugars from the five major food groups.
- ❖ Nutrition Facts on food labels can help you compare and choose snacks.
- ❖ Snacking is a great way to fit fruits, vegetables, whole grain foods, and low-fat foods made from milk into your day’s food choices.
- ❖ Pay attention to how much—not just what—you snack on.
- ❖ Move more and sit less. Active fun is a healthful substitute for mindless snacking.

Activity Summary

(Icebreaker) **Snack Line—Find Your Place!** - Preteens arrange themselves along a snack continuum to explore their attitudes about healthful snacking.

- 1 Which Snack Has More Solid Fat?** - Preteens work in small groups doing a demonstration to discover saturated fat and *trans* fat in some popular preteen snacks.
- 2 "5-20% DV" Snack Vision** - By checking their results with *Nutrition Facts Cards*, they learn to use Nutrition Facts to compare and choose snacks for calories and other nutrients.
- 3 Snack Dilemmas** - Using decision-making steps, preteens come up with their own snack dilemmas then practice making sound snack choices that match their own needs.
- 4 (Afterschool Snack) Roll It Up!** - Preteens prepare and talk about Peanut Butter Rollups, an easy snack to make later at home.

(Wrap up) **What's yourCHOICE?** - Each person comes up with personal steps to snack for health—and so puts his or her "power of choice" in action.

Getting Ready

● Read:

- ❖ Do You Know...?
on the next page

● Display Posters:

- ❖ *MyPyramid*
- ❖ *It's Up to You*
- ❖ *FIGHT BAC!*
- ❖ *READ IT before you EAT IT!*
- ❖ *How Much Do YOU Eat?*
- ❖ *Move It!*

● Get:

For "Which Snack Has More Fat?"

- ❖ 1/2 cup chips (not fat free), 1/2 cup pretzels
- ❖ 1 cookie, 1 graham cracker
- ❖ 1 small candy bar, 1 banana
- ❖ 1 piece regular cheese, 1 carrot stick
- ❖ 2 tablespoons peanut butter, 1 carton fat-free yogurt
- ❖ 1/4 cup water, small amount of stick margarine
- ❖ Brown paper toweling, markers

For "5-20' Snack Vision"

- ❖ *Nutrition Facts Cards*: chips, pretzels, regular cookie, graham cracker, candy bar, banana, cheese, carrot, peanut butter, fat-free yogurt

For "Snack Dilemmas"

- ❖ Several large sheets of paper, tape, markers, adhesive notes

For "Roll It Up!" (snack activity)*

- ❖ Ingredients: whole-wheat tortillas, peanut butter, sliced bananas, drained pineapple chunks, shredded carrots, and lettuce or sprouts
- ❖ Equipment: cutting board (grater or blender to shred carrots if needed), knives, paper plates with utensils to serve
- ❖ Table setting: paper plates, knives, napkins
- ❖ *Nutrition Facts Cards*: whole-wheat tortillas, peanut butter, bananas, pineapple chunks, carrots, lettuce or sprouts

* If your program has been approved to serve USDA's Afterschool Snacks, the snack served as part of this activity may qualify for reimbursement. For each participant, **serve at least 1 tortilla and 2 tablespoons peanut butter.**

For "Wrapping Up: What's yourCHOICE?"

- ❖ "yourCHOICE" handout** for each participant
- ❖ (Optional) some form of recognition for each participant

** Reminder: Collect handouts for next session.

Do You Know...?

Is snacking okay? Yes! Growing preteens need more food energy and nutrients than younger children. That nourishment can come from snacking: mostly low-fat or fat-free choices from the food groups, less saturated fat and *trans* fat, low-nutrient snack choices, and not overdoing it with “too much” of a high-calorie food.

How do snacks fit in? No matter what your age, snacks can help you fill in the MyPyramid gaps by helping you get enough of the foods and nutrients your body needs. Make snacks count toward food-group amounts you need by choosing foods with little or no solid fats or added sugars.

- ❖ *Grains Group*: bagel, pretzels, popcorn, muffin, breakfast cereal, or oatmeal cookie, among others. Look for whole grain snacks.
- ❖ *Vegetables Group and Fruits Group*: raw vegetables, dried fruits, frozen fruit-juice bar, or whole fruits
- ❖ *Milk Group*: low-fat or fat-free string cheese, yogurt, frozen yogurt, or flavored or unflavored milk
- ❖ *Meat and Beans Group*: hard-cooked egg, slice of meat, or handful of peanuts

Why snack on vegetables? When you choose vegetables, you paint your plate with color! Besides their good looks, dark-green leafy and deep-yellow vegetables can serve up a hefty amount of vitamin A and folate (folic acid), nutrients that help keep you healthy. (Vitamin A is also great for healthy skin.) Plus, these foods are low in fat.

How can you use food labels to make snack choices? Nutrition Facts provide information about your snacks: for example, how big the Serving Size is; how much fat, calcium, iron, and fiber it has; and how many calories one Serving gives. The “5-20% DV” guide helps you see if a food has more or less of some nutrients. Remember: double the numbers (calories and % Daily Values) for two Servings.

What snacks are nutrient dense yet low in fat and easy to make?

Each of these snacks counts toward amounts of foods from two or three food groups.

❖ Ultra easy, no fuss

- Low-fat yogurt, topped with fruits and nuts
- Baked corn tortilla chips, sliced cucumbers, jicama, or summer squash with salsa
- Baby carrots and low-fat cheese sticks
- Two or more juices mixed in one glass

❖ Easy, minor preparation

- Low-fat ice cream sandwich made with oatmeal cookies
- Microwaved noodle soup mixed with corn or other vegetables, topped with low-fat or fat-free cheese
- Peanut butter sandwich with banana slices or grated carrot

- Cut-up fruit in an unsugared ice cream cone

❖ A little more effort

- Fruit smoothie made with low-fat or fat-free yogurt, ice cream or frozen yogurt, or milk and fruit.
- Ham and lettuce rolled up in a soft tortilla
- Raw, chopped veggies and sliced cheese or lean meat, tucked in pita bread with a little salad dressing drizzled on top
- Microwaved potato, topped with salsa or shredded low-fat cheese

How can you snack for good health without giving up foods you like?

- ❖ If you snack on foods that have some fat or sugar, no problem. Try this:
 - Just keep the amount you eat sensible in size: perhaps eat less, share with a friend, or eat them less often.
 - Substitute one snack for a version with less fat or added sugar, for example, fat-free chips for regular chips, frozen yogurt for ice cream, or a bagel for a doughnut.
 - Rather than snack right from the package, put your snack on a plate. That way you won't eat too much. That's good advice no matter what you eat!
- ❖ Move more; sit less. Doing something physically active may even take the place of sitting and snacking.

What if you snack even when you aren't hungry? If you nibble when you're stressed, bored, lonely, or just out of habit, learn to do something in exchange for eating: go for a walk, pick some flowers, clean your room, call a friend!

yourCHOICE Snacks: “Chews” for Health

Topic 7 Activities

Getting Started: **Snack Line— Find Your Place!**

Start preteens thinking about their snack choices by asking each to find his or her place in a line that reflects snacking attitudes.

Ask preteens to stand if they snacked yesterday, this week, this month. Continue until everyone is standing. Now that they’re all up, start the activity.

- ❖ **ASK:** How would you rate your attitude about snacking?
- ❖ **Show preteens a real or imaginary “snack line” in the room.** Each end represents a different attitude about snacking.
 - *One end:* I always choose snacks for my good health!
 - *Other end:* I eat what I like. I don’t think about healthful snacking.
- ❖ **Explain:** Many attitudes preteens have about snacking fit somewhere in between.
- ❖ **Have preteens place themselves along the “snack line,”** talking with those to their right and left to decide where they seem to fit. As the leader, **put yourself along the “snack line,” too.**

Have them sit on the “line” and talk about their reasons for being where they placed themselves. Keep the discussion open-ended so preteens talk freely, and everyone gets a chance to share his or her thoughts.

