



**GROWING**



**ACTIVITY**



**FAMILIES**



**EATING**

HEALTHY CHILDREN,  
HEALTHY WEIGHTS

**Ring of Fun!**

TODDLER

**Healthy Children, Healthy Weights** (HCHW) is designed to prevent childhood overweight and obesity by promoting healthy weight and growth in all children, starting with the youngest age group – birth to five years old.

**The Ring of Fun** is an activity tool to extend our key topics into the classroom:

- Healthy Activity
- Healthy Eating
- Healthy Growing
- Healthy Families

**HCHW thanks you for your commitment to growing healthy children.**

<http://publichealth.columbus.gov/healthy-children-healthy-weights.aspx>



THE CITY OF  
**COLUMBUS**  
MICHAEL B. COLEMAN, MAYOR

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**COLUMBUS  
PUBLIC HEALTH**

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# Roll It Along

## MATERIALS

- Ball

## DIRECTIONS

1. Sit on floor 3-4 feet from child with legs spread apart.
2. Gently roll ball to child.
3. Have child trap the ball with his or her arms and chest.
4. Encourage child to roll ball back to you.
5. Provide praise and encouragement throughout activity.

*Adapted from [www.headstartbodystart.org](http://www.headstartbodystart.org)*

# Drum Beat

## MATERIALS

- Plastic bowls or drums

## DIRECTIONS

1. Tap a bowl or drum counting along with the beat, “1,2,3”.
2. Have the children begin tapping and counting together.
3. If using a variety of bowls or drums allow the children to take turns with each.

*Adapted from: Mississippi early learning guidelines for infants and toddlers. 2010*



# Animal Actions

Children love imitating their favorite animals. Make it a game to encourage activity.

- Think of fun ways to move like an animal:
  - Hop like a bunny
  - Walk like a crab
  - Strut like a turkey
  - Jump like a frog
  - Fly like a bird
  - Slither like a snake
- Have children make sounds like the animals once they start moving.
- Create visuals with stuffed animals, small animal figurines or photos.
- Consider going outside or to a park where you can see some of the animals move.

*Adapted from [www.headstartbodystart.org](http://www.headstartbodystart.org)*

# Snowstorm

## MATERIALS

- Cotton balls
- Small basket, bag or bucket

## DIRECTIONS

1. Spread cotton balls on floor.
2. Have children run around and pick them up placing them in a basket/bag/bucket.
3. After all cotton balls are collected throw them into the air so they fall onto the children.
4. Encourage children to collect as many as they can with their arms and hands as they fall.
5. Have the children pick all cotton balls up and start again.

*Adapted from [www.headstartbodystart.org](http://www.headstartbodystart.org)*

# Balloon Fun

## MATERIALS

- Balloons

*Safety note: put each balloon in pantyhose so that if it pops the pieces will be contained and children cannot put them in their mouths.*

## DIRECTIONS

1. Have children work together to keep the balloon in the air using their hands.
2. Start activity again if balloon touches the ground.
3. Try adding extra balloons for a greater challenge.

*Adapted from [www.headstartbodystart.org](http://www.headstartbodystart.org)*



# Toddlin' Parade

Children love parades. Create a fun activity by holding your own parade.

## **MATERIALS**

- Supplies to make hats
- Music
- Instruments

## **DIRECTIONS**

1. Lead children in a march along to music.
2. Encourage a variety of movements: marching, jumping and galloping.
3. Include instruments such as wrist bells or maracas.

*Adapted from [www.headstartbodystart.org](http://www.headstartbodystart.org)*

# All Aboard

## MATERIALS

- Two pool noodles
- Imagination!

