

Awesome Appetites

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Audience: Teachers, Cooks & Administrators

Preparation Time

Activity 1: 5 min
Activity 2: 15 min
Activity 3: 10 min

Duration of Lesson

Introduction: 5 min
Activity 1: 15 min
Activity 2: 30 min
Activity 3: 20 min
Closing: 5 min

Handouts

Use the Nutrition Facts Label to Eat Healthier MyPyramid for Preschoolers

Goal

To increase knowledge and awareness of the government guidelines regarding healthy eating. To understand how to adjust child care center menus to meet *MyPyramid for Preschoolers* recommendations.


Participant Objectives

Participants will:

1. Name at least one key recommendation of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
2. Identify the six color bands on *MyPyramid for Preschoolers*.
3. Use the Nutrition Facts label to determine if foods meet Dietary Guidelines recommendations.
4. List two ways to incorporate the messages of *MyPyramid for Preschoolers* into the child care center menu and activities




Points to Cover/Trainer's Notes

Points to Cover	Trainer's Notes
Introduce the <i>Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005</i> (DGA)	Intent of DGA is to summarize knowledge regarding nutrients and food components into recommendations for an eating pattern that can be adopted by the public. The recommendations in DGA are for Americans over 2 years of age.
Key DGA Recommendations 	The overall message of DGA is to consume a variety of nutrient-dense food and beverages within the basic food groups. Key recommendations include choosing foods that limit saturated and <i>trans</i> fats, cholesterol, salt and added sugars. Another key recommendation is to be physically active every day. Children need 60 minutes of physical activity daily. Thirty of the 60 minutes should be structured, developmentally appropriate physical activity.
Working together: DGA, <i>MyPyramid</i> , Nutrition Facts label	One of the eating plans that support DGA is <i>MyPyramid</i> . This eating plan integrates dietary recommendations into a healthy way to eat for most individuals. DGA is the foundation of <i>MyPyramid</i> , which presents the science in a consumer-friendly form. Another tool consumers can use to meet the recommendations in DGA is the Nutrition Facts label. The Nutrition Facts label lists serving size, calorie, and nutrient information for packaged foods. The percent daily value (% DV) on

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<p>Working together: DGA, <i>MyPyramid</i>, Nutrition Facts label (continued)</p>	<p>the label is based on a 2000 calorie diet. Pre-school children eat fewer calories but % DV can still be used as a guide.</p> <p>Follow DGA recommendations by choosing foods that provide the most nutrition for the calories. Avoid high calorie foods that have few vitamins and minerals. A quick guide to % DV is that 5% is low; 20% or more is high. Choose foods that have a high % DV for nutrients you want more of such as calcium, vitamin A and fiber, and a low % DV for nutrients you want less of such as saturated fat and sodium. (See <i>Use the Nutrition Facts Label to Eat Healthier</i> handout)</p>
<p><i>MyPyramid</i> and <i>MyPyramid for Preschoolers</i></p> 	<p>The new <i>MyPyramid</i> food guidance system provides options to help people make healthy choices and to be active every day. The new <i>MyPyramid</i> symbol introduced in 2005 conveys the messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical activity – Person climbing the side of the pyramid reminds us that daily activity is important. <i>Key message: Be physically active every day.</i> • Variety – Six color bands represent five food groups plus oils. <i>Key message: Every color every day.</i> • Proportionality – Each band is a different width representing how much to eat from each group. <i>Key message: Eat more from some food groups than others.</i> • Moderation – The base of the pyramid represents foods with little solid fats and added sugars and the narrow top stands for foods with more fat and sugar. You should eat mainly from the base of the pyramid. <i>Key message: Choose healthier foods from each group.</i> • Gradual improvement – ‘Steps to a Healthier You’ slogan suggests you can take small steps each day to improve diet and lifestyle. <i>Key message: Take one step at a time.</i> • Personalization – The person on the steps, the slogan and the URL show that you can find the right kinds and amounts of food for you at MyPyramid.gov. <i>Key message: Make choices that are right for you.</i>
<p>Color bands on <i>MyPyramid</i> and proportions</p>	<p>The color bands on <i>MyPyramid</i> represent the five major food groups and oils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orange – grains: Make half your grains whole. • Green – vegetables: Vary your veggies. • Red – fruit: Focus on fruit. Go easy on juice and make sure it’s 100%.

