



Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Thomas Farley MD, MPH
Commissioner

Gotham Center
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Dear Director,

As you may know, obesity is epidemic in New York City and across the country, beginning early in life. In 1980, 7% of children in the United States ages 6-11 years were considered obese. By 2006, this figure more than doubled to 17%. Additionally, in 2004, among New York City children ages 2-4, 42% were either overweight or obese. Being obese in childhood increases the likelihood of adult obesity, which is associated with diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease, and cancer.

Child care centers play an important role in addressing the obesity problem by helping to keep children at a healthy weight. Children can consume as much as 70% of their daily calories at the child care center. Their attitudes, food preferences, and behaviors are shaped by the center's environment.

Several months ago you may have received a copy of *Growing Healthy Children: A guide to enhance nutrition and physical activity in New York City group child care centers*, encouraging your center to develop nutrition and physical activity policies to support healthy habits among young children. To complement this work, the Best Practices Partnership to Prevent Overweight and Obesity in Early Childhood developed the enclosed toolkit – *Growing Healthy Children: Promoting nutrition and physical activity in child care settings*. This toolkit will help promote your child care center as a place where children can develop healthy habits – habits that they can carry with them into adulthood. It will also help you to engage families in conversations around nutrition and physical activity.

Enclosed materials include:

- **Nutrition and Physical Activity Posters**
 - Provide clear and simple messages for families (in English and Spanish) around nutrition and physical activity for children ages 0-5. Display these posters in a place where families can see them.
- **Background Information Sheets**
 - Provide directors with necessary information on each poster topic. They also offer ideas for promoting the messages in the child care center and suggestions for engaging families in the conversation.

Note: Electronic versions of the enclosed materials are also available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Bengali, Haitian Creole, and Korean. For more information, visit nyc.gov and search for “growing healthy children.”

If you have any questions or would like to request additional copies of the *Growing Healthy Children* materials, please contact us at ewph@health.nyc.gov. Thank you for your continued commitment to children's health.

Sincerely,

Frank Cresciullo
Assistant Commissioner
Bureau of Child Care
New York City Health Department

Susan Kansagra, MD, MBA
Assistant Commissioner
Bureau of Chronic Disease Prevention
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New York City Health Department

Choose Water

Why choose water?

- Water is the best drink for your body when you are thirsty.
- Tap water is always a good choice. It is free, good for you, and has no calories.
- After being active, water is the best drink to quench your thirst.
- Modeling healthy behaviors – like drinking water and eating healthfully – encourages children to do the same. Avoid drinking sugary drinks in front of children.

Why avoid sugary drinks?

- Sugary drinks add calories without providing nutrients. The empty calories in these drinks can lead to weight gain, type 2 diabetes, and other chronic diseases.
- Sugary drinks can promote tooth decay.
- Replacing sweetened drinks with water is healthy and free.

What is a sugary drink?

- A sugary drink is a drink with added sugar. Sugary drinks include soda, sports drinks, flavored milks, fruit drinks, sweetened coffees, and sweetened teas.
- Added sugar has many names. To find out if a drink contains added sugar, look for any of these words in the ingredients list:
 - sugar
 - high-fructose corn syrup
 - brown sugar
 - corn syrup
 - dextrose
 - fruit juice concentrates
 - invert sugar
 - molasses
 - syrup
 - corn sweetener
 - honey
 - cane sugar
- A single 20-ounce soda contains about 16 teaspoons of sugar and 250 calories.

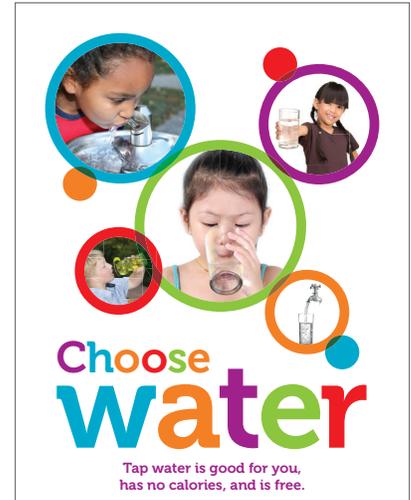
Besides water, are there other healthy beverage choices?

- Seltzer or unflavored low-fat (1%) or non-fat (fat-free) milk are healthy choices.
- Limit 100% juice to fewer than 6 ounces per day for children.
 - Diluting juice with water or seltzer is a great way to cut down on calories.
 - Serving fresh fruit instead of 100% fruit juice is best because it is high in dietary fiber and a natural source of energy.
- Drinks with artificial sweeteners are never a healthy choice for children.

Here are some ideas for promoting the “Choose water” message in your child care center and engaging families in the conversation:

Center Environment

- Article 47 of the New York City Health Code states that no beverages with added sweeteners (natural or artificial) shall be served to children in group child care centers. Consider going a step further and making your center a sugary drink-free zone, respected by all children, staff, and parents, even during special occasions and meetings.



- Article 47 of the New York City Health Code requires that group child care centers, when serving juice, serve no more than 6 ounces and only 100% juice to children per day. Consider going a step further and not serving any juice at your center.
- Create a center policy that identifies approved beverages for children, staff, and parents in your center.
- Consider eliminating sugary drinks from vending machines located in your center.

In the Classroom

- Make water available and accessible for children at all times. Put water in child-sized pitchers for children to help themselves throughout the day. Keep water and cups out at child-level all day.
- Only offer water, unflavored low-fat (1%) or non-fat (fat-free) milk, and seltzer as beverages - both for everyday and special occasions.
- Select a child to be a “water helper” for the day.
- Dilute 100% juice with water or seltzer.

Family Engagement

- Display the “**Choose water**” poster in your center where families can see it.
- Share information about the impact of sugary drinks on children’s health.
- Encourage parents and caregivers to serve water instead of juice or dilute 100% juice with water or seltzer before serving.
- Provide families with a list of healthy beverages.
- Encourage families to go “Sugary Drink-Free” for a week.
- Hold a “Sugary Drink Workshop” for families.