*Adapted from [www.headstartbodystart.org](http://www.headstartbodystart.org)*

## DIRECTIONS

1. Pair staff with a child or two children together.
2. Have pairs stand a few feet apart and connect to each other by holding the ends of two pool noodles.
  - The person at the front of the train faces forward holding one pool noodle in his right hand and one in his left. The person in the back also faces forward holding one pool noodle in his right hand and one in his left.
3. Have the train chug around the room.
4. They can stop to pick up a passenger for the middle of the train

# No-Running Tag

Make a game of tag more fun by having children move without running. Try these movements:

- Hopping on two feet
- Hopping on one foot
- Skipping
- Galloping
- March
- Baby steps



# Sock Toss

## MATERIALS

- Laundry basket or box
- Pairs of socks

*Adapted from  
[www.headstartbodystart.org](http://www.headstartbodystart.org)*

## DIRECTIONS

1. Roll pairs of socks into balls.
2. Place an empty laundry basket about two feet from children.
3. Show children how to toss socks underhand into the basket.
4. Demonstrate taking turns by having children and staff alternate.
5. Have children practice counting or name color of socks while they toss.

# Bubble Fun

## MATERIALS

- Bubbles

## DIRECTIONS

1. Blow bubbles towards the children.
2. Have children to chase the bubbles and try to catch or pop them.
3. Once the bubbles land on the ground encourage children to try and stomp on them.
4. Reinforce spatial concepts by blowing bubbles high and low and in front or behind the children.

*Adapted from [www.headstartbodystart.org](http://www.headstartbodystart.org)*



# Throwing Sponges

## MATERIALS

- Bucket of water
- Large sponges

## DIRECTIONS

This activity works best outside on a warm day. Use the side of the building, a blacktop or driveway to throw sponges.

1. Soak sponges in the bucket of water.
2. Have children take a sponge from the bucket and throw it at the side of a building, blacktop or driveway.

*Adapted from [www.headstartbodystart.org](http://www.headstartbodystart.org)*



# Hoop Hop

## MATERIALS

- Hula hoops

## DIRECTIONS

1. Set hoops on the floor so that they are touching.
2. Make a line or create another pattern using the hoops.
3. Have children jump with both feet or hop on one foot from hoop to hoop.
  - It may take several jumps to get from one hoop to another.
4. Motivate and encourage them throughout the activity!

*Adapted from [www.headstartbodystart.org](http://www.headstartbodystart.org)*

# Banana Dogs

## INGREDIENTS

- Whole wheat Hot Dog buns (1 bun for every two children)
- Peanut butter or low-fat cream cheese
- Bananas (1 large banana for every 2 children)

## DIRECTIONS

1. Spread both sides of the bun with peanut butter or cream cheese.
2. Peel banana and place inside bun like a hot dog.
3. Cut in half and serve.

*Please wash hands and handle food properly.*

# Fruit Wheels

## INGREDIENTS

- Rice Cakes
- Low-fat flavored cream cheese
- Diced fruit

## DIRECTIONS

1. Spread cream cheese on rice cake.
2. Top with diced fruit and serve.

*Please wash hands and handle food properly.*



# Apple Cheese Towers

## INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 medium apple
- 1 ounce low fat cheese (about 8 small cubes)

## DIRECTIONS

1. Rinse apple and cut into slices.
2. Cut cheese into cubes.
3. Build towers with apple slices and cheese cubes. See who can build their tower the highest!

*Please wash hands and handle food properly.*

*Recipe from Cheryl Barber, Mary Longo, Anita Pulay, and Kirk Blair at the Ohio State University Extension*



# Bunny's Favorite Snack

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups plain nonfat yogurt
- 1 envelope (1 oz) dry ranch mix
- Carrots, celery, or other vegetables (for dipping)

*Recipe from Cheryl Barber, Mary Longo, Anita Pulay, and Kirk Bloir at the Ohio State University Extension*

## DIRECTIONS

1. Stir yogurt and ranch dressing mix together and chill until cold throughout.
2. Rinse and cut vegetables into small pieces or strips.
3. Dip carrots or other vegetables into the dip and enjoy!

***Raw vegetables are a choking hazard for children under the age of 4. Cut foods into small pieces and/or cook or steam vegetables until softened.***

*Please wash hands and handle food properly.*

# Painted Toast

## INGREDIENTS

- Slices of whole wheat bread
- Milk
- Food coloring

## DIRECTIONS

1. Mix milk with different food colorings in small bowls. These will be edible paints.
2. Toast bread.
3. Have children use fingers or paintbrushes only used for food to paint colors on the toast.

