Using Children's Storybooks as a Basis For Nutrition Education

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Nutrition Education Connection Lessons

Overview

- Cooking Connection
- Craft Connection
- Learning Connection
- Music, Movement, and Play Connection
- Each module has six lessons and/or resource sheets.
- An introductory sheet includes tips on planning, organizing, and creating nutrition education lesson kits.
- Materials will be available at www.nfsmi.org
The value of books in nutrition education

• Promote Literacy (which promotes brain development)

• Great starting point for a lesson or tasting

• Children may be more willing to try new foods that they first experience through storybooks.¹

• Exposes children to a wider variety of quality children’s books

• Promotes Adult/Child bonding

Choose books that are developmentally appropriate

- Picture books for the youngest children
- Children enjoy rhyming and repetition
- Mix it up with some predictable books and some that are creative
- Incorporate nonfiction, informational books as well as storybooks
- Look for engaging illustrations and colors
Tips on selecting books – What to Avoid

• Cultural/ethnic stereotypes
• Negative view of body type/shape/size
• “Preachy” tone of some children's health books
• Complex nutrition concepts
• Positive Example: Good Morning Little Fox
Reading Time!

- Look at the cover. Ask the children to predict what the book is about.
- Encourage children to participate. Encourage sharing and discussion.
- Ask children to name the foods and their shapes and colors.
- Talk about how different foods look, taste, and smell.
- It's OK to “shorten” the book or finish at a later time.
Expanding a Book into a Lesson

- Tasting foods from the book
- Planting seeds (garden books)
- Cooking activities
- Field trips
- Guided movement (activity oriented books)
“Try New Foods” Books

- Green Eggs and Ham
  - By Dr. Seuss

- Bread and Jam for Frances
  - By Russell Hoban
    - Pictures by Lilian Hoban

- I Will Never Eat a Tomato
  - By Lauren Child

- The Seven Silly Eaters
  - By Mary Ann Hoberman
    - Illustrated by Marla Frazee
Hmmmm?
One of Connie’s first books
Research Support for “Moonsquirters” and “Orange Twiglets from Jupiter”

Source:
Exploring the Milk Group

Cooking Connection Lesson: Moo Juice Smoothie
Exploring the Grains Group

Cooking Connection Lesson: Little Red Hen Bread
Planting/Gardening

Craft Connection Lesson: Seeds to Veggies
Planting/Gardening

Craft Connection Lesson: Seeds to Veggies
Craft Connection Lesson: Seeds to Veggies
Take a Field Trip

• Visit farms, orchards, farmer's markets, ethnic markets, or grocery stores.

• Use the food picked or selected in a recipe.

• Encourage children to draw pictures about the experience.
Multicultural Education:

Learning Connection Lesson: Foods from Many Places
Get Active!

Guido van Genechten

Max Exercises

The Bouncing, Dancing, Galloping ABC

by Charlotte Doyle, illustrated by Julia Gortan
Get Active!
Make Your Own Books

- Children’s artwork
- Photos of children
- Food Magazines
- Gardening Catalogs
- Grocery Flyers
Consider a Book Bag Program

• Families can “check out” the book bags
• 1-2 books on a common theme
• Recipes
• Nutrition Tips
• Journal for family to record their personal experience with the bag

Source:
Where to Find Quality Children’s Books

- Local Library
- Search online bookstores
- Catalogs (e.g. www.neatsolutions.com)
- Michigan Team Nutrition Preschool Booklist: www.tn.fcs.msue.msu.edu (click on “resources” and scroll down until you see the preschool booklist)
Upcoming Web-Based Seminar:

Creating an Active, Healthy Environment
April 14, 3 PM CST

All materials will be available at http://www.nfsmi.org
Questions?