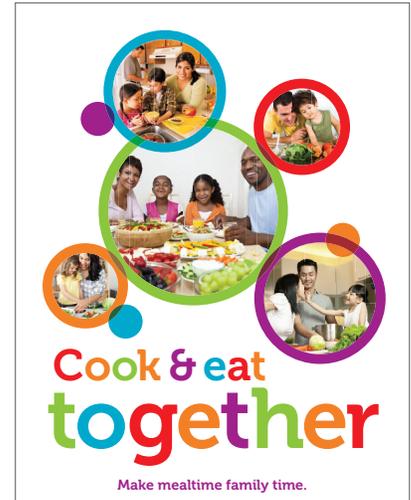
Resources

- **Growing Healthy Children- A guide to enhance nutrition and physical activity in New York City group child care centers**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cdp/cdp_pan_gcc.shtml
- **Growing Healthy Children Nutrition Education Curriculum**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene <http://home2.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/cdp/growing-healthy-children.pdf>
- **Healthy Beverage and Snack List** http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cdp/cdp_pan_gcc.shtml
- **HealthyChildren.org** American Academy of Pediatrics <http://www.healthychildren.org>
- **Let’s Move Child Care** <http://healthykidshealthyfuture.org/welcome.html>
- **Let’s Move Drink Smart** <http://www.letsmove.gov/drink-lots-water>
- **New York City Drinking Water**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/drinking_water/index.shtml
- **Physical Activity and Nutrition**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cdp/cdp_pan.shtml
- **Pouring on the Pounds Campaign**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene <http://www.nyc.gov/health/drinkingfat>

Cook & Eat Together

Why cook and eat together?

- Mealtime is important for developing healthy habits. Good habits learned early in childhood can last a lifetime.
- Cooking and eating together as a family builds a child's self-esteem, confidence, and independence.
- Children are more willing to try a new food when they help make it and see others enjoying it.
- Mealtime is a great time for adults to model healthy behaviors to children. If a child sees an adult eating healthy food, they will too.
- Children who eat with their family eat healthier foods, perform better in school, have better language skills, and are less likely to become substance abusers¹.



How can children be encouraged to eat healthfully?

- Engage children in planning and preparing meals early in life. Children as young as 3 can help in the kitchen. They can break lettuce into small pieces for salad, stir ingredients, place utensils on the table before mealtime, and pass ingredients.
- Allow children to choose what to eat from the foods being offered and let them serve themselves. By serving themselves, children will also develop fine motor skills and good table manners.
- Teach children to put a small amount of food on their plate. If they finish and are still hungry, then they may help themselves to some more.
- Avoid using food to reward, comfort, or punish children.
- Children should be encouraged, but never forced to eat.

Tips for making mealtime family time

- Create a fun and relaxed mealtime environment with little distraction. Turn the TV off. Talk about the day.
- Sit and eat together as a family.
- Share memories about your favorite foods with your child.
- Encourage children to practice their table manners.

Here are some ideas for promoting the "Cook & eat together" message in your child care center and engaging families in the conversation:

Center Environment

- Serve meals family-style (children serve themselves with limited help). Train staff on the benefits of serving family-style meals.
- Ensure that staff be role models for the children in the classroom. Encourage them to display positive attitudes toward all foods served in order to create a pleasant eating environment.
- Repeatedly offer new foods. Remember that patience works better than pressure.

In the Classroom

- Children should be encouraged, but never forced to eat.
- Never use food as a punishment or reward.
- Have staff sit and eat with the children. Talk about the day.

¹ Meals Matter. Family Meals: More Than Just Eating At Home <http://www.mealsmatter.org/Articles-And-Resources/Healthy-Living-Articles/Family-Meals.aspx>

Family Engagement

- Display the “**Cook & eat together**” poster in your center where families can see it.
- Share information with families about creating a positive mealtime environment. Encourage families to:
 - Cook and eat together at home.
 - Let children serve themselves.
 - Be role models for children. If a child sees an adult eating healthy food, they will too.
 - Avoid using food to reward, comfort, or punish children.
 - Encourage, but never force children to eat.
- Have family-style meals for families in your center.
- Hold a “Cooking with Children Workshop” for families.

Resources

- **Eat Well Play Hard in Child Care Settings Curriculum**, Child and Adult Care Food Program, New York State Health Department http://www.health.state.ny.us/prevention/nutrition/resources/eat_well_play_hard
- **Ellyn Satter Responsibility of Feeding** <http://www.ellynsatter.com/ellyn-satters-division-of-responsibility-in-feeding-i-80.html>
- **Growing Healthy Children Nutrition Education Curriculum**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene <http://home2.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/cdp/growing-healthy-children.pdf>
- **HealthyChildren.org** American Academy of Pediatrics <http://www.healthychildren.org>
- **Let’s Move** <http://www.letsmove.gov>
- **Let’s Move Child Care** <http://healthykidshealthyfuture.org/welcome.html>
- **Maximizing Messages**, United States Department of Agriculture <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/corenutritionmessages/Maximizing.htm>
- **Nibbles for Health: Nutrition Newsletters for Parents of Young Children**, United States Department of Agriculture <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/nibbles.html>
- **NYC Food** <http://www.nyc.gov/nycfood>

Eat Colorful Fruits & Vegetables

Why eat colorful fruits and vegetables?

- Fruits and vegetables are good for us. They provide vitamins, minerals, and fiber, and are low in fat and salt.
- Eating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables as part of a healthy diet may protect against many diseases, including cancer, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke.

Tips for adding fruits and vegetables to every meal

- Fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables at every meal.
- Choose real fruit instead of juice.

