

NETA Quarterly News

Nutrition, Physical Activity & Gardening for
Early Childhood Providers



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Make MyPlate Your Plate

The new MyPlate, recently released by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is designed

to promote healthful eating. The MyPlate icon is easy to understand and, along with supporting resources, encourages

Americans to put the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans into action. The new icon builds on a familiar image of a colorful plate divided into

sections. This simple visual helps plan balanced meals and the proportions to strive for. A circle next to the plate reminds us to add dairy, such as fat free or lowfat milk, or yogurt.

What is USDA trying to accomplish?

- Simple, easy-to-understand messages which help promote healthful eating.
- Offer people information that will move them to take action and make healthful food choices.

What are MyPlate key messages for September 2011-August 2012?

- Make half of your plate fruits and vegetables (September-December 2011)
- Enjoy your food, but eat less (January-April 2012)
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks (May-August 2012)

MAKE HALF YOUR PLATE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES.

The new MyPlate calls for filling half the plate with vegetables and fruits and dividing the other half with grains and lean protein foods. Fill half of the plate with fruits and vegetables at every meal is a simple message you can teach your students.

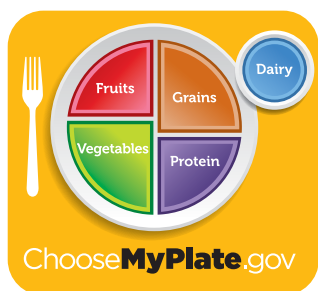
In the classroom, you can reinforce what half means by using small paper plates and folding the plates in half, evenly. Fill half of a plate with cut fruits or vegetables to illustrate ways

to achieve the recommendation. For preschoolers, emphasize the concept of fractions as part of a whole. Ask students to name shapes and describe characteristics and differences of the shapes. See *Nutrition Matters!* Activity 1-1 about shapes, colors, and food. Students can then taste test the produce.

Other educational materials to encourage children to eat healthy and get familiar with MyPlate are available on line.

Extend lessons by adding activities from NETA's monthly "*Tips for Busy Early Childhood Professionals*" and *Nutrition Matters!* curriculum, or contact the NETA Program at (510) 567-6812 or <http://neta.ucdavis.edu/>.

For more information about MyPlate, go to <http://www.choosemyplate.gov>.



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[gov/index.html](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/index.html). The Preschoolers section can be found under "Specific Audiences."

References:

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), ChooseMyPlate.gov, <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/index.html>

USDA 2010 Dietary Guidelines Communications Message Calendar, <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/downloads/MyPlate/DGCommunicationsMessageCalendar.pdf>

USDA, ChooseMyPlate coloring sheet: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/tipsresources/printmaterials.htm>



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Network for a Healthy California

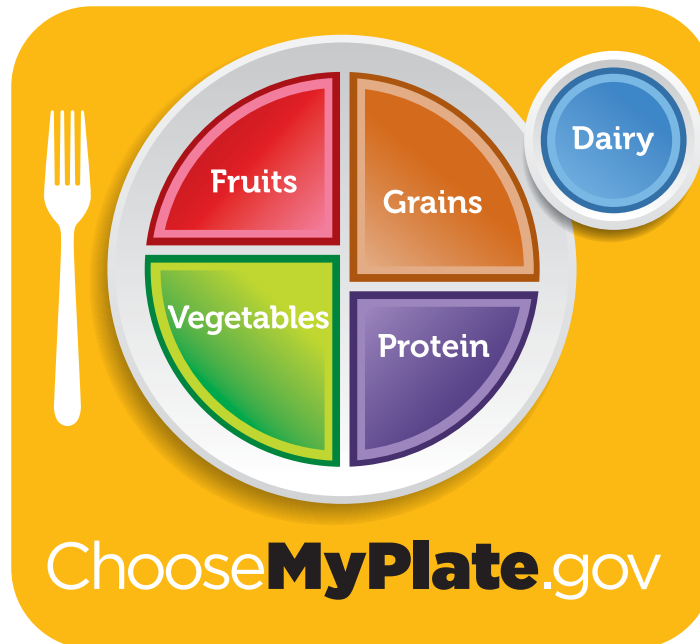
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MyPlate and the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans

My Pyramid is moving over and being replaced by the new icon MyPlate. Every five years, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Health and Human Services (HHS) review and update the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA).

