Dear Staff Member,

Welcome to the second edition of the Eat Well Play Hard in Child Care Settings (EWP:HC:CS) Staff Newsletter! This newsletter is designed especially for you!

In these pages you will find EWP:HC:CS program updates, nutrition and physical activity tips for your classroom, and a healthy and easy recipe for you to try with your class. This issue focuses on the importance of cooking with children. You will also learn about child care centers that are working towards improving nutrition and physical activity. We hope this issue will give you new and delicious ideas to adopt in your own centers and classrooms.

If you have any questions or comments concerning the newsletter, please contact me at 212-788-2226 or esolomo1@health.nyc.gov.

Happy Reading!

Elizabeth Solomon, Program Manager

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Day Care Nutrition Star:

Mt. Lebanon Early Learning Center (Brooklyn)

Mt. Lebanon Early Learning Center recently participated in Eat Well Play Hard in Child Care Settings (EWP:HC:CS), a free nutrition education program offered by the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Since participating, children, parents and staff at the center have all made positive changes toward healthy eating.

Students from Mt. Lebanon try vegetables during nutrition class.

While working with the center, Wendyann Moore, an EWP:HC:CS Registered Dietitian, taught children the difference between being hungry and being full. Mrs. Hall, a teacher at the center, states that the children in Wendy's class grasped the concept of hunger and satiety and now pay attention to how much they eat based on how hungry they feel.

Parents tell Mrs. Hall that they are encouraged to make healthier food choices at home. One parent states that her son eats apples almost every day because he is able to use the apple corer that was provided as a nutrition reinforcement to the parent for attending the nutrition workshop. Another parent gave into her daughter’s demands to make fruit kabobs. Mrs. Hall also notices that some of the children are now bringing in healthy snacks, such as green or fruit salads.

Mrs. Delva, a part-time teacher and cook at the center, added three recipes from the EWP:HC:CS curriculum to her weekly menus: Tuna Salad in Pita Pockets, Easy No Bake Mac and Cheese and Veggie Rice Pilaf. The kids love the changes in the menu. The center also made a bulletin board with pictures of the children eating green salads and making fruit kabobs in the classroom.

Congratulations to the children, parents and staff of Mt. Lebanon Early Learning Center for making nutrition an important component at their center.
Audrey Johnson Day Care Center, located in Bushwick, Brooklyn, provides educational and recreational programs to children ages two to five years old. Julie Dent, Director, makes sure that Sports, Play & Active Recreation for Kids (SPARK) gets implemented in each classroom every day.

Teachers integrate a 45-minute SPARK session in the morning and then another 45 minute session in the afternoon. Each teacher chooses a lesson from the SPARK curriculum. These lessons vary from Bean Bag Boogie (in which children move to music while working with small bean bags) to Animal Action (in which children use their bodies to create animal actions). Children are also encouraged to choose a lesson from the SPARK curriculum that they would like to do as a class.

“Look to see if the teachers are incorporating SPARK in their lesson plans and in the classroom and have a team meeting to see how SPARK is going,” she advises.

In addition, Audrey Johnson Day Care Center provides nutrition education to the children and staff at the center. Teachers cook with the children in the classroom using EWPHCCS recipes and encourage the children to use healthy food in the kitchens within their classroom by providing food models of fruits and vegetables. We commend Audrey Johnson Day Care center for continuing to incorporate both physical activity and nutrition into their center.

Mrs. Wilson, a teacher at the center, states that children have a lot of fun doing the exercises from the SPARK curriculum. The teachers love doing the exercises with the children because it is a fun way to get a great workout.

Initially, it was difficult to get all the teachers trained in SPARK. Mrs. Dent overcame obstacles of time and staff coverage by closing and hosting SPARK training at the center for a day.

Mrs. Dent advises directors who are having trouble implementing SPARK to wear sweats and get directly involved in the hands-on activities.
Physical Activity of the Month: Old MacDonald’s Farm

Spice up an old classic by adding physical activity to Old MacDonald. This game will not only get children moving but also strengthen recognition and awareness about the origins of food, develop vocabulary, build motor skills, and be loads of fun!

Steps:
• Tell the children you are going to sing “Old MacDonald” and have the children form one line with you at the front. Tell the children you are going to play follow the leader while singing the song.
• Begin to sing “Old MacDonald.”
• Ask the children to follow you as you march around the room singing “Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O!”
• Have the children clap their hands as they march around the room.
• Customize the song by adding verses and movement for different animals and foods. For example, if you choose “chicken,” flap your arms like a chicken while saying, “with a cluck, cluck here and a cluck, cluck there…”
• Other suggestions:
  • Apples: lift your arms above your head to pick the apples from the tree while you sing “with a pick, pick here and a pick, pick there…”
  • Blueberries: move your arms from side to side to pick blueberries from the bushes while you sing, “with a pick, pick here and a pick, pick there…”
  • Cow: squat and milk a cow while you sing, “with a milk, milk here and a milk, milk there…”

Adapted from USDA’s Tickle Your Appetite: Team Nutrition’s Education Kit for Child Care. 1998: 4-33.