*Please wash hands and handle food properly.  
Recipe from Cheryl Barber, Mary Longo, Anita Pulay, and Kirk  
Blair at the Ohio State University Extension*



# Pumpkin Dip

## INGREDIENTS

- 3 Tbsp canned pumpkin
- 1 cup low-fat vanilla yogurt
- 1 Tbsp orange juice concentrate (100% juice)
- ½ tsp of cinnamon (optional)
- 1 Tbsp maple syrup (optional)
- Apple slices and graham crackers for dipping

## DIRECTIONS

1. Stir pumpkin, yogurt, orange juice, cinnamon and maple syrup all together and chill until cold throughout.
2. Rinse and cut apples into slices.
3. Dip apples and graham crackers into the dip and enjoy!

*Please wash hands and handle food properly.*

*Recipe from the Dannon Institute*

# Banana Scream

## INGREDIENTS

- 3 bananas (the riper the banana, the sweeter the shake)
- 2 Tbsp nonfat milk

## DIRECTIONS

1. Peel the bananas.
2. Cut bananas in half width-wise.
3. Wrap banana halves in plastic wrap.
4. Freeze bananas until firm.
5. Puree bananas with milk in blender until creamy.
6. Recipes serves 4.

*Please wash hands and handle food properly.*

*Recipe from Familyfun.go.com*



# Jungle Juice

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 cups nonfat milk
- 1/2 cup grape juice
- 1 banana, sliced

## DIRECTIONS

1. Combine milk, juice and banana in a blender until smooth.
2. Consider adding a few drops of purple food coloring for brighter color.
3. Recipe serves 2.

*Please wash hands and handle food properly.*

*Recipe from [Familyfun.go.com](http://Familyfun.go.com)*

# Shrunken Sandwiches

## INGREDIENTS

- Ham
- Low-fat cheese
- Crackers

## DIRECTIONS

1. Slice ham and cheese into small squares or rounds to match the size of the crackers.
  - Using a round cookie cutter may be helpful.
2. Place ham on a cracker, and then add the cheese.
3. Cover with another cracker.

*Please wash hands and handle food properly.*

*Recipe from [Familyfun.go.com](http://Familyfun.go.com)*

# Strawberry Frozen Yogurt

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups frozen strawberries
- 8 ounces nonfat vanilla yogurt

## DIRECTIONS

1. Mix frozen strawberries with yogurt in blender or food processor; blend until smooth.
2. Recipe serves 4.

*Please wash hands and handle food properly.*

*Recipe from Familyfun.go.com*



# Edible Faces

## INGREDIENTS

- Plates
- Low-fat dip or yogurt
- Cheese cubes
- Diced fruits and vegetables

## DIRECTIONS

1. Rinse and cut fruits and vegetables into small pieces.
2. Provide children with bowls of small foods (diced fruits, vegetables and cheese) and a plate.
3. Provide children with a plate and bowls of diced fruits, vegetables and cheese.

*Please wash hands and handle food properly.*



# Watermelon Pop Stars

## INGREDIENTS

- Watermelon
- Popsicle sticks
- Star-shaped cookie cutter

## DIRECTIONS

1. Cut watermelon in 1 inch thick slices, if not already done.
2. Use cookie cutter to cut watermelon stars from slices.
3. Insert popsicle stick into stars.
4. Place stars on an aluminum foil-lined baking sheet.
5. Cover the stars with another sheet of foil.
6. Freeze for 1 hour or until firm.

*Please wash hands and handle food properly.*

*Recipe from [Familyfun.go.com](http://Familyfun.go.com)*

# Fish Tank Garden

Grow plants in a clear container so children can see the growing process underground. Discuss the role of the roots and how they are connected to the rest of the plant.

## **MATERIALS**

- A clear fish bowl or clear container
- Soil
- Plant seeds

## **DIRECTIONS**

1. Fill 1/3 of the container with soil.
2. Plant seeds and water.
3. Place the container in an area with sunlight, such as a window sill.
4. Continue to keep soil moist and watch the plant grow.