Tips for keeping meals with added fruits and vegetables affordable

- Purchase whole fruits and vegetables instead of expensive pre-cut portions.
- Buy fruits and vegetables in season.
 - Explore your local farmers' market for seasonal fruits and vegetables at lower cost. To find a farmers' market near your center, go to nyc.gov and search for "farmers' markets."
- Visit a NYC Green Cart or other fruit and vegetable carts in your neighborhood.
- Make a shopping list before going to the store. Choose fresh, frozen, or canned fruits and vegetables to get the best deal for your money.
 - Choose canned fruits in their own 100% juice. (If you can't find canned fruits in their own juice, try rinsing under cool water to remove excess sugar.)
 - Choose low-sodium or no-salt canned vegetables. (If you can't find low-sodium or no-salt versions, try rinsing under cool water to remove excess salt.)
 - Purchase store brands rather than expensive name brands.
- Find out more about how to enroll in, or use, the SNAP Program at myBenefits.gov or 800-342-3009.

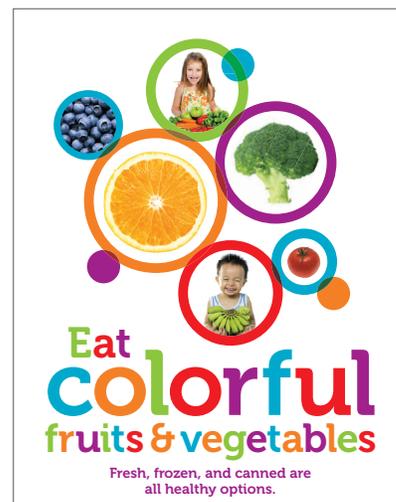
Here are some ideas for promoting the "Eat colorful fruits & vegetables" message in your child care center and engaging families in the conversation:

Center Environment

- Serve a variety of colorful, fresh fruits and vegetables daily.
- If you hold a fundraiser, sell fresh fruits and vegetables instead of baked goods or candy and include healthy recipes.
- Serve fresh fruits and vegetables at celebrations and parent/staff meetings.

In the Classroom

- Cook with children using fruits and vegetables.
- Include fruits and vegetables in your play kitchens.
- Read books about fruits and vegetables.
- Grow a container garden. Make container planters from old milk cartons and have children grow their very own vegetables and fruits.
- Take class trips to a local farmers' market or NYC Green Cart.



Family Engagement

- Display the “**Eat colorful fruits & vegetables**” poster in your center where families can see it.
- Encourage families to serve a variety of colorful fresh fruits and vegetables at home with every meal.
- Provide families with a list of local fruits and vegetables available during each season.
- Encourage families to shop at NYC Green Carts and local farmers’ markets. To provide families with a map of farmers’ markets, go to nyc.gov and search for “farmers’ markets.”
- Hold a “Fruit and Vegetable Workshop” for families.

Resources

- **Choose My Plate**, United States Department of Agriculture <http://www.choosemyplate.gov>
- **Eat Well Play Hard in Child Care Settings Curriculum**, Child and Adult Care Food Program, New York State Health Department http://www.health.state.ny.us/prevention/nutrition/resources/eat_well_play_hard
- **Eat Well Play Hard Newsletters**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cdp/cdp_pan-ewph-news.shtml
- **Farm to Preschool** <http://www.farmpreschool.org/home.html>
- **Growing Healthy Children- A guide to enhance nutrition and physical activity in New York City group child care centers**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cdp/cdp_pan_gcc.shtml
- **Growing Healthy Children Nutrition Education Curriculum**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene <http://home2.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/cdp/growing-healthy-children.pdf>
- **Health Bucks** <http://www.nyc.gov/health/farmersmarkets>
- **HealthyChildren.org** American Academy of Pediatrics <http://www.healthychildren.org>
- **Just Say Yes to Fruits and Vegetables** <http://www.jsyfruitveggies.org>
- **Let’s Move** <http://www.letsmove.gov>
- **Let’s Move Child Care** <http://healthykidshealthyfuture.org/welcome.html>
- **New York State Fruit and Vegetable Harvest Calendar** <http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us/harvestcalendar.html>
- **NYC Food** <http://www.nyc.gov/nycfood>
- **NYC Green Carts** <http://www.nyc.gov/greencarts>
- **NYC Greenmarkets** <http://www.grownyc.org/ourmarkets>
- **Physical Activity and Nutrition**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cdp/cdp_pan.shtml
- **Produce for Better Health Fruits and Veggies More Matters** <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org>
- **Quick and Easy Recipes**, United States Department of Agriculture <http://www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhardhealthy lifestyle/QuickandEasy/smartstartrecipes.htm>
- **Stellar Farmers’ Market Nutrition Education Program**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene <http://www.nyc.gov/health/farmersmarkets>

Choose to Move

Why choose to move?

- Moving more and sitting less helps children and adults stay fit. Physical activity can help protect against many diseases, including cancer, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke.
- Daily physical activity can make you feel good, give you more energy to play, and keep you healthy.
- Physical activity helps children's bones and muscles grow and be strong. Active play helps develop muscle groups, motor skills, and helps children with school readiness.
- Children sleep better when they have been active during the day.

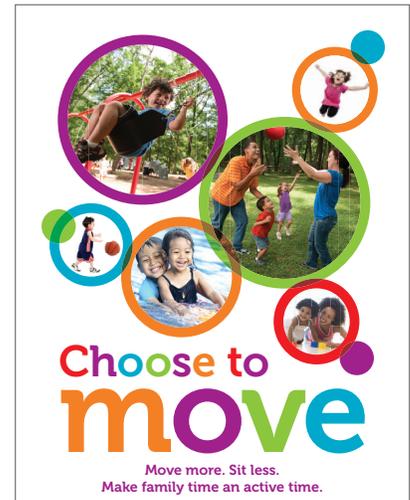
Choose to move every day.