The 2010 DGA is the most recent guide for healthful eating. Previously MyPyramid was the icon that symbolized the DGA recommendations. While the Pyramid was widely used, specific knowledge about the Pyramid was limited and confusing to a large segment of the population. For some people the Pyramid was too complicated, for others too simplistic. As part of the review, USDA conducted research, interviews, consumer focus groups, and quantitative surveys, to help create MyPlate. MyPlate is the new icon that reminds us of the messages of healthful eating, to help decrease overweight/obesity, as well as other chronic diseases.

While some of the childhood obesity rates in the U.S. seemed to have leveled off, certain segments of the population still have large percentages. In California, low-income Latino preschoolers still have a combined obesity/overweight prevalence rate of 35.0%; Whites 27.8%, African Americans 25.7%, and Asians/Pacific Islanders 24.9%. We cannot call California a “healthy state,” with ¼ to



⅓ of our preschool children obese/overweight.

How is MyPlate and the 2010 DGA messages being promoted?

The USDA's Center for Nutrition, Policy and Promotion, in partnership with state and local agencies, have joined efforts to provide one key message, each quarter. One selected message will be chosen for a coordinated focus (see page 1). The key nutrition message will be promoted, along with practical tips, “how-tos,” resources, and tools about making changes.

Incorporating the new MyPlate icon into your Classroom lessons?

MyPyramid educational materials can continue to be used as teaching tools with your preschoolers. *Teachers can use the MyPlate icon in conjunction with MyPyramid materials.* Using the MyPlate icon will generate children's interest and get them to think about

what they actually put on their plates.

Use *Nutrition Matters!* Module 1, Activity 1-1, “Exploring MyPyramid.” Compare the shapes of MyPyramid and MyPlate. Notice that the colors of MyPyramid and MyPlate are the same, representing the 5 food groups. Continue to emphasize vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean protein foods, and fat free or lowfat dairy products. Using the MyPlate icon will help children visualize that half of their plates should be fruits and vegetables. Stress the

importance of filling their plates with colorful fruits and vegetables. If you have a garden, encourage children to grow colorful vegetables.

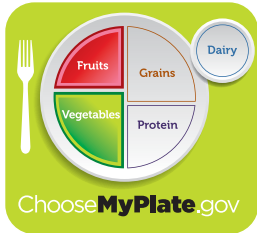
For more information, contact the NETA Program at (510) 567-6812 or <http://neta.ucdavis.edu/> or the ChooseMyPlate website <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/index.html>.

References:

- CDC, MMWR Vol. 58, July 24, 2009. Obesity Prevalence Among Low-Income, Preschool-Aged Children—United States, 1998-2008. <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5828a1.htm>
- CDC. Table 8D. 2010 Pediatric Nutrition Surveillance. Growth & Anemia Indicators by Race/Ethnicity or Age. http://www.cdc.gov/pednss/pednss_tables/tables_numeric.htm
- USDA, MyPlate and MyPyramid. . .Can they be used together? <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/downloads/MyPlate/UsingMyPlateAlongWithMyPyramid.pdf>

Build a Healthy Plate

Every day you eat from your plate or bowl. MyPlate gets you to think about what should go on your plate. Making healthy choices



includes eating vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low fat dairy products, and lean protein foods.

In MyPlate, half of the plate holds fruits and vegetables. There are varieties of produce with different colors--red, orange, and dark-green vegetables, such as tomatoes, winter squash, sweet potatoes, and broccoli. Fruits are good snacks, but adding more fruits in your recipes, including main and side dishes, will make your plate more colorful and flavorful.

Give these recipes a try. "Tips for Busy Early Childhood Professionals" have more recipes you can prepare in your classroom and at home.

Reference:

USDA, Let's Eat for the Health of it. June 2011, <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/downloads/MyPlate/DG2010Brochure.pdf>

Recipes

SPICY APPLE-FILLED SQUASH

Makes: 4 servings. 1 wedge per serving.

Note: this recipe makes 4 adult servings at 1 wedge (¼ squash) each. To make this for your classroom, adjust the taste tests to ⅓ squash servings (cut each squash half into 4 pieces); this recipe makes 8 taste tests for the classroom.

