

Fruits & Veggies!

Tips & Information

Real-life challenges...

- Fruits & vegetables are too expensive.
- We have limited storage & fridge space for produce.
- Fruits and veggies take too long to eat.
- Kids don't like to eat fruit & veggies.
- Getting kids to help with snack preparation takes too much time, especially washing hands, putting on gloves, and supervising.
- Afterschool licensing requirements and food safety regulations don't allow kids to participate in food preparation.

...and how to overcome them

- ⇒ Serve canned, dried or frozen fruits and veggies for cheaper alternatives.
- ⇒ Make purchases more often or request more frequent deliveries to keep food fresh.
- ⇒ Cut & peel before serving to make eating easier. Get kids involved for hands-on experience.
- ⇒ Use fun taste tests to better understand kids' preferences. Identify new items that kids enjoy to add to your regular menu (see the example below).
- ⇒ Assign rotating helper jobs like snack set-up/clean-up, involve kids in menu planning, or plan grocery store visits.
- ⇒ Get creative with jobs for kids like setting tables, washing fruit, and helping with clean up.

Check out some of these creative success stories!

When one program started introducing different fruits & veggies, they designed a whiteboard near the snack area where children rated the new foods each day. The site director tallied the ratings and created new snack menus that matched the kids' favorites. The kids were eating foods that they loved and that were good for them too!

Brainstorming with children about new ways to incorporate fruits and vegetables into snacks is a great way to get kids involved. One site urged children to think of creative ways to add either a fruit or vegetable to every snack. Some ideas are:

- * Carrots, celery, bananas or apples with peanut butter
- * Whole grain crackers with an orange or sliced red peppers
- * Trail mix with nuts, sunflower seeds, and dried fruit
- * Yogurt with granola and berries



Did you know?

The Scoop on Fruits & Veggies

- Offer a fruit or vegetable option with every snack or meal served.
- Fruits and vegetables are important foods to include in a healthy diet, but only about one in every five children (and few adults!) get the recommended 5 or more servings each day.¹
- Fruits and vegetables are packed with nutrients, including vitamins A, B, and C, and minerals such as potassium and even calcium. They help protect against heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure and cancer later in life.²
- Each type of fruit or vegetable has unique benefits, so it is important to eat different types to get all the nutrients for a strong body.
- 100% fruit juice isn't a substitute for whole fruit. When possible, serve whole fruit—it contains more nutrients and fiber and helps you fill up.
- Even though canned and frozen foods can provide an easy way to keep fruits and veggies handy, watch out for added sugar and salt.

Creative & Easy Snack Ideas:

Applesauce
Tangerines/Clementines
Apricots
Canned fruit in water or juice
Dried fruit like: apple rings,
apricots, raisins, berries
Colored pepper slices
Raw broccoli and cauliflower
Green & yellow string beans
Celery

How much do kids really need?

- ★ Children should eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables each day

So what's a serving?

- ★ 1/4 cup of dried fruit
- ★ 1/2 cup of cooked or raw vegetables
- ★ 3/4 cup of 100% juice
- ★ 1 cup of leafy greens—and remember that darker greens are more nutritious!
- ★ 1 medium piece of fruit

Get creative with these recipe ideas!

- ◆ Baked apples
 - ◆ Fruit kebobs
 - ◆ Fruit salad
 - ◆ Ants on a log
 - ◆ Fruit smoothies
 - ◆ Veggie dipping sauce
- (These recipes can be found in your Food & Fun Manual)

Want to know more? Check out these other resources.

For tips on eating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables, nutrition information, and activity pages for children visit the 5aday website:

<http://www.5aday.com>

Dole produces a 5-a-day website that has sections for teachers as well as children:

<http://www.dole5aday.com>

Harvard School of Public Health publishes an online nutrition news and resource center:

<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource>

Produce for Better Health has resources for afterschool providers to help children establish smart fruit and vegetable eating habits:

<http://www.pbhfoundation.org/educators/teachers/activities/>