Challenge their thinking:

- ❖ How would you describe your place on the “snack line?” Why did you put yourselves there? **Talk about** the snack choices, the amounts, when and where they get snacks, who they snack with.
- ❖ What are your favorite snacks? Why?
- ❖ **POINT OUT:** Several weeks ago, we played “values charades” and talked about what was important to us. Do you remember what you said? How might changing your spot on the “snack line” match what’s important to you?
- ❖ How can you pick snacks that taste great and help keep you healthy, too?

If time allows, have them move around more, rearranging themselves along the “snack line” to show other snacking practices. Talk about their position on the line, reasons for being there, and where might be the smartest place to be. For example, the “snack line” might have these “opposite ends”:

- ❖ *Always* snack when I’m stressed. / *Never* snack when I’m stressed.
- ❖ *Always* snack when I’m bored. / *Never* snack when I’m bored.
- ❖ *Always* eat the same snacks my friends do. / *Never* eat the same snacks my friends do.

Activity 1: Which Snack Has More Solid Fat?

To relate snacking to what they learned from other topics, do a hands-on activity. They'll discover that solid fat "hides" in many of their favorite snack foods.

As review, ask two or three preteens who came to the "Tastes Great, Less Solid Fat!" session (Topic 5) to share what they learned about eating less solid fat.

Divide preteens into small groups. Give each group a food pair to test for fat. For example:

- ❖ Regular chips and pretzels
- ❖ Cheese stick and carrot stick
- ❖ Graham cracker and cookie
- ❖ Peanut butter and fat-free yogurt
- ❖ Banana and candy bar

Before starting, talk about:

- ❖ Which snack would you pick? Why?
- ❖ Do you think either of your snack choices has fat? Why or why not?
- ❖ Why would you care about fat in your food choices? Review what they learned in Topic 5.

To find out, conduct this demonstration:

- ❖ **Have the groups rub both their snacks on brown paper toweling.** Using a marker, have them label both spots. (*Note: Notebook paper works, too, but the fat spots are less visible. The finish on grocery bags is less effective since the surface may not be absorbent.*)
- ❖ **Have them put 2 or 3 drops of water on another brown paper towel;** circle and label it as "water." Do the same with a small amount of stick margarine.
- ❖ **Let the paper dry.** Have them hold the paper up to the light, and **compare the two spots.** (*Note: Stick margarine will leave a greasy, translucent spot; the water spot will disappear.*)
- ❖ **Challenge their thinking:**
 - What did you see after you rubbed each food?
 - How do the spots from your snacks compare with the margarine spot and the water spot?
 - What does that tell you? Which snack has more fat? (*chips, cookie, candy bar, cheese, peanut butter*) **POINT OUT:** fruits, veggies, and some foods made from milk have little or no fat.
 - What else can you say about these snack foods? Encourage them to look at the *It's Up to You* poster to see how they fit into (and what they add to) a healthful way of eating.

Activity 2: "5-20% DV" Snack Vision

Continue to have preteens discover more about these snack pairs using the "5-20% DV" guide to food labeling, which they learned about in previous sessions.

Start by asking:

- ❖ Can you tell if a snack has any fat by looking at it? Can you tell *how much* fat it has?
- ❖ You probably won't go around rubbing snack choices on paper to see if they have some fat. How can you find out without rubbing them on paper? (*Nutrition Facts on food labels give the types and amounts of fats in one Serving of a food. The "5-20% DV" guide helps you see if a food has a little or a lot of the different types of fats.*)

Again in small groups, have preteens check the **Nutrition Facts Cards for their two snacks**. They'll see *how much* fat and other nutrients their snacks have. **ASK:**

- ❖ Does either snack have a *little* or a *lot* of fat? Which type of fat?
- ❖ Do these snacks have a *little* or a *lot* of any other nutrients? Do you need to eat *more* or *less* of these nutrients? Have them check the **READ IT before you EAT IT!** poster.
- ❖ Which ones are your best bets for healthful eating? Why?
- ❖ Which snack will you choose? Why?
- ❖ Will you eat it from the package or a bowl? Why? **Talk about** Serving Size compared with amount of food usually eaten, and show "how much" affects the amounts of calories, different types of fats, and other nutrients listed for one Serving.
- ❖ What will you tell someone about making a snack choice from among these food pairs? **POINT OUT:** Many snacks that preteens like are high in fat. Try to choose lower fat snacks (fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat or fat-free foods made from milk) most of the time; that's healthier.

Encourage preteens to test other foods at home by doing the paper-rubbing activity with their families. They can check Nutrition Facts for fat on the food label. It's a fun way for them to share what they learned with their families.

Activity 3: *Snack Dilemmas*

Give preteens practice as they use decision-making steps to make their snack choices.

As a group, brainstorm snack dilemmas or situations. Have one or more preteens write them on a large piece of paper so everyone can see. For example:

- ❖ You really feel stressed out with your homework. You need to “chill out” before you can really get into studying. You can decide if you choose to head to the kitchen for something to eat or do something else.
- ❖ You’re hanging out with your friends after school. Your stomachs are growling (big time), so all of you decide to find something to snack on.
- ❖ You’re really hungry for a snack. But there’s not much that’s ready to eat in your kitchen. There’s a bag of chips in easy reach.

Together, pick one or more dilemmas to work on.

- ❖ **Write it on large paper and label** as a “snack dilemma.” Underneath, write “snacking options,” “pros and cons,” and “snack choices.”
- ❖ **Have everyone pick a partner.** Give a marker and adhesive notes to each pair. Have the partners come up with snacktime options for each dilemma, then write their options on adhesive notes.
- ❖ **On other adhesive notes, have them write the pros and cons** of each snack option.

Bring the group back together to decide. Keep the discussion open so preteens can talk freely about their snack choices. For each situation:

- ❖ **Have the partners share their snacking options and pros and cons.** Have them post their notes on the large paper.
- ❖ **As a group, eliminate options** after going over the pros and cons. Remove the adhesive notes for those options.
- ❖ **Talk about the choices they keep.** **POINT OUT:** that most situations—including snacking—have more than one good choice. They need to choose what’s right for them and try to keep the values they have about health in mind!

Use this activity as a chance to talk about:

- ❖ *What they’d snack on*—food-group snacks, substituting snacks with less solid fat. Encourage fruits, vegetables, whole-grain foods, and calcium-rich snacks containing low-fat or fat-free milk.
- ❖ *How much they’d snack on*—paying attention to Serving Sizes by eating sensible amounts of snacks.
- ❖ *What they might do instead*—doing something active instead of snacking to relieve stress, boredom, or loneliness.

Activity 4: Roll It Up!

As a quick, fun, and healthful snack they can also make at home, have preteens make a quick portable snack: Peanut Butter Rollups.

Prepare Peanut Butter Rollups:

- ❖ **Give preteens a chance to wash their hands before handling food.**
Talk about this food safety tip. Refer to the messages on the *FIGHT BAC!* poster.

Food Safety-Smarts: Fruits and vegetables are healthful afterschool snacks. Rinse them under running water before you eat them.

- ❖ **Have two preteens help you get ready:** Place tortillas on a paper plate, get out peanut butter, and serve both with utensils; drain pineapple chunks, slice bananas, rinse lettuce or sprouts, shred or grate rinsed carrots; put each topping on a serving plate with utensils; set paper plates, knives, and napkins on the table.
- ❖ **Have them make their rollup** by spreading a tortilla with peanut butter, topping it with fruits or vegetables, and then rolling it up. Let them choose which fruits or vegetables they'd like on their "rollup."

As they eat, talk about the "rollup." Use the *Nutrition Facts Cards* and the *It's Up to You* poster to prompt discussion. **ASK:**

- ❖ Why is your Peanut Butter Rollup a good choice?
- ❖ How does it add some different foods to your food choices?
- ❖ How will you make your "rollup" if you make this snack at home?
- ❖ How will the foods you use compare?