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<p>Color bands on <i>MyPyramid</i> and proportions (continued)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yellow – oils: Know your fats. Limit solid fats such as butter and choose fats from fish, nuts and liquid oils such as corn and canola. • Blue – milk: Get your calcium rich foods. Choose low-fat (1%) or nonfat if over age two. • Purple – meat/beans: Go lean with protein.
<p>Child care menu planning to put it all together</p>	<p>When applying these guidelines to a child care center menu, keep the following points in mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange food to be visually appealing and appetizing. • Select colorful foods and vary colors at each meal. • Vary textures. A meal of all soft foods is best left to the infant room. Preschool children are ready for different textures. • Vary temperatures in a meal.

Activities

- Activity 1: Incorporating *MyPyramid for Preschoolers* Messages into the Child Care Center Menu and Activities
- Activity 2: Reading the Nutrition Facts Label
- Activity 3: *MyPyramid* Menu Makeover

Closing

1. Review participant objectives.
2. Discuss that future lessons will build on this one.

References

[Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#)
www.mypyramid.gov



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Activity 1: Incorporating *MyPyramid for Preschoolers* Messages into the Child Care Center Menu and Activities

Preparation Time: 5 min

Activity Time: 15 min

Supplies

easel
easel pad
markers
MyPyramid for Preschoolers poster



Preparation Prior to Class

Assemble the easel and place a pad on the easel.

Implementation

1. Begin by using the poster to explain the messages conveyed by *MyPyramid for Preschoolers* (See: *MyPyramid/MyPyramid for Preschoolers**):
 - Physical activity – Be physically active every day.
 - Variety – Every color every day.
 - Proportionality – Eat more from some food groups than others.
 - Moderation – Choose healthier foods from each group.
 - Gradual improvement – Take one step at a time.
 - Personalization – Make choices that are right for you.
2. Introduce the purpose of the brainstorm, which is to come up with ways to incorporate the messages of *MyPyramid for Preschoolers* into the everyday activities at the child care center.
3. Review brainstorming rules:
 - Any idea is fine – no comments on the ideas of others
 - It is okay to build on someone else's idea
 - Yell out your ideas
 - We will discuss ideas later
4. Record participant responses to icebreaker and brainstorming questions on the easel pad.
5. Start with an icebreaker: Which *MyPyramid* message(s) do you think is most important? Why?
6. Then, move into the brainstorming questions. Use prompts, if necessary, to move conversation along:
7. How can you encourage children to eat a variety of healthy foods?
8. What *MyPyramid* message does this practice support?

* Underline denotes Points to Cover discussed in the Trainer's Notes in the lesson plan.