- All children from birth to age 5 should engage in daily physical activity that promotes movement skills and provides a foundation for health-related fitness¹.
 - **Infants** should interact with caregivers in daily physical activities that are dedicated to exploring movement and the environment. Caregivers should place infants in settings that encourage active play and stimulate movement for short periods of time several times a day.
 - **Toddlers** should accumulate a total of at least 30 minutes of structured physical activity each day. They should also engage in at least 60 minutes of unstructured physical activity each day, and should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time, except when sleeping.
 - **Preschoolers** should accumulate a total of at least 60 minutes of structured physical activity each day. They should also engage in at least 60 minutes of unstructured physical activity each day, and should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time, except when sleeping.
- Everyday opportunities to get children moving include:
 - Dancing, running, jumping, walking, hula hooping, or playing tag.
 - Taking the stairs, getting off the subway one stop early and walking, or parking the car at the back of a parking lot and walking.
 - Helping out around the house or classroom, performing simple tasks such as making the bed, sweeping, dusting, or picking up toys.

Here are some ideas for promoting the "Choose to move" message in your child care center and engaging families in the conversation:

Center Environment

- Article 47 of the New York City Health Code requires that group child care centers provide children attending a full-day program with at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day. For children ages 3 or older, at least 30 minutes of the 60 minutes must be structured and guided physical activity. To help your center reach this mandate:
 - Include detailed teacher-led physical activity periods in all classroom schedules and staff lesson plans.
 - Establish a standard minimum temperature for outdoor play and have children play outside whenever possible.
- Provide physical activity opportunities for staff, including during professional development days.



¹ Active Start: A Statement of Physical Activity Guidelines for Children From Birth to Age 5, 2nd Edition, National Association for Sport and Physical Education. <http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/standards/nationalGuidelines/ActiveStart.cfm>

In the Classroom

- Incorporate physical activity, such as active games and dancing, into the schedule and during special occasions.
- On children's birthdays, have them pick their favorite physical activity and lead their classmates in the activity.
- Have a minimum of two staff members participate in all physical activity sessions with children.
- Try pairing a reluctant or uncooperative child with a staff member to encourage participation.
- Take the class on neighborhood walking tours.

Family Engagement

- Display the “**Choose to move**” poster in your center where families can see it.
- Encourage families to:
 - Move together and make moving fun. Play is movement.
 - Provide infants with tummy time and toddlers with time for movement on the floor.
- Inform families of free or low-cost physical activity opportunities in the community.
- Distribute an “At Home Physical Activity Calendar” with ideas and tips for families to incorporate physical activity every day.
- Encourage active transportation, such as walking or biking to the child care center. Once a child is able to walk, encourage families to get them out of the stroller as much as possible.
- Establish adult physical activity clubs in your center, such as walking groups, and encourage parents, caregivers, and staff to participate.
- Hold a dance-a-thon, walk-a-thon, or some other movement-based fundraiser at your center. Use funds to buy physical activity equipment, such as beanbags, scarves, and music CDs for each classroom.
- Hold a “Physical Activity Workshop” for families.

Resources

- **At Home Physical Activity Calendar**
<http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/cdp/growing-healthy-children-policy-guide.pdf>
- **BeFitNYC**, Find out about free or low-cost physical activity opportunities in the community by going to <http://www.BeFitNYC.org> or calling 311.
- **Fit WIC** http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Sharing_Center/statedev_FIT.html
- **Growing Healthy Children- A guide to enhance nutrition and physical activity in New York City group child care centers**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cdp/cdp_pan_gcc.shtml
- **Growing Healthy Children Nutrition Education Curriculum**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene <http://home2.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/cdp/growing-healthy-children.pdf>
- **HealthyChildren.org** American Academy of Pediatrics <http://www.healthychildren.org>
- **Helping Children Reach a Healthy Weight**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene <http://home2.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/diabetes/diabetes-healthyweight.pdf>
- **Let's Move Child Care** <http://healthykidshealthyfuture.org/welcome.html>
- **Let's Move Get Active** <http://www.letsmove.gov/get-active>
- **Move-to-Improve Early Childhood**, Classroom Based Physical Activity Curriculum, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene http://home2.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cdp/cdp_pan-physical.shtml
- **National Association for Sport and Physical Education** Fun physical activity ideas to do at home <http://www.aahperd.org/headstartbodystart/>
- **Physical Activity and Nutrition**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cdp/cdp_pan.shtml

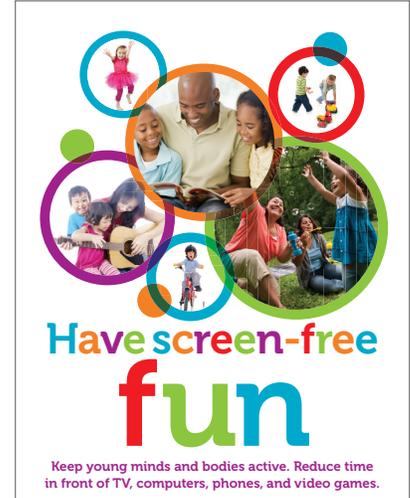
Have Screen-Free Fun

What is screen time?

- Screen time includes time spent watching shows, watching movies, and playing video games on the TV, computer, smartphone, or portable game device.

Why should screen time be limited for children?

- The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends no more than two hours of quality screen time per day for children over the age of 2. For children under the age of 2, AAP recommends no screen time at all¹.
- Too much screen time can limit active play, creativity, and interaction with others, and can lead to children becoming overweight or obese.
- Children who eat or snack while watching TV often overeat. Even if the TV is on in the background and the children are not watching it, they are more likely to be overweight.
- Children who watch too much TV are also more likely to eat the foods they see advertised in commercials, many of which are unhealthy.



What are some ways to have screen-free fun?

- Great alternatives to screen time include:
 - looking at and reading books
 - listening to music
 - drawing
 - playing games
 - helping cook
 - playing outside
 - dancing
 - singing
 - gardening

Here are some ideas for promoting the “Have screen-free fun” message in your child care center and engaging families in the conversation:

Center Environment

- Article 47 of the New York City Health Code requires that children under the age of 2 have no screen time in child care. For children older than 2, the requirement is a maximum of one hour of quality educational programming, including computer time. Consider going a step further and becoming a screen-free center.
- Participate in National “Turn It Off” week.

