



NETA QUARTERLY NEWS

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Nutrition Education
Training Academy

Nutrition, Physical Activity & Gardening for Early Childhood Providers

Hints for the Holidays

- Consume fats with moderation. They have twice as many calories as protein or carbohydrates.
- Remember that added sugar provides calories but not additional nutrients.
- Put smaller portions on a smaller plate; it won't look skimpy.
- Eat an appetizer instead of an entrée at a restaurant.

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Community Nutrition Education & Mobilization for Parents of Preschoolers

Kicking-off a new nutrition education training program for parents of preschoolers, the UC Cooperative Extension of Alameda Counties' Nutrition Education Training Academy (NETA) organized Community Nutrition Fairs for over 500 parents of preschoolers at eight Oakland Unified School District Early Childhood Development Centers.

The Community Nutrition and Mobilization (CNAM) for Parents of Preschoolers is a three-year pilot project that provides nutrition education training for parents and promotes environmental changes at home, schools and neighborhoods where parents reside.

Using a community mobilization approach, the program helps parents incubate ideas on how to live a healthier life style and trains parents how to teach others to select, consume and eat more fresh fruits and vegetables. CNAM empowers parents to create safe and healthy environments by promoting opportunities for physical activity and increasing access to and consumption of fruits and vegetables.

It is now well documented that empowerment and community participation within the health promotion movement helps people, organizations, and communities strive for independence, self-reliance and self-governance.¹ CNAM strives to promote active participation and encourage parents to become their own change agents for better access to food and safe spaces where they can safely walk or bike.

CNAM offers a one-year training program for parents in different leadership

topics. The first six months of training focus on building the capacity of parents as Community Nutrition Education Assistants (CNEA's). The trainings develop the CNEA's knowledge of and skills in nutrition, health promotion, and community mobilization. By the end of the year, CNEA's use their knowledge to mobilize and recruit parents for the Parent Nutrition Advisory Committee (PNAC).

The PNAC's role will be to identify community needs and resources, organize school events that promote healthy eating and active lifestyles. The committee will also promote healthy lifestyles, like walking days, writing bicycles, newsletters, recipe books and other culturally relevant materials.

In the last six month of the year, CNEA's will organize community meetings and parent trainings to share their knowledge and information about how to eat, consume, select food and become physically

active.

Trained CNEA's will help facilitate community participation in setting nutrition and physical activity priorities, defining health problems and setting strategies to meet their needs. CNEA's will engage their families, friends, neighbors, and fellow parents in the mobilization process.

Eight OUSD school sites are currently implementing CNAM: Bella Vista CDC, Highland CDC, Lockwood CDC, Martin Luther King Jr., CDC, Parker CDC, Centro Infantil de la Raza- Main CDC, Centro Infantil de la Raza - Annex CDC, and International CDC.

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Community Nutrition Fair held at Martin Luther King Jr. CDC

1 Zimmerman, Marc, et al: Empowerment Forum: A Dialogue between Guest Editorial Board Members. Health Education Quarterly, Vol.21 (3) 281-294 (Fall 1994)



EAT FRUITS & VEGETABLES
AND BE ACTIVE

Benefits of Parent-Focused Early Childhood Nutrition Program



Parents play a key role in their children's lives, shaping their eating and physical activity habits. The food related experiences children have early in life help them to learn about food and eating, and influence their attitudes about making healthy food choices. Children who grow up in families that encourage outings and being "on the move" also learn to value being physically active and are more likely to carry out these habits into adulthood.

Researchers both in the field of nutrition and education have found a direct relationship between nutrition, health, and learning. Children who practice unhealthy eating habits and have sedentary lifestyles are at risk to be overweight and obese. The increases in the prevalence of overweight among low-income preschool children is particularly alarming, says, Patricia Crawford, Center for Health and Weight, Director, at the University of California, Berkeley. It is not clear, why Latino children have the highest risk of being overweight. There is some evidence that the lack of culturally appropriate techniques to educate Latino parents may create some confusion in the Latino families, particularly new immigrants. The perception about what children should eat, when and how much to eat, and whether or not a child is overweight differs among culturally diverse families. Some parents may believe that a child who is

Children look up to parents as role models. If the parents eat right and are physically active, there is a good chance that a child will make those choices, too.

