

Health and Wellness Newsletter for Early Childhood Educators

Healthy Children, Healthy Adults

Volume 13, Issue 2 • January–March 2013

The Gift of Spring

Spring is the time when dormant branches sprout new buds, birds migrate, and sun rays filter through the clouds, giving us energy. It is time to renew our commitment to a healthy lifestyle.

March is National Nutrition Month! The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics encourages consumers to “Eat Right, Your Way, Every Day.” It is time to move forward, eat better, worry less, walk with a friend and reconnect with them. Find balance in your life and take an optimistic view of your own ability to engage in healthy habits. Where should you start?

Spring Into Health! Do not worry about perfect outcomes. It is hard to make changes on your own. Find



family and friends that eat right and are physically active.

Set Realistic Goals: Make small, easy changes over time. Recognize that you have more control than you think. Most importantly, “Do not give up.”

Spoon Less Sugar: Cut back on sweetened beverages. **Drink Water.**

Eat Small Portions: Order an appetizer instead of an entrée, or consider sharing a plate with a friend when the portions

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are large. Take some home for dinner or lunch.

Eat Green in Spring:

Eat more vegetables. Eat dark green leafy vegetables which are a good source of folate and vitamin B. Consider adding Spinach as a substitute for lettuce in your sandwich.



Get Moving: Spring is here! Walk with your friends. Start with 30 minutes and increase to 60.

For more information and fact sheets to help choose healthy foods that fit your lifestyle, food preferences and personal health needs, visit <http://www.eatright.org/nnm/>.



Teacher Corner

Inspired by the First Lady's passion for healthy living and eating, people across the country are starting a vegetable garden at home and school. In Alameda County, schools are using the gardens to teach children to eat more fruits and vegetables and learn how to incorporate healthy foods into their favorite meals.

CONNECTING THE GARDEN TO THE CLASSROOM

Garden hands-on learning experiences invite children to play and inquire, take safe risks, build relationships, and gain a deeper understanding of diversity.

Domain: Language and Literacy. Builds sight word recognition and background knowledge and helps make connections such as picture to word.

- **Picture and Word Matching:** Make fruit and vegetable word and picture cards. Then have the children match the word to the picture and glue the pairs on a sheet of construction paper.

Domain: Mathematical Development. Early childhood teachers help children develop mathematical knowledge throughout the day and across the curriculum. Children's everyday activities and routines can be used to introduce and develop important mathematical ideas.



- **Veggie Garden Game:** Use construction paper and cut out five or more different veggie shapes such as carrots, radishes, squash and cucumbers. Mix up the shapes, and place them in a pile. Let each child pick up different veggie shapes. They can glue them on construction paper in separate rows.

Domain: Cognitive Creative Arts Knowledge and Skills. Painting and drawing invite children to explore concepts—color, shape, size, and cause and effect.

- **Color and Create a Garden Mural:** Cut a variety of fruits and flower shapes out of different colored construction paper. Also cut out pictures from seed catalogs of flowers the same colors as the construction paper. Mix up the fruits and flowers, and place them in a box. Invite children to sort the fruits and flowers by color and glue them together on a large piece of brown or green paper (all the red flowers together, all the blue flowers together and so on) to make a colorful garden.

Reference:

Bright Hub Education <http://www.brighthouseeducation.com/preschool>
 Childhood In the Garden, A Place to Encounter Natural and Social Diversity. Beyond the Journal • Young Children on the Web • January 2008
 Head Start Domain 5: Creative Arts: http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/eecd/Domains%20of%20Child%20Development/Creative%20Arts/edudev_art_00015_061705.html#Art

Photos: Network for a Healthy California

Movement and Physical Activities

“Brain breaks” can be used to energize a group after lunch, or relax and calm a class at the end of the day.

SNACK BREAKS FOR YOUR BRAIN.

Animal Pretend: Moving is one of the most important things that children can do. Teachers call out various animal names and students walk and pretend they are those animals.

Find it Fast: Any safe movement which will transport the children from one area to another is allowed. Teacher calls out a color, a shape, or other trait, and children must quickly find an object with that trait in the room.

Reference:

Michigan Department of Education; Brain Breaks
<http://www.emc.cmich.edu/BrainBreaks/>



Farm to School

Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) participates in the Farm to School Program. The district is making efforts to procure more locally grown produce (fresh fruits and vegetables) for school meals. Procuring locally sourced produce increases consumption of foods produced in the region.

WHAT SCHOOL ACTIVITIES RELATE TO FARM TO SCHOOL?

OUSD connects cafeteria food, nutrition, and agriculture with school educational efforts such as school gardens, field trips to local farms, and cooking classes.