*Adapted from Kids Garden*

# Fruit and Vegetable Sorting

1. Organize children into a circle.
2. Place fruits and vegetables in the center of a circle.
3. Have children sort the fruits and vegetables by:
  - Fruits
  - Vegetables
  - Color
  - Shape
  - Size



*Adapted from <http://www.brighthubeducation.com/preschool-lesson-plans/58585-harvest-time-vegetable-lesson/>*

# Popcorn Pie

## **MATERIALS**

- A pie plate
- Soil
- Popcorn kernels

## **DIRECTIONS**

1. Fill a pie plate with potting soil.
2. Have children plant the popcorn kernels.
3. Keep the soil moist to create a light green popcorn pie!

*Adapted from Kids Garden*

# Seed, Seed, Sprout!

Have children play “Seed, seed, sprout,” instead of “Duck, duck, goose”!

*Adapted from <http://www.preshoolrock.com/>*



# Pretend to be Plants

Ask children to pretend they are plants following this guide:

- Stand tall, close your eyes, and 'plant' your feet firmly on the ground.
- Let your toes 'grab' the ground, and imagine they are sending roots deep into the soil in search of food and water. Feel that fuel moving up into your body.
- Let your arms reach up and feel the sun's warmth.
- Here comes a big wind! It's a good thing you are rooted to the ground! Bend and sway like a plant!

Ask them these questions:

- What kind of plant are you?
- Is the sun shining on you?
- Do you hear birds in the trees? What else do you hear?

*Adapted from Kids Garden by Avery Hart and Paul Mantell*

# Taste Test Challenge

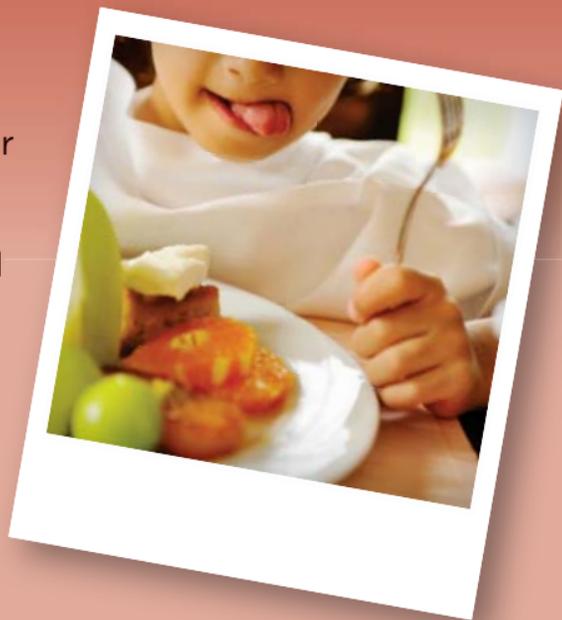
Ask children to try a variety of fresh foods, preferably from a local garden.

- Cut up bite-size pieces of various fresh foods.
- Create each child a plate that includes a piece of each food.
- Ask children to discuss each food:
  - What color is it?
  - What shape is it?
  - What is its name?
- Together, try each food one at a time.
- Encourage children to take “one bite”.
- Discuss whether or not they like it.

# Take Time for Meals

## Mealtime Mission

A healthful, balance meal should be full of different colors. With the help of their parents, ask children to count and list all the colors provided at dinner. Then have them report back what they found the following day.



# Make Breakfast Count

Invite parents to share a healthy breakfast with their toddler. Have parents and children prepare Fruit Wheels together. Discuss the food groups included in the meal and the importance of eating a balanced breakfast every day.

## **FRUIT WHEELS**

- Rice Cakes (grain group)
- Low-fat flavored cream cheese (dairy group)
- Diced fruit (fruit group)

Spread cream cheese onto rice cake. Top with diced fruit and enjoy. Pair with a glass of low-fat or fat free milk to complete the meal.

# An Hour a Day to Play

Children should get 60 minutes of physical activity daily. Play activities from the “Healthy Activity” section of the ring of fun or create new games. Host a family night and encourage parents to play with their children and promote active play at home.