"thick and solid" at an early age is healthy. Often, a parent's control over a child's diet is challenged by other family members. Emotionally, it is also difficult for a mother to deny food if a child wants to eat, despite having just eaten.

Parents, particularly mothers, are important in shaping their children's diet and active patterns early in life. Children look up to parents as role models. If the parents eat right and are physically active, there is a good chance that their child will make those choices, too.

Families can create an environment at home that can make it easier to adopt healthy choices and make changes to be successful in maintaining smart eating habits and being physically active. Early Childhood Nutrition programs benefit from parent-focused programs that provide parents practical real life experiences they can adopt at home. In order to develop effective childhood obesity prevention interventions, Early Childhood Nutrition Programs should offer opportunities for parents to change environmental conditions in schools and in their communities in ways that promote active lifestyles and healthy eating. Such parent-focused nutrition education programs empower parents to educate and support each other in their effort to encourage children to eat more nutritious food, and link resources to improve the availability of fresh produce in local stores.

Lucrecia Farfan-Ramirez, County Director, UC Cooperative Extension of Alameda County

Resources:

Jain A. Sherman SN, Chamberlin DL, Carter Y, Powers SW, Witaker RC. *Why don't low-income mothers worry about their preschoolers being overweight?* Pediatrics. 2001 May; 107(5) 1138-46.

Patricia B. Crawford, Gosliner W, Strode P, Samuel SE, Burnette C, Craypo L, Yancey A. *Walking the Talk: Fit WIC Wellness Programs Improve Self-Efficacy in Pediatric Obesity Prevention Counseling.* American Journal of Public Health. 2004 September; 1480-85.

Fisher, J. O., Mitchell, D. C., Smiciklas-Wright H., & Birch, L. (2002). *Eat as I say and eat as I do: Parental influences on young girls' fruit and vegetable intake.* Journal of the American Dietetic Association. 102, 58-64.

U.S. Department of Agriculture Child and Adult Care Food Program. *Making Nutrition Count for Children.*

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute of Health. *We Can! Families Finding the Balance.* A Parent Handbook. 2005 June.

Action Steps that Parents Can Take at their Child's School

- Encourage your school to offer healthy breakfast and lunch options, including fruits and vegetables.
- Make an appointment with the school principal or Site Administrator to talk about the school's health environment. Ask to be involved with the school's health committee if one exists.
- Encourage educators and parents to provide sweet fruits like grapes, strawberries, or nectarines as special treats during birthday parties and class celebrations.
- Become involved with the development of school wellness policies in your district.
- Offer to help organize fun physical activities for children.

Farmers' Market News: Eating Seasonal With Asian Greens



The farmers' market table is buried of different shades of unfamiliar greens. Some of us may ask, "What is that?" "How do you cook it?" Leafy Asian greens are called *Choy* in Chinese. Sometimes many of the greens have more than one name. We have included a guide to help select Asian greens and some recipes you can prepare.

In California, many of the Asian greens come from the San Joaquin Valley, where Hmong immigrants from Laos settled after the Vietnam War.

Baby Bok Choy. Small curvaceous, jade-green heads (4-10 in) with mellow flavor.

Yao Choy (yau, yow or yu choy; choy sum, ching choy sum) Bright green slender, fleshy, leafy stalks with tiny yellow buds or flowers have an earthy, slightly bitter mustard flavor.

Chinese Mustard Green (gai, choy, juk choy or leaf mustard) Has a mild to pungent mustard bite and jade-green leaves and stems. Some are broad, smooth, and succulent with ruffled leaves, others are

thin with smoother leaves.

Bok Choy (also called pak choie or Chinese white cabbage) Cabbage texture with a mild cabbage like flavor.