SPRING GARDEN OPTIONS

Spring is the perfect season to grow both familiar and new vegetables in the school garden. For the Spring season, Alameda County Master Gardeners recommend to:

- Prepare soil by digging in cover crops
- Start seeds indoor
- Select your edibles and flowers from the recommended lists:

Source:

Your Alameda County Master Garden, Month By Month
http://acmg.ucdavis.edu/Your_Garden,_Month-by-Month/

	March	April	May
Edibles	Start seeds indoors. You can grow peas, cucumber and squash from seeds	Beets, turnips, radishes, potatoes, Lettuce, chard, leeks and green onions	All summer vegetables can be planted: Beans, corn, squash, tomatoes, peppers, melons
Flowers	Pansies, nemesia, primrose	Callas, cannas, dahlias, gladiolas	All summer flowers can be planted



Recipes Ideas From the Garden

SNOW PEAS AND WASABI SESAME SEEDS

Ingredients

Makes 12 servings

- 4 snow peas
- 1/2 cup whipped chive cream cheese
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- Thin radish slices
- Wasabi sesame seeds

Preparation

Remove outer string from snow peas; make a slit at top edge of each, and gently open (do not pull apart). In a small bowl, combine cream cheese and freshly ground black pepper. Stir well. Spoon mixture into a heavy-duty zip-top plastic bag. Snip off 1 corner of bag and pipe cream cheese mixture into snow peas. Place 2-3 thin radish slices into cream cheese mixture; sprinkle with wasabi sesame seeds.

Nutritional Information

Amount per serving: Calories: 38 Fat: 3g Saturated fat: 1g Monounsaturated fat: 0.0g Polyunsaturated fat: 0.0g Protein: 1g Carbohydrate: 2g Fiber: 0.0g Cholesterol: 5mg Iron: 1mg Sodium: 67mg Calcium: 44mg

Source:

Health <http://www.health.com/health/recipe/0,,50400000108583,00.html>

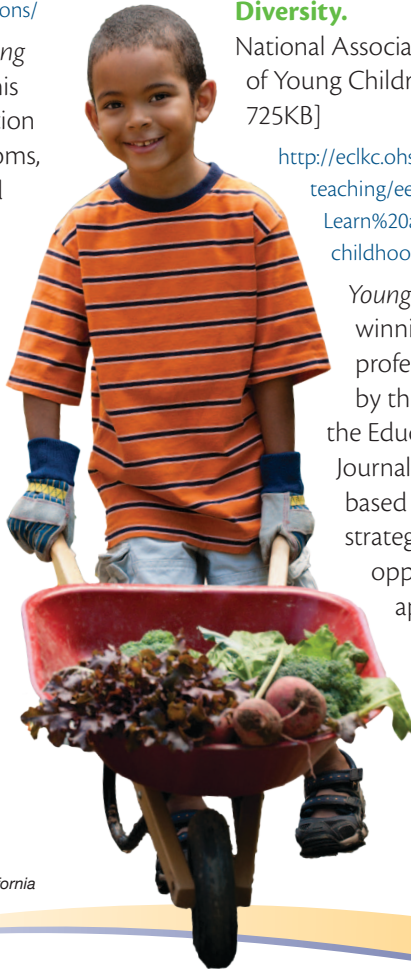


Professional Development Resources

Cornell Garden Base Learning

<http://blogs.cornell.edu/garden/get-activities/signature-publications/>

The Three Sisters: Exploring an Iroquois Garden – This award-winning publication explores the food, customs, and stories that evolved from the traditional companion planting of corn, beans, and squash– the Three Sisters. Legends, a call for biodiversity, uses of the Three Sisters, and planting facts are all included. Visit Three Sisters Site for the web-based project!



Photos: Network for a Healthy California

Childhood in the Garden: A Place to Encounter Natural and Social Diversity.

National Association for the Education of Young Children. 2011. English. [PDF, 725KB]

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/eecd/nature-based-learning/Learn%20and%20Play%20in%20Nature/childhood-garden.pdf>

Young Children is an award-winning, peer-reviewed professional journal published by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Journal issues offers research-based ideas and practical strategies to give children many opportunities to explore, appreciate, and value the natural world.



Children's Health and Wellness Books

THE CARROT SEED

Ruth Krauss
ISBN: 978-0064432108

IN MY GARDEN: A COUNTING BOOK

Ward Schumaker
ISBN: 978-0811826891

GROWING VEGETABLE SOUP

Lois Ehlert
ISBN: 0-15-232580

EAT YOUR PEAS LOUISE!

Peegan Snow (available in Spanish)
ISBN: 0-5160-2067-6

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