Governor's Fit & healthy KiDS — Vermont Department of Health

Schools & Families: Take the Fit & Healthy Kids Fall Challenge!

Schools & families — Fall back into fun, food & fitness...

For the week of November 5—9, find creative ways to incorporate the Fit & Healthy Kids Fall Challenge into your school. See ideas below to get started and please share this information with students to bring home — families can participate, too. Ideas for families are on the back of this page.

Ideas for SCHOOLS

1) MOVE more!

- Make science active! Take students for a walk in the woods, have them note signs of fall and research what they find– why leaves change colors, where geese fly and why, how ponds freeze (and what happens to the fish), etc.
- Teach students about the body. Have them rake or jump in leaves, carve pumpkins, and play their favorite game (or just pretend to); then have them identify what muscles are used for each activity.
- Have students go out for a walk and collect fall items, such as leaves and acorns:

  art class – use items for collages; **math** – see how many different ways students can sort items by type, color, size, etc; **science** – have students identify trees leaves come from.
- In between classes, get students moving! For five minutes play music, or have them act out fall animals or signs — leaves falling, geese flying, wind blowing. Let students choose the symbol to act out.

2) Eat more COLORS!

- Use fruit and vegetables for math lessons (fractions, add and subtract, division and multiplication).
- Have each student research how and where a particular fruit or vegetable is grown.
- Work with foodservice personnel to offer additional fruits and vegetables at meal time or to have free 'tastings' of unique fruits and vegetables.
- Create a recipe book of healthy snacks with help from students and parents.
- Offer daily fruit and vegetable trivia over the announcements.
- Take students on a fruit and vegetable treasure hunt in the grocery store. Give them a list of fruits and vegetables to find, or have them do cost comparisons between fresh, frozen, canned, and dried.
- **Check out these free resources –**

  Fruits and Veggies More Matters educator resources: **http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/** and *MyPyramid* teaching materials: **www.mypyramid.gov/kids/**

3) Turn it OFF !

- Have students identify at least one activity they can do instead of watching TV and then record their success doing the new activity each day. Make sure they share their ideas and successes with other students!
- Have students research the effect of television or media on nutrition habits, smoking (for older students) or language development in young children. Have them share what they learn with each other.

Ideas for FAMILIES

1) MOVE more!

- Create a leaf maze — when leaves cover the lawn, take turns raking twisting pathways with dead ends; then take turns walking through, finding the right path to the end.
- Take a walk through the woods — see who can identify the most signs of fall.
- Visit a pumpkin patch — walk around trying to find the largest and smallest pumpkins.
- Explore your town's recreation path or go for a fall hike at a state park.

2) Eat more COLORS!

Offer a wide variety of fruits and vegetables daily; don't worry if children don't like everything right away. Here are some ways to make it fun:

- Get kids involved — help them identify and select new fall fruits and vegetables at the store and help find recipes on how to serve them.
- Keep a bowl of fresh fruits on the counter and refrigerate cut up fruits and vegetables for easy snacks on the run. You'll be amazed at how fast they'll disappear!
- Try adding new fruits and vegetables into foods your kids already like. Kiwi in yogurt and cereal, cauliflower and spinach in salads and pasta dishes, mashed sweet potatoes instead of white potatoes.
- **For more ideas, try these great resources -**

  Kids in the Kitchen: **http://kidsinthekitchen.ajli.org/**

  Kidnetic: **http://www.kidnetic.com/BrightPapers/?c=For+Parents**

3) Turn it OFF !

List things you can do together instead of watch television- make sure everyone contributes an idea and try one each day. Some suggestions:

- Stuff a scarecrow - break out an old shirt and overalls and stuff with leaves until firm. Complete with a pumpkin head.
- Make a sun catcher - collect colorful leaves, arrange between two pieces of waxed paper and then, using a low setting, iron the waxed paper with a sheet of plain paper on top. Hang in a sunny window.
- Carve pumpkins!

Make every day active, colorful and fun for your family!

For copies of this form or to learn more about the Fit & Healthy Kids Initiative, go to **http://healthvermont.gov/fitandhealthy.aspx**
or call the Vermont Department of Health at **(802) 863-7330.**