Wrapping Up: What's yourCHOICE?

Wrap up by making “yourCHOICE” action plans for making snack choices.

Review what they learned about this topic. **ASK:**

- ❖ Why pay attention to what snacks you pick and how much of them you eat? **Talk about** the food energy (calories) and nutrients; what happens when you snack too much; what happens when candy and chips always replace foods with more nutrients.
- ❖ What quick food-group snacks can you eat at school? At a fast-food place? At home? With your friends?
- ❖ How can you make sure those foods are available when you are hungry for a snack?
- ❖ How can you snack without giving up your favorite snack foods? **Talk about** sharing with a friend, eating a smaller amount, eating these foods less often.
- ❖ What changes can you make for smarter snacking choices? Why? **Talk about the goals and actions** they can take. *(For example, GOAL: Eat more fruits and less candy when I want a sweet snack. Actions: Ask my family to buy fruits for quick snacks. Make a fruit smoothie at home as a snack drink. Tuck an apple or banana in my backpack for a snack.)*

On their “yourCHOICE” handout, have each person write a goal and three steps he or she can take this week to make snack choices count for healthful eating. (Note: At the next session, ask them what actions they actually took.)

Have the participants see how they did with the goal and action steps each person wrote on their own “yourCHOICE” handout for the last topic. They can check (✓) the steps they took so far. (Optional) Each person who took at least one action receives some form of recognition.

Collect their handouts to use in upcoming sessions.

TOPIC **8**: *yourCHOICE* Your Fast-Food Order?

Skill-Based Outcomes

Preteens who participate in this activity will be able to:

- ❖ Determine the fats and added sugars in a typical fast-food meal.
- ❖ Tell friends how to cut back on fat and added sugars when they order fast foods.
- ❖ Explain how to eat more fruits, vegetables, and low-fat or fat-free foods made from milk at fast-food places.
- ❖ Make a healthful snack that's fast and fun!

Empowerment Messages

- ❖ Many fast foods have a lot of fat and added sugars. Eating too many foods with added sugars and high-fat foods is not good for your health.
- ❖ Many fast-food items are bigger than you need. Choose the regular size instead of the deluxe and super sizes.
- ❖ Fast-food places offer choices. Look for fun, tasty ways to include more food variety—including fruits, vegetables, and low-fat or fat-free foods made from milk—and get less solid fat and added sugars in your fast food meals and snacks.
- ❖ Balance higher fat fast-food choices with lower fat foods for the rest of the day.

Activity Summary

(Icebreaker) **Fast Food—for You?*** - A quick, personal look helps preteens discover how much they rely on fast foods and why they need to pay attention to what fast foods they pick.

- 1 Fast Food Facts** - With empty fast-food containers as props, preteens talk about food energy (calories), types and amounts of fats, and calcium in a typical fast-food meal.
- 2 Fitting Fast Foods In** - Preteens measure out fat in a fast-food burger meal and discover that many fast foods have a lot of fat. They use *Nutrition Facts Cards* to fit fast foods into their day's food choices; still they eat enough whole-grain foods, fruits, vegetables, and calcium-rich foods.
- 3 Advertise for Fast Food** - Preteens have fun creating and acting out "fast action" advertisements that promote healthful fast-food eating.
- 4 (Afterschool Snack) Pizza—A Fast Snack!** - Preteens prepare Veggie Pita Pizza, a fast-food-type snack, and brainstorm a variety of low-fat or fat-free pizza toppings.

(Wrap up) **What's yourCHOICE?** - Each person comes up with personal steps for making smart fast-food choices.

* Adapted from *Jump Start Teens*.

Getting Ready

● Read:

- ❖ Do You Know...? on the next page

● Display Posters:

- ❖ *MyPyramid*
- ❖ *It's Up to You*
- ❖ *FIGHT BAC!*
- ❖ *READ IT before you EAT IT!*
- ❖ *How Much Do YOU Eat?*
- ❖ *Move It!*

● Get:

For "Fast Food Facts"

- ❖ Empty containers from a fast-food meal: large hamburger, large fries, 16-ounce soda, fried fruit pie. (*Ask preteens to bring containers in a week ahead.*)
- ❖ Large paper, marker, tape (to display the fast-food meal chart on page 97)
- ❖ Shortening, measuring spoons, plate

For "Fitting Fast Foods In"

- ❖ *Nutrition Facts Cards* for planning meals and snacks for the day (a set of cards for each pair or group of preteens)

For "Pizza—A Fast Snack!" (snack activity)*

- ❖ Ingredients: pita rounds, prepared pizza or spaghetti sauce, chopped vegetables (broccoli, bell pepper, mushrooms, zucchini), grated cheese
- ❖ Equipment: cutting board; knives; grater; bowls and utensils for sauce, vegetables, and cheese; paper plate and utensil for pita; baking pans; oven (or tabletop or toaster oven); hot pads; turners; measuring spoons and cups
- ❖ Table setting: paper plates, forks, napkins
- ❖ *Nutrition Facts Cards*: pita, spaghetti sauce, broccoli, bell pepper, mushrooms, zucchini, cheese

* If your program has been approved to serve USDA's Afterschool Snacks, the snack served as part of this activity may qualify for reimbursement. For each participant, **serve at least 1 pita round and 1 ounce cheese.**

For "Wrapping Up: What's yourCHOICE?"

- ❖ "yourCHOICE" handout** for each participant
- ❖ (Optional) some form of recognition for each participant

** Reminder: Collect handouts for next session.

Do You Know...?

Can preteens eat healthfully without giving up fast foods?

Whether they cruise the mall for snacks or head to a local burger or pizza place to eat or socialize, fast-food eating is part of most preteens' lifestyles. To eat for health, they need to know simple ways to make fast-food choices that fit into a healthful way of eating.

How much do fast-food meals and snacks rate for nutrition? For the nutrition they give you, fast-food meals and snacks tend to be *high* in fat, calories, and sodium **and** *low* in fiber, calcium, and other nutrients. Typically, they're limited in whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and calcium-rich foods.

Just one fast-food meal can exceed a whole day's fat limit: depending on the food choices. Preteens and teens may need from 1,600 to 3,200 calories or more a day depending on their gender, age, growth needs, and activity level. Eating too many added sugars and high-fat foods isn't good for your health. Fast-food meals and foods are often big—resulting in more fat and food energy (calories), too.

How can you enjoy fast foods and still eat healthfully? There's no reason to give up fast-food eating or feel guilty about enjoying a fast-food meal or snack. Most fast-food places give you choices. These are some simple ways to make healthful fast-food choices that you can enjoy, too:

Less solid fat

- ❖ Ask for regular—not deluxe sized—burgers, burritos, and tacos. Skip the added bacon, sour cream, or special sauces.
- ❖ Order regular pizza without double cheese.
- ❖ Order a grilled—not fried—chicken sandwich.
- ❖ Eat the chicken meat; skip skin and breading!
- ❖ Skip fries and onion rings. When you do order one of these, ask for the small order, and share it with a friend.
- ❖ Order a baked potato instead of fries or hash browns. Ask for sour cream, butter, or cheese sauce on the side—so you control how much.

Less added sugar

- ❖ Skip fruit "pies." Eat a piece of fruit at home later, or tuck an apple or banana in your backpack to eat with your fast-food meal.
- ❖ Skip soda. Order juice, milk, water, or unsweetened iced tea instead. If you choose soda, have the regular not the large or super-sized drink.

continued on next page

continued from previous page

Fewer calories

- ❖ Follow the tips for “less solid fat” and “less added sugar.” You’ll probably consume fewer calories, too!

More calcium

- ❖ Drink low-fat milk with your fast-food meal or snack.
- ❖ Order a small milk shake. Since shakes have more calories, cut back on other high-calorie food choices you might eat during the day.
- ❖ Add cheese to your hamburger.
- ❖ For coffee drinkers, drink café con leche (coffee with fat-free milk), latte, or cappuccino instead of plain coffee.
- ❖ Buy a carton of low-fat yogurt if you can.