# Make Each Plate a Healthy Plate

Create a list of the children's favorite foods from each of the food groups.

- Use a large piece of paper and title it “Our Favorite Foods”.
- Draw columns or a plate and label with the food groups: “Grains, Proteins, Fruits, Vegetables and Dairy”.
- Ask children to name their favorite foods.
- Write foods under the proper food group.
- Encourage children to choose favorites from each food group.
- Hang on the wall when finished to share with children and parents.

# Cold Weather Fun

## **Snow Treasure Hunt**

Provide parents and children with clues to find a treasure together. Hide items in the snow for them to find at pick-up:

- Small toys
- Special Pens and Pencils
- Balls
- Tubs of Play-Doh



# Healthy Celebrations

Serve healthy snacks during holiday celebrations. Send recipes home for parents and children to prepare together.

## **PUMPKIN DIP** (*Dannon Institute*)

- 3 Tbsp canned pumpkin
- 1 cup low-fat vanilla yogurt
- 1 Tbsp orange juice concentrate (use 100% juice)
- ½ tsp of cinnamon (optional)
- 1 Tbsp maple syrup (optional)

Mix ingredients together. Dip in with apple slices and graham crackers.

# Build Children Up With Words

Design an obstacle course of simple activities to build confidence.

- Create a checklist of the activities and have the children mark them off as they finish.
- Move from simple activities like coloring a picture to more difficult activities like cutting out shapes and pasting them to paper.
- Have children take their checklist home to share their success with parents.

*Adapted from: [http://www.ehow.com/info\\_8009867\\_confidence-building-games-children.html](http://www.ehow.com/info_8009867_confidence-building-games-children.html)*



# Growing Great Tasters

**Rainbow Foods Week:** Grow great tasters by serving a variety of fruits and vegetables based on the color group assigned to that day:

- Monday - Purple/Blue
- Tuesday - White/Tan/Brown
- Wednesday - Red
- Thursday - Yellow/Orange
- Friday - Green

Keep track of the new foods the children try and how they felt about them. Create a chart for each child similar to the one below and keep track of each child's reaction. Hang the chart on the wall and provide information to parents, encouraging them to continue to provide new foods at home. *Adapted from the P.A.C.K. program*

## (Child's Name) Tried One Bite and I...

	Liked it	Did not like it
Blueberries		
Jicama		

# Reduce Screen Time

Implement a no screen time policy/ rule at your site. Promote it to parents by hanging posters and sending home handouts.

As an activity, ask children to draw something they could do instead of watching TV. Send their pictures home and ask parents to hang it up on their television as a reminder to cut or eliminate time in front of the TV screen.

*Adapted from: Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth*



# Water First for Thirst

## Water March

March children throughout the center looking for sources of water. Ask them to point out things such as:

- Sinks
- Fire hydrants
- Toilets
- Puddles
- Outside faucets
- Clouds, etc.

At the end of the march provide cups of water and discuss the importance of drinking water to be healthy.

For homework, ask the children to count how many places they find water at home that night. Have them report back to the group the next day how many they found.

# Good Rest is Best

## Sleep Log

Children 1-3 years old should sleep 12-14 hours per night. Start a sleep log for each child at your center to record the amount of time they are sleeping throughout the day. Send the log home and ask parents to record how many hours of sleep the child gets each night. Are they getting the recommended amount?



# Make Snacks Count

## Watermelon Pop Stars

Have children create a healthy snack to share with their parents.

### Materials

- Watermelon
- Star-shaped cookie cutter
- Popsicle sticks
- Aluminum foil
- Baking sheet

### Directions

1. Cut 1-inch-thick slices of seedless watermelon.
2. Use cookie cutter to cut watermelon slices into stars.
3. Insert a Popsicle stick into each star.
4. Set the pops on an aluminum foil-lined baking sheet.
5. Cover the stars with another sheet of foil.
6. Freeze for 1 hour or until firm.
7. Send stars home for children to share with family.

*Adapted from:  
Familyfun.go.com*