In the Classroom

- Discuss the many great alternatives to screen time such as looking at books, listening to music, drawing, playing games, helping cook, playing outside, dancing, and singing.
- Discuss the benefits of limiting screen time and why being active every day is important.
- Display pictures of active play and screen-free activities.

¹ Where we stand: TV viewing time, American Academy of Pediatrics, <http://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/Media/Pages/Where-We-Stand-TV-Viewing-Time.aspx>

Family Engagement

- Display the “**Have screen-free fun**” poster in your center where families can see it.
- Provide families with a list of alternatives to TV, video games, computers, smartphones, and portable game devices.
- Encourage families to:
 - Reduce their screen time. Families with children under 2 should be encouraged to avoid all screen time.
 - Watch quality educational television together.
 - Have a “Screen-free” week at home. Have children track their time engaged in healthy alternatives at home. Reward families with a prize if they are able to make it through the whole week without TV, video games, computers, smartphones, and portable game devices.
- Hold a “Screen-Free Fun Workshop” for families.

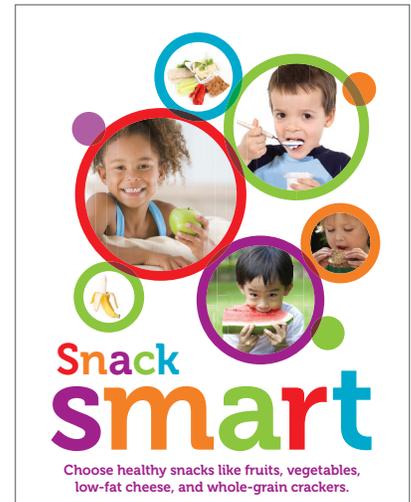
Resources

- **At Home Physical Activity Calendar**
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- **HealthyChildren.org** American Academy of Pediatrics <http://www.healthychildren.org>
- **Let’s Move Child Care** <http://healthykidshealthyfuture.org/welcome.html>
- **Let’s Move Reduce Screen Time and Get Active** <http://www.letsmove.gov/reduce-screen-time-and-get-active>
- **National Association for Sport and Physical Education** Fun physical activity ideas to do at home
<http://www.aahperd.org/headstartbodystart/>
- **Tvturnoff.org** <http://ww2.tvturnoff.org/>

Snack Smart

Why snack smart?

- A snack is not a meal, but instead, something small and nutritious to eat between meals to help control hunger. Snacks should always be healthy.
- Healthy snacks can provide important vitamins, minerals, and fiber.
- Some examples of healthy snacks include:
 - apple slices with peanut butter
 - fresh vegetables with salsa or low-fat dip
 - whole-grain crackers with low-fat cheese
 - carrots and hummus
 - low-fat yogurt and fruit
 - low-fat milk and applesauce
 - peanut butter and banana on whole-wheat bread



When should children be offered a healthy snack?

- Most children need two healthy snacks each day, but if a child is not hungry, they do not have to eat a snack.
- When offering healthy snacks, serve them at regular times each day and not too close to mealtime.
- Make healthy snacks appealing by including combinations of colorful fruits and vegetables, low-fat dairy, and whole grains.
- Avoid using snacks to reward, comfort, or punish children.

Tips for keeping healthy snacks affordable

- Healthy snacks do not have to cost more money than less healthy snacks.
- Encourage local stores to carry healthy, affordable snacks.
- Purchase store brands rather than expensive name brands.
- Make a shopping list before purchasing at the store.
- Purchase whole fruits and vegetables.
- Visit a NYC Green Cart or other fruit and vegetable carts in your neighborhood.
- Buy fruits and vegetables in season.
 - Explore your local farmers' market for seasonal fruits and vegetables at lower cost. To find a farmers' market near your center, go to nyc.gov and search for "farmers' markets."
- Find out more about how to enroll in, or use, the SNAP Program at myBenefits.gov or 800-342-3009.

Here are some ideas for promoting the "Snack smart" message in your child care center and engaging families in the conversation:

Center Environment

- Consider only allowing snack foods from an approved list to be brought into the center - for both children and staff.
- Serve fresh fruit and vegetables as snacks.
- Consider having a "healthy snack of the week" theme and hold center activities around these foods.

In the Classroom

- Include children in the preparation of healthy snacks.
- Display pictures of healthy snacks and discuss healthy snack ideas.
- Read books about healthy snacks and have children create collages or draw pictures of healthy snacks they want to eat.

Family Engagement

- Display the “**Snack smart**” poster in your center where families can see it.
- Encourage families to:
 - Offer healthy snacks at regular times each day. Inform families that children do not need to eat a snack if they are not hungry.
 - Serve fresh fruit and vegetables as snacks. Frozen and canned versions are also healthy options.
 - Avoid using snacks to reward, comfort, or punish children.
- Encourage parents and other caregivers to be role models for their children. If a child sees adults eating healthy snacks, they will too.
- Provide recipes for healthy snacks in center-wide newsletters and communications.
- Hold a “Smart Snacking Workshop” for families.

Resources

- **Choose My Plate**, United States Department of Agriculture <http://www.choosemyplate.gov>
- **Eat Well Play Hard in Child Care Settings Curriculum**, Child and Adult Care Food Program, New York State Health Department http://www.health.state.ny.us/prevention/nutrition/resources/eat_well_play_hard
- **Eat Well Play Hard Newsletters**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cdp/cdp_pan-ewph-news.shtml
- **Growing Healthy Children- A guide to enhance nutrition and physical activity in New York City group child care centers**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cdp/cdp_pan_gcc.shtml
- **Growing Healthy Children Nutrition Education Curriculum**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene <http://home2.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/cdp/growing-healthy-children.pdf>
- **Health Bucks** <http://www.nyc.gov/health/farmersmarkets>
- **HealthyChildren.org** American Academy of Pediatrics <http://www.healthychildren.org>
- **Let’s Move** <http://www.letsmove.gov>
- **Let’s Move Child Care** <http://healthykidshealthyfuture.org/welcome.html>
- **NYC Food** <http://www.nyc.gov/nycfood>
- **NYC Green Carts** <http://www.nyc.gov/greencarts>
- **NYC Greenmarkets** <http://www.grownyc.org/ourmarkets>
- **Physical Activity and Nutrition**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cdp/cdp_pan.shtml
- **Quick and Easy Recipes**, United States Department of Agriculture <http://www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhardhealthylifestyle/QuickandEasy/smartstartrecipes.htm>
- **Stellar Farmers’ Market Nutrition Education Program**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene <http://www.nyc.gov/health/farmersmarkets>