More fruits and vegetables

- ❖ Order fruit smoothies. They’re often made with low-fat or fat-free milk or frozen yogurt for more calcium, too. They can be made without any added sugars.
- ❖ Add tomato, lettuce, and other vegetables to your sandwich.
- ❖ Order your pizza with more veggies: tomatoes, mushrooms, peppers, broccoli, others. For less solid fat, skip pepperoni and sausage.
- ❖ Have a salad instead of fries. Use reduced-fat or fat-free dressing, or use just a little regular dressing.

More tips

- ❖ Be adventurous. For something new, try different kinds of fast foods: wraps (sandwiches in soft tortillas), veggie sandwiches on whole-wheat bread, stuffed spuds (baked potatoes topped with chili or steamed vegetables), sushi, others.
- ❖ Be sensible. For all kinds of fast foods, order regular-sized amounts of foods most of the time. Share an order with a friend.
- ❖ Be flexible. Balance your choices. If you eat more foods high in solid fats at one meal, pick low-fat foods the rest of the day.

Tips for Leaders:

At this age, young adolescents should not be overly concerned with precise numbers or measures of foods or nutrients. Instead, they should understand the benefits and apply general guidelines to choosing amounts and types of foods and physical activity. Avoid giving too much emphasis to calories or fat grams. Instead talk about the importance of getting the kinds of foods teens need to pay attention to such as: whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and low-fat or fat-free milk or equivalent foods made from milk.

yourCHOICE Your Fast Food Order?

Topic 8 Activities

Getting Started: *Fast-Food-for You?*

Have preteens take a quick look at their fast-food eating habits to see why they need to pay attention to their fast-food choices.

Start by having them:

- ❖ Raise one hand if you ate at a fast-food place once this week.
- ❖ Raise two hands if you ate at a fast-food place two times this week.
- ❖ Stand up if you ate at a fast-food place three or more times this week.
- ❖ **Talk about** how much they usually spend each time they buy fast food.

Have them look around to see how many people have their hands raised or are standing up. Have preteens think about how much they spend on fast food.

- ❖ **POINT OUT** that most of the money preteens spend on eating out goes to fast-food restaurants.
- ❖ **ASK:**
 - Why do you eat at fast-food places?
 - Do you think fast-food places notice that preteens buy a lot of fast foods? What makes you think so? Why do fast foods appeal to preteens?

Continue with the discussion. Keep the discussion open-ended so preteens talk freely, and everyone gets a chance to share his or her thoughts.

- ❖ You either had one or two hands up or you stood up to show how often you eat at fast-food places. Does it matter what you eat there? Why?
- ❖ What three fast foods do you buy most often? Why? Where do they fit in on the *It's Up to You* poster?
- ❖ Would you buy different foods if they were on the menu? Why or why not?

Activity 1: Fast-Food Facts

Have preteens discover more about nutrition in a typical fast-food meal. It's a way to help them make healthier choices when they eat out.

Show some empty containers from a typical fast-food meal. Have them imagine that these containers hold a large hamburger with lettuce and tomato, large fries, a 16-ounce soda, and a fried apple pie. **ASK:**

- ❖ How many of you have eaten this meal or a similar meal recently?
- ❖ How would you rate it for taste? Healthful eating? Fun? Other?

Give preteens a chance to start exploring nutrients in fast foods.

- ❖ Display nutrition information for a fast-food meal they imagined, and then talk about it. Use information from Nutrition Facts labels to start the discussion. **POINT OUT:** They can get nutrition information at many fast-food places if they ask.

Food	Calories	Fat Grams	Fat % Daily Value	Calcium % Daily Value
Large hamburger with lettuce and tomato	512	27	41%	6%
Large fries	355	19	29%	2%
16-ounce soda	200	0	0%	0%
Fried apple pie	265	14	22%	6%
Total	1,332	60	92%	14%

❖ Encourage them to check the chart to find out about fat in these foods.

ASK:

- Do you think these foods have a little or a lot of fat? Added sugars? The *READ IT before you EAT IT!* poster can help them talk about the %DVs for fats and calcium.
- How about the whole meal?

❖ To visualize, encourage them to figure out how many teaspoons of fat this fast-food meal has then measure it out using shortening for each food. (One teaspoon of shortening weighs 4 grams.) **POINT OUT:** Eating less solid fat helps keep your heart healthy.

Challenge them to uncover more about this fast-food meal. Talk about the food energy (calories), types of fats, limited amounts of fruits and vegetables, etc.

ASK:

- ❖ How would this meal fit into your energy needs for the day? (*Provides a lot of calories—about 50% or more of the food energy you need for the day*)
What happens when you eat more calories (food energy) than your body uses? (*Gain weight*)
- ❖ What if you order a regular instead of a large size? **POINT OUT:** Many fast-food items are oversized. And large amounts of foods mean more fat and more calories.
- ❖ How can you change this meal to have less fat? More fruits and vegetables? More low-fat or fat-free calcium-rich foods? **Have them use the *It's Up to You* poster and *Nutrition Facts Cards* for ideas.**
POINT OUT: It's important to know how to cut back solid fat and boost calcium in fast-food meals, since many preteens eat these meals a lot.

Activity 2: Fitting Fast Foods In

Have preteens figure out how to fit their favorite fast foods into a whole day of healthful eating.

Refer to the empty fast-food containers again. **ASK:**

- ❖ If you eat this fast-food meal, what can you eat the rest of the day for more calcium and less solid fat? **POINT OUT:** It's easier to balance the day's food choices for fat if smaller amounts of high-fat fast foods are eaten.

Divide into pairs or small groups. Use Nutrition Facts Cards and the It's Up to You poster to plan and compare:

- ❖ **a full day's menu without fast foods.** Their menu plan for meals and snacks should have: (1) 100% DV or less for saturated fat, (2) 100% DV or more for calcium, and (3) about 2,000 calories for a day. Active boys need more food.
- ❖ **a full day's menu with a fast-food meal.** Try to stick to the same guideline: (1) 100% DV or less for saturated fat, (2) 100% DV or more for calcium, and (3) about 2,000 calories for a day. Active boys need more food.

Have the groups share their 2 days' menus (without fast foods and with a fast-food meal) and how they cut back the fat and boosted the calcium. **ASK:**

- ❖ Was it easy or hard to fit fast foods in? Why? How did you do it?
- ❖ Now, how do you feel about fast-food eating? Why is healthier fast-food eating important to you?
- ❖ How can you make healthier fast-food choices the next time you order?

Activity 3: Advertise for Fast Food

Have fun with food advertisements! Have preteens create and act out a TV or computer advertisement for healthier fast-food eating.

Focus their creative juices by asking:

- ❖ What TV or computer advertisements (ads) really grab your attention? Why?
- ❖ What might work if you want to sell something to preteens your age?
- ❖ Why do preteens like fast foods? How can they make healthier fast-food choices?
- ❖ How can advertisers get that message across to you?
- ❖ What else can fast-food chains do? **Encourage them to be creative:** for example, make healthier fast foods fun, appealing, and easy to see; offer coupons for healthier menu items; use high-tech promotions; involve celebrities; put “clickable” ads on the computer; make a music video about healthier fast foods.

Divide into groups of four or five preteens. Take about 10 minutes to create a “fast action,” fast-food advertisement—one that tries to get preteens their age to make healthier fast-food choices. They can make it:

- ❖ Simple: one or two empowering messages
- ❖ Short: 30 to 60 seconds
- ❖ Clever, fun, and memorable

Present the fast-food ads to everyone, and talk about the messages.

Activity 4: Pizza—A Fast Snack!

Make Veggie Pita Pizza for practice while choosing low-fat or fat-free pizza toppings.

Prepare Veggie Pita Pizzas:

- ❖ **Give preteens a chance to wash their hands before handling food.**
Talk about this food safety tip. Refer to the messages on the *FIGHT BAC!* poster.