Ingredients

- 1 large acorn squash (about 1 pound)
- 2 teaspoons margarine
- 1 large apple, cored, peeled, and chopped
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ⅛ teaspoon ground cloves
- ⅛ teaspoon nutmeg

Preparation

1. Cut squash into halves and scoop out the seeds. Place squash, cut side down, in a microwave safe baking dish. Poke squash several times with a knife.



2. Add about ¼ inch of water and cook on high for 6-7 minutes in the microwave oven. Rotate dish and cook another 6-7 minutes, or until tender. Let stand 5 minutes.
3. While the squash is cooking, cook the rest of the ingredients in a medium saucepan over medium heat for about 8 minutes or until apple is crisp-tender.
4. Cut each piece of squash in half and divide the apple mixture equally among squash wedges. Return squash to microwave oven; cook 1-2 minutes more or until heated through and serve while hot.

Nutrition information per serving:

Calories 99, Carbohydrate 21 g, Dietary Fiber 4 g, Protein 1 g, Total Fat 2 g, Saturated Fat 1 g, Trans Fat 0 g, Cholesterol 5 mg, Sodium 18 mg

Recipe from:

Everyday Healthy Meals, Network for a Healthy California, Page 50; Winter Squash Microwave from Michigan State University Extension, <http://www.migarden.msu.edu/uploads/files/8/wintersquashPreservation.pdf>

FIRE AND ICE WATERMELON SALAD

Makes 4 servings. 1½ cups per serving.

Note: this recipe makes 4 adult servings at 1½ cups each. To make this for your classroom, adjust the taste tests to ¼ cup servings; this recipe makes 27 taste tests at ¼ cup each.

Ingredients

- 6 cups watermelon, rind removed, cut into large chunks
- 2 green onions, thinly sliced
- 1/3 cup thinly sliced red onion
- 1/3 cup torn mint leaves
- 1 tablespoon red pepper flakes
- 2/3 cup white vinegar
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon chili powder

Preparation

1. In a large bowl, combine watermelon, onions, mint, and red pepper flakes.
2. In a small bowl, mix vinegar, oil, and chili powder.
3. Drizzle vinegar mixture over watermelon mixture and serve.

Nutrition information per serving:

Calories 132, Carbohydrate 20 g, Dietary Fiber 2 g, Protein 1 g, Total Fat 7 g, Saturated Fat 1 g, Trans Fat 0 g, Cholesterol 0 mg, Sodium 12 mg

Recipe from:

USDA, ChooseMyPlate.gov, <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/downloads/MyPlate/Recipes.pdf>

Keeping Outdoor Activities Safe for Preschoolers

Summer weather means warmer days and lots of sun. Children like to be out playing and many families like to go out and enjoy the sunny weather. The American Academy of Pediatrics makes some recommendations to protect children from harmful ultraviolet radiation (UVR) exposure. On both sunny and cloudy days use a sunscreen that protects against UVA and UVB rays. Children should be covered with hats and should wear cotton clothing with a tight weave. Try to keep children in the shade and limit sun exposure during the peak intensity hours --between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

After using these preventive measures, children and families can enjoy activities

that focus on encouraging individual and free expression. For example:

- Read "Five Little Chicks" by Nancy Tafuri and have the children move their bodies like all the different animals in the book.
- Call out different foods and have the children pretend to move like that food (i.e. eggs scrambling, corn popping, banana peeling, peas snapping, toast popping out of toaster).
- Turn the playground into the jungle, set up tent cards with different animals and let the children move

like that animal from one tent card to another.

Water play is always fun for the children.

For this activity all that is needed are containers for water, sponges, and free wall or fence. Practice overhand and underthrow tossing with the wet sponges and paint the wall (fence). Encourage high and low tosses and for a challenge encourage the children to move further away from the wall (fence) before tossing.

Reference:

American Academy of Pediatrics, <http://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-play/Pages/Sun-Safety.aspx>



Photo: Network for a Healthy California



This material was produced by the California Department of Public Health's *Network for a Healthy California* with funding from USDA SNAP, known in California as CalFresh (formerly Food Stamps). These institutions are equal opportunity providers and employers. CalFresh provides assistance to low-income households and can help buy nutritious foods for better health. For CalFresh information, call 1-877-847-3663. For important nutrition information, visit www.cachampionsforchange.net.

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