Good Health Starts at an Early Age:

Nutrition and Physical Activity for Infants and Toddlers (Ages 0-3) in Child Care Centers

Good health habits start early, and good nutrition and physical activity are essential for ensuring that babies and toddlers grow healthy and strong. The child care center is an ideal setting for encouraging good health habits at a young age and it provides opportunities to engage families in conversations about the importance of nutrition and physical activity for infants and toddlers.



Here are some ideas for promoting nutrition and physical activity among infants and toddlers (ages 0-3) in your child care center and engaging families in the conversation:

Center Environment/In the Classroom

Feeding and Mealtime Environment

Breastfeeding

- Any amount of time spent breastfeeding is good for the baby. Encourage and assist mothers to continue breastfeeding. Provide a quiet space for breastfeeding mothers.
- Experts recommend that you give only breast milk and no formula, water, or food until the baby is about six months old. Then you add baby foods and continue to feed the baby breast milk or formula or both¹.

Mealtimes and Food Preparations

- Promote the use of fresh ingredients in baby food prepared at your center.
- Repeatedly offer new foods, one at a time. Children need to taste a new food many times before it becomes familiar. Remember that patience works better than pressure. Observe a baby for any abnormal reactions to a new food.

Bottles

- Bottles are for breast milk or infant formula only. Do not put juice or cereal in bottles.
- Under 1 year of age, don't serve water from a bottle or sippy cup because of the increased risk of a nutritional imbalance. Don't serve juice from a bottle or sippy cup because of the increased risk of tooth decay².
- Do not put a child to sleep with a bottle.

Beverages

Water

- Offer water with meals and snacks for children over the age of 1. Do not serve water to infants under the age of 1 year unless the parent/caregiver has received clear instructions from their health care provider.

Milk

- Provide whole milk for children ages 1-2. The dietary fats in whole milk are important for normal growth and brain development.
- Article 47 of the New York City Health Code requires that child care centers offer only low-fat (1%) or non-fat (fat-free) unflavored milk for children over the age of 2.

100% Juice

- Pediatricians recommend no more than 4-6 ounces of 100% juice per day for children ages 1-6. Juice is not recommended for children under the age of 1³. Consider going a step further and not serving any juice at your center.

¹ NYC Pregnancy and Baby Care Information. <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/pregnancy/html/home/index.shtml>

² National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. <http://nrckids.org/TipSheet/JuiceTipSheet.pdf>

³ Fruit Juice and Your Child's Diet, American Academy of Pediatrics. <http://www.healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/nutrition/Pages/Fruit-Juice-and-Your-Childs-Diet.aspx>

Physical Activity

- Article 47 of the New York City Health Code requires that group child care centers provide children attending a full-day program with at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day. To help your center reach this mandate for ages 0 to 3, provide infants with tummy time and toddlers with time for movement on the floor, such as crawling, walking, and other movements that encourage large muscle development.

Screen Time (*Watching shows/movies and playing video games on the TV, computer, smartphone, or portable game device.*)

- Article 47 of the New York City Health Code requires that children under 2 receive no screen time in child care. For children older than 2, the requirement is a maximum of one hour of quality educational programming, including computer time. Consider going a step further and becoming a screen-free center.
- Participate in National “Turn It Off” week.

Family Engagement

- Display the “**Listen to your baby**” poster in your center where families can see it.
- Inform families that:
 - Bottles are only for breast milk or infant formula. Bottles should never contain juice or cereal.
 - Children should never be put to sleep with a bottle.
 - Children should make the switch from bottle to cup once they are old enough to hold the cup on their own. If possible, have an age-appropriate infant cup available for display.
 - Babies and young children know when they are hungry and when they are full. If a family is concerned their child is being over- or underfed, encourage them to visit their health care provider.
- Encourage families to:
 - Offer babies and toddlers one new food at a time and observe baby for any abnormal reactions to a new food. Encourage caregivers to wait three days before offering another new food.
 - Eat the same foods together (babies, toddlers, children, and adults) to expose new flavors and healthy foods to the whole family. Prepare foods for babies and toddlers as appropriate for age.
 - Mix whole milk with low-fat (1%) milk, gradually phasing out whole milk when the child is 2.
 - Provide infants with tummy time and toddlers with time for movement on the floor such as crawling, walking, and other movements that encourage large muscle development. Toddlers should never be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time unless they are sleeping.
 - Go screen-free for children under the age of 2. And for those over 2, limit screen time to less than two hours a day.
- Hold a “Make Your Own Baby Food Workshop” for families. Explain that it is possible for the whole family to eat the same foods. Show families how to make their own baby food by simply cooking and mashing the foods their family already loves.

Resources

- **African-American Breastfeeding Alliance** Help line: 877-532-8535 (9 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday)
- **Ellyn Satter Association** <http://www.ellynsatter.com>
- **Growing Up Healthy Hotline** (for WIC information) 800-522-5006
- **Healthy from the Start, How feeding nurtures your young child’s body, heart and mind.** Zero to Three Network http://www.zerotothree.org/child-development/health-nutrition/health_eng.pdf
- **HealthyChildren.org** American Academy of Pediatrics <http://www.healthychildren.org>
- **La Leche League** (for support groups and lactation consultants) 800-Laleche (800-525-3243) or lalecheleague.org
- **National Breastfeeding Helpline**, United States Department of Health and Human Services 800-994-9662
- **NYC Pregnancy and Baby Care Information**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/pregnancy/html/home/index.shtml>
- **The New York City Mother’s Guide to Breastfeeding**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/csi/csi-breast-feed-mother-guide.pdf>
- **Women’s Healthline** (for birth control information) Call 311

Resources

A note about the New York City Health Code:

Effective January 1, 2007, Article 47 of the New York City Health Code was amended to include new requirements related to nutrition and physical activity that apply to child care centers that are permitted by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH). For a copy of Article 47, go to <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/public/notice-adoption-hc-art47-0308.pdf>.