Food safety-smarts: Put your backpack on the floor not the counter or table where you put food. Keep everything clean in the kitchen or wherever you eat.

- ❖ **While the groups finish sharing their fast-food ads, ask two or more preteens to get the snack ingredients ready:** Rinse and chop broccoli, bell pepper, mushrooms, and zucchini then serve in bowls with spoons; grate cheese and serve in bowl with spoon; arrange pita rounds on a paper plate with utensil to serve; pour pizza sauce in a bowl with spoon to serve; set out baking pans with hot pads and turners; put paper plates, forks, and napkins on the table.
- ❖ **Have each preteen assemble his or her veggie pita pizza:** Spoon pizza sauce onto one pita round. Top with chopped vegetables and grated cheese. Bake them in an oven (or tabletop or toaster oven) at 375 °F until the cheese melts, about 10 minutes.

While the veggie pita pizzas bake, **encourage preteens to discover more ways to make healthful pizza choices.** Have them use the *Nutrition Facts Cards* and the *It's Up to You* and *READ IT before you EAT IT!* posters to talk about the crust, sauce, and pizza toppings.

- ❖ Can pizza be a healthful snack or meal choice? Why?
- ❖ How do pizza toppings compare for less fat? More fiber? More calcium? More vitamin A or C? **Use the "5-20% DV" guide** to decide. *Hint:* their toppings are partial Servings.
- ❖ How can you "load" more vegetables and fruits on a pizza?
- ❖ Will you make pita pizza at home? How? For whom? What other low-fat or fat-free toppings might you put on for a tasty change?
- ❖ Suppose you were at a restaurant. What might your pizza order be like? Why?

Wrapping Up: *What's yourCHOICE?*

Wrap up by making “yourCHOICE” action plans for smarter fast-food choices.

Review what they learned about this topic. **ASK:**

- ❖ Why is it smart to pay attention to what and how much you eat at fast-food places? **Talk about** the calories, types of fats, and other nutrients in typical fast-food choices.
- ❖ How can you and your friends eat fast foods with less fat? More calcium? More fruits and vegetables? Less added sugar?
- ❖ What changes can you make for healthier fast-food eating? Why? **Talk about the goals and actions** they can take to make smarter fast-food choices. *(For example, GOAL: Eat smaller amounts of high-fat foods at fast-food restaurants. Actions: Order a regular not a deluxe-sized burger or fries. Share nachos and cheese with a friend. Walk with friends to a park not to the fast-food place at the mall.)*

On their “yourCHOICE” handout, have each person write a goal and three steps he or she can take this week to make fast-food choices count for healthful eating. (Note: At the next session, ask them what actions they actually took.)

Have the participants see how they did with the goal and action steps each person wrote on their own “yourCHOICE” handout for the last topic. They can check (✓) the steps they took so far. (Optional) Each person who took at least one action receives some form of recognition.

Collect their handouts to use in upcoming sessions.

TOPIC 9: *your*CHOICE Urge to Splurge?

Skill-Based Outcomes

Preteens who participate in this activity will be able to:

- ❖ Describe hunger cues and how to manage their hunger.
- ❖ Describe why emotions might lead to overeating.
- ❖ Find ways to handle emotional “ups and downs” without overeating.
- ❖ Discuss benefits of not overeating.

Empowerment Messages

- ❖ Paying attention to hunger cues helps you avoid overeating. You don’t always have to feel full. It doesn’t feel good to be stuffed.
- ❖ Eating too fast can lead to overeating. Slow down so your brain has time to know your stomach is full.
- ❖ Your feelings can affect what and how much you eat.
- ❖ Some people eat to cope with negative emotions. To overcome the urge to eat when you’re not really hungry, find other ways to handle your feelings.
- ❖ Not overeating helps you grow at your healthy weight. You’ll also feel better about yourself when you control your urge to eat.

Activity Summary

(Icebreaker) **Get Your Juices Flowing!** - Preteens start off with physical activity and other activities that arouse feelings of hunger.

- 1 *(Afterschool Snack)* **How Hungry?** - To become aware of hunger cues, their afterschool snack offers the chance to judge how full they feel before, right after, and (in the next activity) 20 minutes after eating.
- 2 **Listening to “Body Talk”** - From this “hunger continuum,” preteens explore satiety and ways to manage feelings of physical hunger without overeating.
- 3 & 4 **Emotional “Hunger” and Coping With Eating Triggers** - Preteens explore emotional “hunger,” using a visualization activity, then brainstorm ways to handle emotional triggers without overeating.

(Wrap up) **What’s yourCHOICE?** - Each person comes up with personal steps for managing hunger and avoiding overeating.

Getting Ready

● Read:

- ❖ Do You Know...? on the next page

● Display Posters:

- ❖ *MyPyramid*
- ❖ *It's Up to You*
- ❖ *FIGHT BAC!*
- ❖ *READ IT before you EAT IT!*
- ❖ *How Much Do YOU Eat?*
- ❖ *Move It!*

● Get:

For "How Hungry?" (snack activity)*

- ❖ Ingredients: (Recipe will determine.) Serve with low-fat or fat-free milk.
- ❖ Equipment: (Recipe will determine.)
- ❖ Table setting: paper plates, forks or spoons, cups, napkins

Note: Have the snack prepared ahead, perhaps with the help of preteen volunteers, so participants can eat immediately after their physical activity.

Use the Hot Apple Wrap

recipe suggested here or another appealing snack of your choice, such as bean burritos or tacos, pizza, or wrap sandwiches.

* If your program has been approved to serve USDA's Afterschool Snacks, the snack served as part of this activity may qualify for reimbursement. For each participant, **serve at least 1 slice of bread and 3/4 cup apple slices.**

Hot Apple Wrap

Place thin apple slices on a slice of whole-wheat bread. Sprinkle with 1 teaspoon cinnamon and sugar mixture. Place on a pan under a broiler, and cook until cinnamon melts. Fold the bread to hold the apple slices together.

For "Wrapping Up: What's yourCHOICE?"

- ❖ "yourCHOICE" handout** for each participant
- ❖ (Optional) some form of recognition for each participant

** Reminder: Collect handouts for next session.

Tips for Leaders:

Emotions lead some preteens to undereat not overeat. Serious emotional problems may develop into eating disorders, such as bulimia and anorexia. If you suspect a preteen has an eating disorder, talk to the parents and refer the preteen to a medical professional, social worker, or school nurse or counselor for appropriate professional help. Because the problem is so complex, don't try to counsel the preteen yourself!

Do You Know...?

What triggers eating? Physical hunger does. If your stomach feels empty and perhaps you feel tired, your body may be saying you need to eat. Ignoring hunger cues can lead to overeating.

Other things trigger eating and overeating:

- ❖ Time of day
- ❖ People around you
- ❖ Places where you are
- ❖ Your moods

Eating to cope with anger, boredom, stress, frustration, depression, or loneliness may help relieve your feelings for a short time. It can also lead to overeating without ever resolving the problems or feelings you had.

How do you eat when you're hungry? You need to listen to your body's hunger cues so you know when you're full or partly full. It's okay to stop eating before you feel totally full.

- ❖ Keep a diary to help you pay attention to when you really feel hungry not just when you eat.
- ❖ Eat slowly so your brain and stomach have time to "talk." There's a gap of about 20 minutes after you eat before you start feeling full. To slow down, take smaller bites, eat foods that take longer to chew, and talk between bites.
- ❖ Estimate the amount of food you actually eat. Compare it to the amounts of food you need.
- ❖ Stop when you're not hungry anymore and before you feel stuffed. You don't need to clean your plate. You may feel better and more in control if you eat a little less.

Tip: Don't get too hungry. Skipping meals can make you feel so hungry that you overeat later.