Teacher Tips of the Month: Cooking with Children

Cooking with children is a fantastic way to give children the opportunity to build self-esteem, develop early skills of independence, get exposure to new and healthful foods, and practice early math skills through measuring and counting. And it is also a whole lot of fun! Here are a few tips to get you started:

Safety
• Always wash hands before cooking.
• Keep raw and cooked foods apart.
• Keep cold foods cold in the refrigerator.
• Cook food until it is done, and keep hot food hot.

Keep it simple:
• Cooking doesn’t necessarily mean using an oven. For example, let the children make their own yogurt parfaits by having them cut up bananas and put yogurt on top.
• Work in small groups for more complicated recipes. Decide ahead of time what children can do.

Examples of What Children Can Do:
• 2 year olds can scrub vegetables, tear lettuce leaves, snap green beans, and break cauliflower.
• 3 year olds can pour liquids (not hot), mix ingredients, shake liquids, wrap potato in foil.
• 4 year olds can peel hard cooked egg, squeeze juice from an orange, mash bananas, and crack eggs.

Adapted from New York State Department of Health CACFP Eat Well Play Hard in Child Care Settings Curriculum, copyright ©2008
**Nutrition Activity of the Month:** Vegetable Mystery Bags

This is a fun nutrition activity you can do with the children in your classroom. This activity exposes children to new vegetables, encourages children to try new healthy foods, helps children develop language skills, and explores the senses and how to use them.

**Supplies you will need:**
- 3 different vegetables of your choice. Choose from: green or red pepper, cucumber, tomatoes, carrots or any other vegetable that you like. For each vegetable, you will need one whole one to show to the children and additional ones to cut up so that each child can taste a sample.
- Paper bags, cutting board, knife, serving bowls, serving spoons, small cups, teaspoons, napkins

**Preparation Prior to Activity:**
- For each type of vegetable, put aside a whole one.
- Wash and peel, if necessary, additional samples of each mystery vegetable and cut into bite-sized pieces.
- Place each type of prepared vegetable in a serving bowl and refrigerate until the end of class when the mystery vegetables have been revealed.
- Find and cut out a pictures of a vegetable that you plan to use. (optional)

**Activity:**
- Ask the children to wash their hands.
- Make sure children are seated on the mat in a circle or around the table.
- Show the children each of the 3 whole vegetables and put each one in a separate paper bag.
- Explain that they will feel and smell what is in the paper bag without looking inside of it.
- Pass the bag around in a circle and ask the children, one at a time, without looking inside, to smell and feel what is inside the bag.
- Once all the children have had a turn feeling and smelling the vegetable, ask the children to guess what vegetable is inside.
- Ask them, “How were you able to tell? Was it by touching it? smelling it?”
- Take the vegetable out and show them the vegetable inside the bag.
- Tell them the name of the vegetable inside the bag and that eating vegetables gives you energy to play and grow a healthy body.
- Discuss the color and shape of the vegetable.
- Pass around another vegetable contained in a bag, repeating the steps above.
- Bring out the serving bowls of bite-sized samples and let the children choose vegetables they would like to sample. Allow each child to serve themselves.

Adapted from New York State Department of Health’s Eat Well Play Hard in Child Care Settings Curriculum, copyright ©2008.
**Parent Highlight: Concepcion**

“In the Eat Well Play Hard in Child Care Settings parent class, I learned to add more vegetables to the meals that I prepare. We have been eating a lot of zucchini and broccoli and I do all the chopping and cutting of vegetables. I am also working on being a good role model for my children by eating vegetables with them even if they are not my favorite. My children also help me prepare our family meals at home. My daughter, Raquel, helps set the table and my son helps me with the dishes. They also help with the food preparation like washing, spreading and stirring. At first I wasn’t sure about having them help me in the kitchen, but now I really enjoy spending this extra time with them because I know they are learning new skills that will last their whole life.”

**Parent Tip of the Month: Cooking Skills Develop with Practice Over Time**

Share fun experiences and create memories with your child by cooking with them. Cooking with children helps them to gain independence and confidence, to develop math skills, and to learn to try new foods.

**What Can Children do?**

2 Year Olds Can:
- Scrub vegetables, tear lettuce leaves, snap green beans, dip & wash salad greens and break cauliflower.

3 Year Olds Can:
- Wrap potato in foil, pour liquids (not hot), mix foods, shake liquids, and spread soft spreads.

4 Year Olds Can:
- Peel hard cooked egg, roll an orange, squeeze juice from an orange, mash bananas and crack eggs.

**Delicious and Warm Baked Apples**

**Recipe of the Month!**

**Ingredients**
- 5 medium apples
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- Brown sugar

**Steps**
1. Wash apples.
2. Peel, and remove the seeds and core of the apples
3. Cut the apples into small sections
4. Sprinkle them with cinnamon and a little sugar.
5. Put the apples in a baking dish or microwave container. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes or for 5 minutes in the microwave until soft. Let the apples cool to room temperature before eating.