Pan Steamed Asian Greens



Ingredients:

- Asian greens, Yao Choy, Baby Bok Choy, Bok Choy, Chinese mustard and others like Chinese Broccoli
- 1/2 cup of water
- 2-3 tablespoons of oyster sauce or soy sauce
- 2-3 teaspoons toasted sesame seeds
- 1/2 teaspoon of minced ginger preparation

Directions:

1. Remove and discard yellow, damaged, or tough leaves from 1 pound of Asian green 4-8 inches long.
2. Cut lengthwise into halves or quarter to make about 1 inch thick. Immerse in water and swish to dislodge grit. Drain.
3. Set a 5-6 quart pan over high heat. When hot add 1/2 cup of water and the greens; cover and cook until barely tender to bite, 3-5 minutes. Drain greens and pour into serving bowls.
4. Drizzle with 2 teaspoons of oyster sauce or soy sauce and 2-3 teaspoons of toasted sesame seeds.

Prep and Cook Time: About 10 minutes

Makes 4 servings (1 serving = 3/4 cup)

Nutrition Information per serving:

Calories: 15, Carbohydrates: 2.5 g, Total Fat: 0.2 g, Saturated Fat: 0 g, Fiber: 1.1 g, Sodium: 74 mg



Taryn's Physical Activity Corner: Get Physical—Walk for your Heart



More than 50 million people in the U.S. are affected by high blood pressure, which can lead to cardiovascular disease and other health related complications. Most hypertensive

patients are treated with medication that often is very costly, particularly for those with no health insurance. In some cases pharmaceutical treatment of hypertension may have some adverse effects on the quality of life of a patient.

What are some of the causes of high blood pressure? Elevated Blood Pressure may be caused by kidney disease, obesity, smoking, and excessive consumption of alcohol, heavy caffeine intake, age, gender, ethnicity, family history, stress, emotional disorder and heart disease.

What should you do to lower your BP?

Proper diet and exercise can help control BP.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans and My Pyramid provide information about proper diet. In some cases people with high blood pressure need to be under the guidance of a registered dietitian and their regular physician.

What kind of physical activity helps maintain normal blood pressure?

Aerobic exercise, which helps the muscles draw on oxygen in the blood as well as fats and glucose. Some types of aerobic exercises include biking, jogging, walking, swimming, dancing, etc. To reduce the risk of high blood pressure, it is important to be physically active for at least 30 minutes most days of the week. For those interested in preventing weight gain engage in 60 to 90 minutes of moderate-to vigorous-intensity activity on most days. Similarly, children and teenagers need to be physically active for 60 minutes every day. Adding physical activity into your daily life may

seem difficult. A simple step towards adding physical activity is starting with a walking program. Buy an inexpensive pedometer and monitor your progression. 10,000 steps a day is considered an active lifestyle. Begin with what you complete in a week and aim for a 10% increase of steps each week.

Taryn's message for this Holiday: *"Start walking today! Walking every day can help you feel better, expend calories, and reduce the risk of chronic disease and illness as well as improving the quality of life."*

References:

American College of Sport Medicine, www.acsm.org
Natl. Heart, Lung, Blood Inst., www.nhlbi.nih.gov
National Institute of Health, www.pubmed.gov

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Funded by the USDA Food Stamp Program, an equal opportunity provider and employer, through the California Nutrition Network. The Food Stamp Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. Helping them buy nutritious food for a better diet. For more information about the California Food Stamp program call 1-800-952-5253.

Tidbits

1. *Balancing What You Eat and Consume.* Energy Balance means that your energy in (all the calories from the food and drinks you consume daily) equal your energy out (all the calories you burn to keep your body going to carry out your activities). Visit the We Can! Web site at <http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov> for more information.
2. *What Can Families Do to Encourage Healthy Eating?* It is hard to make changes in eating life styles alone. Involve the entire family in creating a supportive environment for adopting healthy choices and being an active family. Visit My Pyramid! Web site at <http://www.mypyramid.gov/> and <http://www.mypyramid.gov/kids/index.html>.
3. *Who is in control?* Parents have more control than they may think. TV and video games can be turned off. Walk to school with your child everyday. Involve the entire family in doing household chores to keep them active. Visit www.surgeongeneral.gov/topics/obesity/.
4. *Get Involved in Your School and Community.* The Wellness Policy process mandated by the federal government through the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, provides us an opportunity to establish standards for diet and health in our public schools. Check with your school about how to get involved. Some information about Model Wellness Policy available at www.ecoliteracy.org.