What's the problem with overeating? Whether you miss hunger cues or eat to cope with moods, overeating for any reason can lead to weight problems. You may consume more calories (food energy) than your body uses and perhaps make unhealthy food choices (high-fat, low-nutrient snacks). Extra calories get stored as body fat.

Eating to cope with emotional problems may feel good at first. But feeling guilty or stuffed after eating too much isn't good in the long run.

- ❖ You may feel better for a little while if eating distracts you from other things or problems in your life.
- ❖ You may hurt yourself emotionally. Many people feel bad about themselves when they eat too much or know they've made food choices that weren't the best for them. You may feel worse about yourself than you did before eating "what" you thought would help you feel better.
- ❖ More negative feelings can lead to even more emotional overeating.

If you feel stressed, bored, angry, depressed, frustrated, or lonely, what can you do to avoid overeating?

Instead of eating, do something positive in exchange for negative feelings:

- ❖ Do something more active by yourself: dance, take a walk, run up and down the stairs, do sit-ups or push-ups.
- ❖ Roller-blade, skateboard, or play some pickup basketball with a friend.
- ❖ Draw or play music.
- ❖ Read a book or magazine.
- ❖ Write a letter or an e-mail message.
- ❖ Write in your journal or diary.
- ❖ Take a shower. Wash your face. Polish your nails. Brush your teeth. Comb your hair.
- ❖ If you're really hungry, pick a food-group snack with less fat and fewer calories. And decide ahead of time how much you will eat.

Tip: Serve yourself small amounts of foods. Frequently eating large amounts of foods leads to overeating. See Topics 3 and 4 for more on Serving Sizes and estimating amounts of foods.

yourCHOICE Urge to Splurge?

Topic 9 Activities

Getting Started: Get Your Juices Flowing!

Start the session with techniques to arouse preteens' feelings of hunger. The success of each activity for this topic (structured session) depends on how hungry the preteens are, how much they enjoy the snack, and how filling it is.

Before eating, have preteens engage in physical activity.

- ❖ **ASK:** What's the benefit of moving more and sitting less? **POINT OUT** that being physically active also helps them have a healthy appetite, cope with stress and other negative feelings, feel good about themselves, and feel energetic. Refer to Topic 2, page 13, for other benefits of moving more.
- ❖ **Using the *Move It!* poster, have preteens come up with some activity they can do in your center**—something that helps them *do enough, do more, or do plenty*. If preteens filled a “fishbowl” with ideas for physical activities in Topic 2, page A-43, from the Additional “Quick” Activities, this is a good time to pull out an idea.
- ❖ **Take about 10 minutes for physical activity.**

Have the snack on the table ready to eat after preteens finish their physical activity. Do talk about the snack before beginning to eat:

- ❖ how good it looks and how great it tastes
- ❖ how hungry you are and how hungry they must be after school

Activity 1: How Hungry?

Use their afterschool snack to help preteens become aware of their hunger cues.

As they cool down from the icebreaker activity, have preteens rate their feelings of hunger before eating their snack.

- ❖ Describe an imaginary line across the room representing a “hunger continuum.”
 - *One end:* very hungry
 - *Middle:* hungry
 - *Opposite end:* not hungry at all
- ❖ Before they eat their snack, **ASK:** How hungry are you? Have them stand on the appropriate spot on the continuum. Most will be gathered near the “very hungry” end. Encourage them to remember where they stood.
- ❖ Move the session along to the table with the snack and low-fat or fat-free milk to drink with it. Milk helps make the snack more filling.
- ❖ Give preteens time to wash their hands before eating. Talk about this food safety tip. Refer to the messages in the *FIGHT BAC!* poster.

Food safety-smarts: When you pack a lunch or snack to take along, keep HOT foods HOT and COLD foods COLD. A thermos or an ice pack will help.

Invite them to enjoy their snack. Give them at least 5 minutes to eat.

Immediately after eating, have preteens rate their feelings of hunger again on the “hunger continuum.” This time, most will be gathered nearer to the middle where they still feel “hungry.” Encourage them to remember where they stood this time.

Activity 2: Listening to “Body Talk”

Challenge preteens to think about when, how much, and how often they eat.

Start with the word “hunger.” **ASK:**

- ❖ How would you describe hunger?
- ❖ How does it feel to be physically hungry? How did you feel when you first put yourself on the “hunger continuum” before eating and after being active?
- ❖ Do you ever feel hungry for emotional reasons—such as boredom, anger, or stress? Do you feel the same as you do when you’re physically hungry? **Talk briefly** about the difference between real physical hunger and craving food for emotional reasons.

(Watch the time so preteens can arrange themselves again on the “hunger continuum” at exactly 20 minutes after they first started to eat their snack. Timing is essential.)

Have preteens rate their feelings of hunger for the third time on the “hunger continuum”—now 20 minutes after they started to eat their snack. This time, most will be gathered at the other end, “not hungry at all.”

Continue talking about satisfying their hunger. Keep the discussion open-ended so preteens talk freely, and everyone gets a chance to talk.

- ❖ Think about where you put yourself on the “hunger continuum.” How would you compare your hunger feelings *before* you ate, *just after* you ate, and now *after 20 minutes*?
- ❖ Do you feel full now? **POINT OUT** that the word “satiety” means feeling full or at a point of being satisfied with how much food one eats.
- ❖ How do you know when you’re starting to feel satisfied? What cues or signals does your body send to let you know you’re full?

Explore reasons why people overeat and how to avoid it. Talk about:

- ❖ Have you ever gone from feeling hungry to feeling stuffed or too full? How do you feel when you're stuffed? What might happen to the extra calories (food energy) you eat? (*When you eat more calories than your body uses, extra calories turn to body fat.*)
- ❖ Why do people go beyond feeling satisfied, and eat until they're stuffed?
- ❖ **Imagine this situation:** It's 12:30 PM at a fast-food place. You eat a burger and fries in a hurry. At 12:40 PM you're still hungry, so you buy a fruit pie. What's the problem? **POINT OUT:** When you eat too fast, you don't give your body enough time to feel full; that's when you might overeat and feel stuffed. Even if you can eat faster, it takes about 20 minutes to feel satisfied!
- ❖ How can you manage your eating to bridge the time gap before you feel satisfied? **Have them come up with ways** to eat slowly, and listen to body cues to know when they're really satisfied.
- ❖ **POINT OUT** that it's okay to leave food on the plate, and perhaps save it for later that day. **ASK:** Why is it better to save food for later than to eat the extra calories? **Talk about** the feeling that comes with being full but not stuffed.

Activity 3: Emotional “Hunger”

Have preteens explore emotional “hunger” as another reason for overeating.
(Oversized amounts—another reason)

Start by asking:

- ❖ Has anyone ever said to you: “Eat something; you’ll feel better”?
- ❖ Who’s done that? How did you feel at the time? **Focus on their emotional reasons.**

Use visualization to start preteens thinking about some ways to cope with the emotional “hunger”—an emotional craving for food.

- ❖ **Close your eyes and imagine:** You’re totally stressed out with a pile of homework that’s due and a big test tomorrow! Your friend needs to talk to you; you just had a big argument that’s upsetting both of you. Your mom’s on your back about your messy room. It’s so messy you can’t find the notes you need to study anywhere. You walk to the kitchen mindlessly, as you decide what to do next. You see a package of cookies and a bowl of apples on the counter.
- ❖ **ASK:**
 - What’s your mood? How do you feel?
 - What will you do once you get to the kitchen?
 - How will you feel after you do that? What are the consequences? Will eating resolve your problems?

Continue exploring this situation. Discuss:

- ❖ **Eating triggers:** Your moods are triggers that can lead you to feel like eating. Everyone has different triggers. **ASK:** What triggers your eating?
- ❖ **Actions:** Emotional triggers lead to actions, such as eating out of stress, boredom, anger, or loneliness, or eating too often, or eating too fast. **ASK:** How do your moods affect your eating?
- ❖ **Consequences:** Satisfying your emotional “hunger” may have positive or negative, short- or long-term consequences. **ASK:** If you eat to satisfy your emotional “hunger,” what might be some of the consequences?
- ❖ How can you apply what we just talked about?