A note about the New York City Food Standards:

The New York City Food Standards were established by Mayoral Executive Order 122 to improve the health of all New Yorkers served by City agencies. The Standards apply to all City agencies. Programs operating Head Start and child care centers under contract with the New York City Administration for Children's Services are required to follow the Standards for their center-based programs. For more information on the New York City Food Standards, see <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cardio/cardio-vend-nutrition-standard.shtml>

nyc.gov Resources:

- **At Home Physical Activity Calendar** <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/cdp/growing-healthy-children-policy-guide.pdf>
- **Eat Well Play Hard Newsletters**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cdp/cdp_pan-ewph-news.shtml
- **Growing Healthy Children- A guide to enhance nutrition and physical activity in New York City group child care centers**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cdp/cdp_pan_gcc.shtml
- **Growing Healthy Children Nutrition Education Curriculum**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene <http://home2.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/cdp/growing-healthy-children.pdf>
- **Health Bucks** <http://www.nyc.gov/health/farmersmarkets>
- **Healthy Beverage and Snack List** http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cdp/cdp_pan_gcc.shtml
- **Helping Children Reach a Healthy Weight**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene <http://home2.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/diabetes/diabetes-healthyweight.pdf>
- **Move-to-Improve Early Childhood**, Classroom Based Physical Activity Curriculum, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene http://home2.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cdp/cdp_pan-physical.shtml
- **New York City Drinking Water**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/drinking_water/index.shtml
- **NYC Food** <http://www.nyc.gov/nycfood>
- **NYC Green Carts** <http://www.nyc.gov/greencarts>
- **NYC Pregnancy and Baby Care Information**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/pregnancy/html/home/index.shtml>
- **Physical Activity and Nutrition**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cdp/cdp_pan.shtml
- **Pouring on the Pounds Campaign**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene <http://www.nyc.gov/health/drinkingfat>
- **Stellar Farmers' Market Nutrition Education Program**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene <http://www.nyc.gov/health/farmersmarkets>
- **The New York City Mother's Guide to Breastfeeding**, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/csi/csi-breast-feed-mother-guide.pdf>

Additional Resources:

- **African-American Breastfeeding Alliance** Help line: 877-532-8535 (9 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday)
- **BeFitNYC**, Find out about free or low-cost physical activity opportunities in the community by going to <http://www.BeFitNYC.org> or calling 311.
- **Choose My Plate**, United States Department of Agriculture <http://www.choosemyplate.gov>
- **Eat Well Play Hard in Child Care Settings Curriculum**, Child and Adult Care Food Program, New York State Health Department http://www.health.state.ny.us/prevention/nutrition/resources/eat_well_play_hard
- **Ellyn Satter Association** <http://www.ellynsatter.com>
- **Ellyn Satter Responsibility of Feeding** <http://www.ellynsatter.com/ellyn-satters-division-of-responsibility-in-feeding-i-80.html>
- **Farm to Preschool** <http://www.farmtopreschool.org/home.html>
- **Fit WIC** http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Sharing_Center/statedev_FIT.html
- **Growing Up Healthy Hotline** (for WIC information) 800-522-5006
- **Healthy from the Start, How feeding nurtures your young child's body, heart and mind**. Zero to Three Network http://www.zerotothree.org/child-development/health-nutrition/health_eng.pdf
- **HealthyChildren.org** American Academy of Pediatrics <http://www.healthychildren.org>
- **Just Say Yes to Fruits and Vegetables** <http://www.jsyfruitveggies.org>
- **La Leche League** (for support groups and lactation consultants) 800-Laleche (800-525-3243) or lalecheleague.org

- Let's Move Child Care <http://healthykidshealthyfuture.org/welcome.html>
- Let's Move Drink Smart <http://www.letsmove.gov/drink-lots-water>
- Let's Move Get Active <http://www.letsmove.gov/get-active>
- Let's Move <http://www.letsmove.gov>
- Let's Move Reduce Screen Time and Get Active <http://www.letsmove.gov/reduce-screen-time-and-get-active>
- Maximizing Messages, United States Department of Agriculture <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/corenutritionmessages/Maximizing.htm>
- National Association for Sport and Physical Education Fun physical activity ideas to do at home <http://www.aahperd.org/headstartbodystart/>
- National Breastfeeding Helpline, United States Department of Health and Human Services 800-994-9662 (9 am to 6 pm, Monday to Friday)
- New York State Fruit and Vegetable Harvest Calendar <http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us/harvestcalendar.html>
- Nibbles for Health: Nutrition Newsletters for Parents of Young Children, United States Department of Agriculture <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/nibbles.html>
- NYC Greenmarkets <http://www.grownyc.org/ourmarkets>
- Produce for Better Health Fruits and Veggies More Matters <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org>
- Quick and Easy Recipes, United States Department of Agriculture <http://www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhardhealthy lifestyle/QuickandEasy/smartstartrecipes.htm>
- Tvturnoff.org <http://www2.tvturnoff.org>
- Women's Healthline (for birth control information) Call 311