Have your child help you do the steps in red.

Recipe adapted from USDA’s Tickle Your Appetite: Team Nutrition Education Kit for Childcare. 1998: 5-16.
Padre Destacado: Concepcion

“En la clase para padres del programa Eat Well Play Hard que se ofrecen en las guarderías, aprendí a añadir más vegetales a las comidas que preparo. Hemos estado comiendo mucho calabacín y brócoli y yo hago todo el corte y picado de los vegetales. También estoy trabajando en ser un buen modelo de conducta para mis niños comiendo vegetales con ellos aun si no son mis preferidos. Mis niños también me ayudan a preparar nuestras comidas en casa. Mi hija, Raquel, me ayuda a poner la mesa y mi hijo me ayuda con los platos. Ellos también me ayudan con la preparación de la comida como lavar, untar y revolver. Al principio no estaba segura de tenerlos ayudándome en la cocina, pero ahora disfruto mucho pasar tiempo extra con ellos porque sé que están aprendiendo nuevas destrezas que les durarán toda una vida.”

Consejo del mes para padres: Las destrezas culinarias se desarrollan con práctica a través del tiempo

Comparta experiencias divertidas con sus niños cocinando con ellos. Cocinar con sus niños les ayuda a obtener independencia y confianza, a desarrollar habilidades para la matemática, y a aprender a tratar comidas nuevas.

¿Qué pueden hacer los niños?

Los niños de 2 años de edad pueden:
- Fregar los vegetales, deshojar la lechuga, partir las judías verdes, lavar y enjuagar las verduras y separar la coliflor.

Los niños de 3 años de edad pueden:
- Envolver las papas en papel de aluminio, verter líquidos (no calientes), mezclar ingredientes, agitar líquidos, y untar cremas.

Los niños de 4 años de edad pueden:
- Pelar huevos hervidos, robar una naranja, exprimir jugo de una naranja, machacar bananas y romper huevos.

Deliciosas y calientes manzanas al horno

Ingredientes
- 5 manzanas medianas
- 1/2 cucharadita de canela
- Azúcar morena

Pasos
1. Lave las manzanas.
2. Pele, y quite las semillas y el centro de las manzanas
3. Corte las manzanas en secciones pequeñas
4. Espolvoréelas con canela y un poquito de azúcar.
5. Ponga las manzanas en una fuente de horno o un recipiente para microondas. Hornee a 350° durante 30 minutos o en el microondas por 5 minutos hasta que estén blandas. Antes de comérselas, deje que las manzanas se enfrien a temperatura ambiente.

Haga que su niño le ayude con los pasos que están en rojo.

Receta adaptada del Departamento de Agricultura de los Estados Unidos (USDA): Deleite su Apetito: Kit Educativo del 7eam Nutritio para el cuidado infantil. 1998: 5-16
Cooking with Children: Recipe for Action

Cooking in the classroom provides children with hands on, learning experiences that enable them to understand concepts using all five senses. Cooking with children is a fantastic way to give children the opportunity to build self-esteem, develop confidence and independence, practice trying new foods, and learn early math skills through measuring and counting. Try this delicious and fun recipe with the children in your classroom.

**Tossed Salad**

**Yield:** 6 cups

**Ingredients:**
- 1/2 pound romaine lettuce
- 1 small carrot or 5 radishes
- 1 stalk celery or 2 asparagus spears
- 1 small tomato
- 1/2 cucumber
- 2 ounces fresh broccoli or 2 ounces fresh cauliflower
- 1/4 cup frozen corn or peas
- 3/4 cup low-fat salad dressing

**Supplies:**
- colander
- cutting board
- knife
- vegetable peeler
- serving bowls
- tongs and/or serving spoons
- salad bowls
- forks
- napkins

**Steps:**
- Ask the children to wash their hands.
- Display all ingredients for the children to see.
- Discuss each vegetable. Talk about its shape, color, and how it is grown. Talk about the parts of a plant.
- Tell the children they are going to help make a tossed salad using all parts of the plant.
- Assign every child a small task in **boldface** below. You or another adult must do the steps that are not in **boldface**.
  - Wash vegetables thoroughly and drain.
  - Tear lettuce into bite-size pieces and place in bowl.
  - Add peas and corn to the lettuce.
  - Chop remaining vegetables into small pieces, **add to the bowl and mix**.

Serve with low-fat salad dressing and enjoy! *(Let the children serve themselves)*.

Adapted from New York State Department of Health CACFP Eat Well Play Hard in Child Care Settings Curriculum, copyright ©2008

**Part Plants 101**

Did you know that all vegetables are a part of a plant? Talk to your children (and parents) about eating different parts of plants to stay healthy and grow strong.

- Peas, corn—seed of the plant
- Lettuce, herbs, spinach—leaf of the plant
- Broccoli, cauliflower—flower of the plant
- Celery, asparagus, rhubarb—stem of the plant
- Tomato, peppers, squash—fruit of the plant
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