Activity 4: Coping With Eating Triggers

Help preteens come up with their ideas for healthful ways to cope with their moods and negative feelings.

POINT OUT: Sometimes you need to give up some things to get other things you want, such as looking and feeling your best.

ASK: Suppose your moods trigger emotional “hunger.” What can you do that helps you feel good and keeps you in control of your emotions and your eating? Which approach would be hardest for you? Why?

- ❖ Skip food. Do something else that helps you feel good.
- ❖ Eat less food. Have just a small amount. Remind them to use Serving Sizes on food labels to help with choices; refer to the *READ IT before you EAT IT!* poster. Estimate the amount of food you eat by using visual cues and comparing the amount of food you need.
- ❖ Exchange a high-calorie food for another food with fewer calories. Encourage them to use the *It's Up to You* poster for ideas.

Have preteens pair up to brainstorm five things they would be willing to do—besides eat—if they felt bored, stressed, angry, or lonely. Have them share their ideas with everyone.

Wrapping Up: What's yourCHOICE?

Wrap up by making “yourCHOICE” action plans to pay attention to hunger cues and avoid overeating.

Review what they learned about this topic. **ASK:**

- ❖ Why do you need to pay attention to your body’s hunger cues?
- ❖ How can you beat hunger without feeling stuffed?
- ❖ Why don’t you want to let your emotions control your eating?
- ❖ How can you handle your moods without turning to food?
- ❖ What choices can you make for yourself to keep from overeating? Why? **Talk about the goals and actions** they can take to control how much and how often they eat. (For example, *GOAL: Control my urge to eat when I’m stressed out. Actions: Walk the dog to get away from the kitchen. Eat a piece of fruit instead of a high-fat snack. Eat one cookie not the whole package.*)

On their “yourCHOICE” handout, have each participant write a goal and three steps he or she can take this week to manage hunger and avoid overeating. (Note: At the next session, ask them what actions they actually took.)

Have the participants see how they did with the goal and action steps each person wrote on their own “yourCHOICE” handout for the last topic. They can check (✓) the steps they took so far. (Optional) Each person who took at least one action receives some form of recognition.

Collect their handouts to use in the last session.

Urge to Splurge?
Topic 9

TOPIC 10: yourCHOICE What's New?

Skill-Based Outcomes

Preteens who participate in this activity will be able to:

- ❖ Try foods they've never tasted.
- ❖ Talk about new foods without "yucks" before deciding if they like them.
- ❖ Respect each others opinions about foods.
- ❖ Fit new foods into their meals and snacks.
- ❖ Use the "5-20% DV" guide to nutrition labeling to compare and choose new foods.

Empowerment Messages

- ❖ Try not to be afraid to try new things, such as unfamiliar foods and new ways to get moving.
- ❖ Stores and restaurants are full of foods you've never tried. You won't know if you like them until you try them. Give new foods a chance.
- ❖ Trying new foods can be fun, exciting, and interesting. You may even like them in your meals and snacks. And tasting experiences will help you enjoy social events where some foods are often unfamiliar.
- ❖ Different foods help keep you healthy in different ways. In fact, being adventurous with food broadens your choices and enjoyment. And eating different kinds of foods helps you get the nutrients you need to grow, feel good, and be your best.

Activity Summary

(Icebreaker) **Pleasure of Trying!** - With an easy demonstration, preteens discover that the adventure of trying something new can have pleasant results.

- 1 Food Neophobia*** - Preteens learn the term “food neophobia,” as they discover ways to overcome any fear of trying new foods.
- 2 (Afterschool Snack) Give Food a Try!*** - A food trying activity gives them a chance to discover the flavors of many new foods, to see how these foods fit into the food groups, and to see that new foods can be fun to try.
- 3 Facts About New Foods** - In pairs or small groups, they use the “5-20% DV” guide to find out the Nutrition Facts for each new food.

(Wrap up) **What's yourCHOICE?** - Each person comes up with personal steps to introduce new foods in his or her meal and snack choices. In this last session, each person who has taken at least one step to healthier eating and active living gets a Power of Choice Recognition Certificate.

* Adapted from *Go Girls!*

Getting Ready

● Read:

- ❖ Do You Know...? on the next page

● Display Posters:

- ❖ *MyPyramid*
- ❖ *It's Up to You*
- ❖ *FIGHT BAC!*
- ❖ *READ IT before you EAT IT!*
- ❖ *How Much Do YOU Eat?*
- ❖ *Move It!*

● Get:

For "Pleasure of Trying!"

- ❖ Crisp dollar bill
- ❖ Paper grocery bag

For "Food Neophobia"

- ❖ One sheet of 8½ x 11-inch paper, marker

For "Give Food a Try!" (snack activity)*

Selecting unusual or different foods will cost extra; only some of the costs may be reimbursable as snack items.

- ❖ One or two blindfolds
- ❖ Select untypical foods for tasting, such as:
 - *Fruits Group*: papaya, mango, kiwifruit, honeydew melon, Asian pear, blackberries
 - *Vegetables Group*: jicama, kohlrabi, asparagus, squash, plantain, sweet potatoes, snow peas, turnips, parsnips, bok choy, sprouts, red bell pepper, tofu
 - *Grains Group*: naan bread, whole-wheat bread or pita, flavored tortillas, whole-grain rice, spinach pasta, bulgur
 - *Milk Group*: low-fat or fat-free flavored milks, cheeses, or yogurts
 - *Meat and Beans Group*: assorted beans and lentils, veggie burgers, various nuts, nut butters
- ❖ Equipment: cutting boards; knives; bowls, paper plates, and utensils to serve foods
- ❖ Table setting: paper plates, cups, forks, napkins

* If your program has been approved to serve USDA's Afterschool Snacks, the snack served as part of this activity may qualify for reimbursement. For each participant, **serve at least enough tasting foods of any two different components from the following four:**

Milk, fluid	1 cup (8 ounces)
Meat or Meat Alternate	1 ounce
Fruits or Vegetables or full-strength juice	¾ cup (6 ounces)
Grains or Breads	1 ounce equivalent

continued on next page

continued from previous page

❖ Do:

- Try to include foods preteens haven't tasted before. Offer foods from all five food groups with enough different foods included, so each person has a chance to describe a different food while blindfolded.
- Keep or collect Nutrition Facts labels for foods you taste. You may need to ask in the produce department; Nutrition Facts may appear nearby but not necessarily on the produce.
- Buy and prepare foods ahead so they're ready to taste before you start the session; you can reheat foods in a microwave or conventional oven. Have food in tasting-size bites; leave one of each food whole so preteens see how it looks.

For "Facts About New Foods"

- ❖ Nutrition Facts labels for any foods they just tasted from the snack activity

For "Wrapping Up: What's yourCHOICE?"

- ❖ "yourCHOICE" handout for each participant
- ❖ (Optional) some form of recognition for each participant, as offered in previous sessions
- ❖ Power of Choice Recognition Certificate (for all who took at least one step toward healthier eating and active living during the program)

Do You Know...?

Why do people like different foods? Food doesn't have the same flavor for everyone. Our taste buds differ; some people have more than others. That's one reason why some people like spicy-hot flavors, and others don't. Aroma and temperature are part of flavor; we sense smell and touch differently, too. Smoking, some illnesses, and some medications also change the way food tastes.

Most people enjoy familiar foods. The more often you try a food, the more familiar it gets, and often, the more you like it. So don't be surprised if you don't like a food the first time you taste it. Try it again and maybe again. Many people prefer family foods and their own ethnic foods, in part, because they are so familiar.

Why try new foods? Because you might like them! You won't ever know if you like a food or like anything else, for that matter, if you don't try it. Trying new foods can be a whole new adventure. The other question is: why not have a taste? Even if you don't like it, you can always say you gave it a try!