Nutrition and Physical Activity Books

- **Active Play!** by Diane H Craft and Craig L Smith (activeplaybooks.com)
- **All Our Fruits and Vegetables** by Roberta L. Duyff and Patricia C. McKissack (Many Hands Media, 1995)
- **Apples** by Gail Gibbons (Holiday House, 2000)
- **Berenstain Bears Forget Their Manners** by Stan and Jan Berenstain (Random House for Young Readers, 1985)
- **Corn** by Gail Gibbons (Holiday House, 2009)
- **Eating the Alphabet from A to Z** by Lois Ehlert (Houghton, Mifflin, Harcourt, 1993)
- **The Edible Pyramid** by Loreen Leedy (Holiday House, 2007)
- **Fruits** by Robin Nelson (Lerner Publications Company, 2003)
- **Green Eggs and Ham** by Dr. Seuss (Random House for Young Readers, 1960)
- **Growing Colors** by Bruce McMillan (HarperCollins Publishers, 1994)
- **Growing Vegetable Soup** by Lois Ehlert (Houghton, Mifflin, Harcourt, 1990)
- **How Do Dinosaurs Eat Their Food?** by Jane Yolen and Mark Teague (Scholastic Inc., 2005)
- **How Kids Grow** by Jean Marzollo (Cartwheel Books Scholastic, 1998)
- **I Am an Apple** by Jean Marzollo (Scholastic, 1997)
- **I'm Growing** by Alike (Collins, 1993)
- **I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato** by Lauren Child (Candlewick Press, 2003)
- **Milk from Cow to Carton** by Alike (Collins, 1992)
- **The Milk Makers** by Gail Gibbons (Aladdin, 1987)
- **No Milk** by Jennifer A. Ericsson (HarperTrophy, 1998)
- **The Pizza We Made** by Joan Holub (Puffin Books, 2001)
- **Plants on My Plate** by National Geographic (Rigby Educational Publishers, 2003)
- **Please Say Please** by Margery Cuyler (Scholastic, 2004)
- **The Pumpkin Book** by Gail Gibbons (Holiday House, 2000)
- **Rah, Rah, Radishes! A Vegetable Chant** by April Pulley Sayre (Beach Lane Books, 2011)
- **The Skeleton Inside of You** by Philip Balestrino (Collins, 1989)
- **Up, Down, and Around** by Katherine Ayres (Candlewick Press, 2008)
- **Vegetables** by Robin Nelson (Lerner Publications Company, 2003)
- **The Vegetables We Eat** by Gail Gibbons (Holiday House, 2007)
- **We Like to Eat Well** by Elyse April (Hohm Press, 2007)
- **What's for Lunch? Milk** by Claire Llewellyn (Franklin Watts, 1998)

Cookbooks and Recipes for Cooking with Children

- **DK Children's Cookbook** by Katherine Ibbs (DK Publishing, 2004)
- **Emeril's There's a Chef in My Soup! Recipes for the Kid in Everyone** by Emeril Lagasse (HarperCollins, 2005)
- **Emeril's There's a Chef in My World! Recipes That Take You Places** by Emeril Lagasse (HarperCollins, 2006)
- **Everything Cooking for Kids Cookbook** by Ronni Litz Julien, MS RD/LDN (Adams Media, 2010)
- **Kids Cook 1-2-3** by Rozanne Gold; Illustrated by Sara Pinto (Bloomsbury USA Children Books, 2006)
- **Mommy and Me Cookbook** by Annabel Karmel (DK Children, 2005)
- **Real Food for Healthy Kids** by Tracey Seaman and Tanya Wenman Steel (William Morrow Cookbooks, 2008)
- **Someone's in the Kitchen with Mommy** by Elaine Magee, MPH, RD (McGraw-Hill, 1997)
- **The Good Housekeeping Illustrated Children's Cookbook** by Marianne Zanzarella, photographs by Tom Eckerle (Hearst, 2002)
- **Williams-Sonoma The Kid's Cookbook: A great book for kids who love to cook** by Abigail Dodge (Williams-Sonoma Lifestyles, 2002)



Choose water

Tap water is good for you,
has no calories, and is free.

For more information, go to nyc.gov and search for "growing healthy children"



Avoid sugary drinks

Instead, choose tap water, low-fat milk, or seltzer.



Cook & eat together

Make mealtime family time.

For more information, go to nyc.gov and search for "growing healthy children"



Eat colorful fruits & vegetables

Fresh, frozen, and canned are
all healthy options.

For more information, go to nyc.gov and search for "growing healthy children"



Choose to move

**Move more. Sit less.
Make family time an active time.**

For more information, go to nyc.gov and search for "growing healthy children"



Have screen-free fun

Keep young minds and bodies active. Reduce time in front of TV, computers, phones, and video games.

For more information, go to nyc.gov and search for "growing healthy children"



Snack smart

Choose healthy snacks like fruits, vegetables, low-fat cheese, and whole-grain crackers.

For more information, go to nyc.gov and search for "growing healthy children"



Listen to your baby

**Babies know when they are hungry
and when they are full.**

For more information, go to nyc.gov and search for "growing healthy children"

The Best Practices Partnership to Prevent Overweight and Obesity in Early Childhood was established through a grant funded by the New York State Department of Health's Obesity Prevention Program. The following organizations are recognized for participating in the Partnership and for guiding the development of this toolkit.

- Administration for Children's Services
- Center for Children's Initiatives
- Children's Museum of Manhattan
- Chung Pak Day Care Center
- Citizens' Committee for Children of New York
- City Harvest
- Columbia University Head Start Program
- Columbia University Medical Center
- Cornell University Cooperative Extension New York City
- Darby Nutrition-Dietetics Practice PLLC
- Day Care Council of New York, Inc.
- EHCHS Inc., East Harlem Council Bilingual Head Start
- FGE Food & Nutrition Team
- Food Policy Coordinator, Office of the Mayor
- New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
- New York City Early Childhood Professional Development Institute, City University of New York
- New York City Housing Authority
- New York-Presbyterian Hospital
- New York State Department of Health
- Public Health Solutions
- The Children's Aid Society
- TJHindin Consultants
- United Neighborhood Houses
- United Way
- YMCA of Greater New York



Growing Healthy Children

Promoting nutrition and physical activity
in child care settings

Electronic versions of the enclosed materials are available in Spanish, Chinese, Bengali, Haitian Creole, and Korean. For more information, please visit nyc.gov and search for "growing healthy children."