There's a health reason, too. Being adventurous with food broadens your choices and helps you get the 40-plus different nutrients you need for good health. A healthful approach to eating that includes different kinds of foods helps you reach the goals you set for yourself.

How many foods can you pick from? You may not realize how many choices you have! Supermarkets, on average, carry 30,000 different items; most are foods. Yet, for many people, the same eight or 10 "core" foods make up most of the purchases when they shop.

Another reason: When you cut down on foods you like—perhaps because they have a lot of fat or sugar or not much calcium or fiber—it's great to have new foods in exchange.

How can you enjoy new foods? Whether familiar or not, you'll enjoy any food more when it looks and smells good.

- ❖ Serve hot food hot and cold food cold. Besides being safer, it tastes better! For example, milk tastes best cold to most people.
- ❖ Store food properly, so it's at its best quality when you eat it. Again, that's when food is safe to eat. For example, crisp vegetables taste better than limp ones.
- ❖ Cook properly; avoid overcooking. Many foods lose their bright colors and firm textures when they're cooked too long. They may lose nutrients, too.
- ❖ Serve food so it looks nice. Try to have different colors, shapes, and textures on a plate so food looks more appealing.
- ❖ Try a new food with familiar foods. Taste the new food first while you feel the hungriest.

yourCHOICE What's New?

Topic 10 Activities

Getting Started: **Pleasure of Trying!**

Introduce the adventure of trying with a quick icebreaker. Before the session and without anyone seeing what you're doing, put a crisp dollar bill into a paper grocery bag.

ASK *what they had for lunch today* to get them thinking about food.

Tell the group: Inside this bag, there's something green and crisp. It's made from a plant—but you can't grow it. It's very, very flat; in fact, each side looks different. People from faraway lands like it. It would be weird in a salad.

ASK, and have preteens raise their hands to respond:

- ❖ After all the fun we've had learning about vegetables, what do you think it is?
- ❖ Does anyone want to reach in for it—even though you don't know what it is?
- ❖ Is anyone afraid of reaching in for something that you can't really identify?

Let the first person who raised his or her hand reach in and take what's inside. **ASK:**

- ❖ Was it worth being adventurous? Were you pleasantly surprised?
- ❖ Now who wishes they'd tried?
- ❖ When is it okay to be adventurous?
- ❖ What keeps you from trying something unfamiliar? **Probe** to find out if fear keeps anyone from trying new things.

Keep the discussion open-ended so preteens talk freely, and everyone gets a chance to share his or her thoughts.

Activity 1: Food Neophobia

Through a short discussion, help preteens think more about why people avoid trying new foods.

Write the word “neophobia” where everyone can see it.

❖ **ASK** preteens if they know the word or if they can recognize any part of it. Even if they don’t know the word, they might have heard similar words before:

- neonate (newborn baby)
- neophyte (beginner)
- claustrophobia (fear of confined spaces)
- arachnophobia (fear of spiders)

❖ **POINT OUT:** Neophobia means a fear of new things.

ASK: Does anyone have “food neophobia” (fear of trying new foods)? Why or why not? **POINT OUT:** Today you’ll have the chance to try new foods to help overcome any fear of making changes in the way you eat.

Activity 2: Give Food a Try!

Food trying helps preteens get more adventurous with food and overcome food neophobia. Try to pick foods they haven't tasted before. Get foods ready ahead of time, so they're ready to try.

Give preteens a chance to wash their hands before handling foods. Talk about this food safety tip. From one of your tasting foods, show preteens a package with safe handling instructions. Refer to the messages on the *FIGHT BAC!* poster.

Food Safety-Smarts: Look for the safe handling instructions on packages of meat and poultry. They tell you how to keep food safely at home.

Before starting to taste, go over the “new food” taste-testing guides.

Ask tasters to be objective about their experiences.

- ❖ Everyone will be given a chance to try the new foods—at least one bite.
- ❖ There are no “yucks.” Differences in our taste buds and food experiences give us different reactions to food.
- ❖ You can't say you like or dislike the food or that it tastes good or bad. Just describe the flavor, temperature, aroma, and then the appearance.

Have preteens taste test one new food at a time, as you talk together about their experiences.

- ❖ **For each food, blindfold one or two tasters to take the first taste and describe it.** (There's no peeking under or through the blindfold.) See if they can figure out what kind of food it is (e.g., fruit, vegetable, grain, milk product).
- ❖ **Then give everyone a chance to taste.**
- ❖ **Have preteens put the food in its food group** using the *It's Up to You* poster.
- ❖ **Talk more about each food they taste:**
 - How does it compare to other foods you tried?
 - How can you eat this food in an easy meal or snack?
 - How can you combine it with other foods?
- ❖ **Repeat the food tasting with other foods** and other volunteers until everyone has tasted every food. If someone chooses not to taste one or more foods, it's okay. Be sensitive about foods that some cultures and religions avoid.

After tasting, talk about the whole experience. (ASK:)

- ❖ Were you surprised by the flavors of any of these foods? How?
- ❖ Why do you think we tasted new foods today?
- ❖ What did you learn? **Probe** until they recognize that it is a good idea to try a new food before deciding if you like or dislike it. (POINT OUT: Sometimes it takes several tries before a new food gets familiar enough to enjoy. You never know what you might be missing until you try new things.

Activity 3: Facts About New Foods

Give preteens more practice with label reading. Have the **READ IT before you EAT IT!** poster handy.

Start by asking:

- ❖ You just tasted new foods. How can you find out more about them?
- ❖ What can you check for nutrition information? (*Nutrition Facts on the label*)
- ❖ How might you use what you find out?

In pairs or small groups, have preteens check the Nutrition Facts for the new foods. Remind them to use the “5-20% DV” guide to nutrition labeling. Have them tell the whole group what they find out.

Have them come up with benefits for being adventurous and trying different kinds of foods. Talk about the nutrition benefits—and the fun! They can’t say they like or dislike a food unless they try it!

Wrapping Up: What's yourCHOICE?

Wrap up by making “yourCHOICE” action plans for trying new foods.

Review what they learned in this session. **ASK:**

- ❖ Why would you give new foods a chance? **POINT OUT:** *The Power of Choice* activities encourage you to eat foods lower in solid fats, especially those low in saturated fat and *trans* fat. It’s also good to try new foods; you’ll have more “different” kinds of foods to choose from. There are lots of healthful foods you haven’t tried yet.
- ❖ What’s the benefit of having a choice of different kinds of foods?
- ❖ How can you try all kinds of new foods and fit them in your meal and snack choices? **Talk about the goals and actions they can take.**
(For example, *GOAL: Learn to eat some new vegetables. Actions: Buy a new vegetable at the store, and prepare it with my family. Eat a new, raw vegetable with dip. Add one new vegetable to my salad.*)

On their “yourCHOICE” handout, have each person write a goal and three steps he or she can take this week to enjoy new food-group foods in meals and snacks. (Note: They can share the actions they took with their families and friends.)

See how the participants did with all the goals and action steps they wrote for the previous nine topics. On the handout, have them check (✓) the steps they took for the last topic. (Optional) Each person who took at least one action receives some form of recognition.

If this is your last Power of Choice activity, wrap it up!

Talk together about what's important in their lives and how to use goal-setting and decision-making skills to be the best they can be and to reach their goals. In Topic 1, pages 3 to 5, you explored values and goals together.

Go over their “yourCHOICE” handout. Talk about all the goals and action steps they wrote and those they actually did (checked off) since the program began.

Acknowledge their success. Recognize everyone who took at least one step to eat healthier foods and move more—and stuck with it! Congratulate them with a Power of Choice Recognition Certificate.

Encourage preteens to keep their “yourCHOICE” handout as a personal contract. **Suggest:**

- ❖ Try to check off more healthful eating and active living steps.
- ❖ Post it on the refrigerator at home to remind yourself of steps you can take.
- ❖ Share it with your family. They can make healthful choices, too, and reinforce what you're doing!