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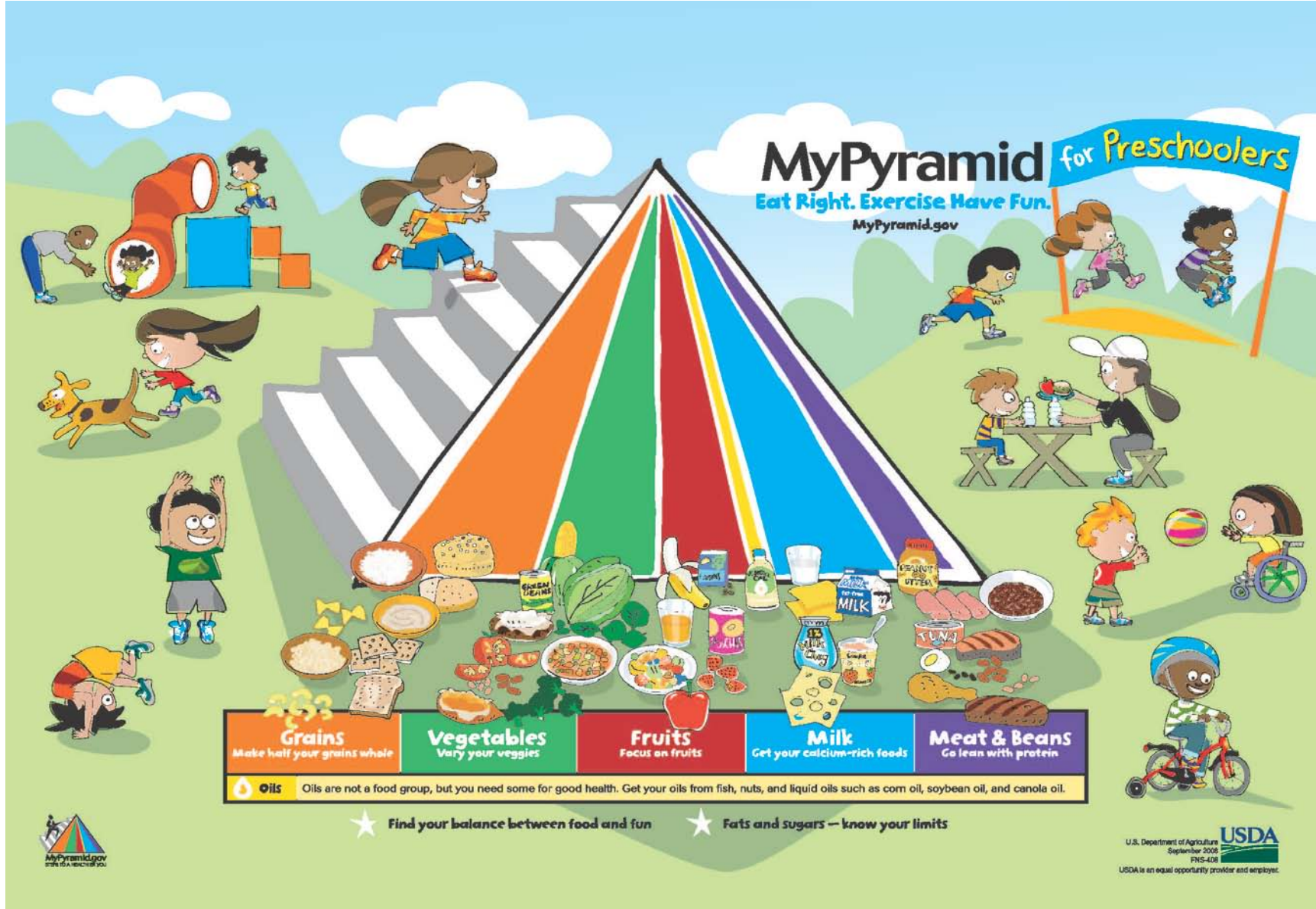
Activity 1: Incorporating *MyPyramid for Preschoolers* Messages into the Child Care Center Menu and Activities

Preparation Time: 5 min

Activity Time: 15 min

- Include children in menu planning by asking them what they like. (Personalization)
 - Serve foods that are consistent with DGA. (Moderation, Proportionality)
 - Teach children how to respond to their appetites by eating when they are hungry and stop when they are full. (Moderation)
 - Serve meals and snacks family style. (Moderation, Personalization)
 - Pay attention to the way food looks. (Variety)
 - Vary the colors, textures, shapes and temperatures of foods on the menu. (Variety)
 - Read stories about how fruits and vegetables grow. (Personalization)
 - Let children prepare their own simple snacks. (Personalization)
 - Introduce new foods to children several times. (Gradual Improvement)
 - Provide children with choices for physical activity and food. (Personalization)
9. How could you encourage gradual improvement of the child care center menu, mealtime environment and/or physical activity program?
- Recognize and reward staff and teachers for sharing ideas for improvement.
 - Involve children in menu and physical activity planning.
 - Keep parents/caregivers informed about the physical activity program, menu and mealtime environment.
 - Encourage feedback from children as well as parents/caregivers.
10. After the brainstorming is over, ask each participant to name one way their center could incorporate the *MyPyramid for Preschoolers* messages into their child care center menu or activities.





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Pointers to Help your Preschooler Develop Healthy Habits



They Take Their Lead From you. Make Healthy Choices and Your Kids Will Too.

Eat together whenever possible. Let your kids see you enjoying fruits, vegetables, and whole grains at meals and snacks at home and on the go.

Cook together. Kids love helping in the kitchen. They'll learn skills they'll use for life.

Help Them Try New Foods.

Sometimes new foods take time. Kids don't always take to new foods right away. Offer new foods many times. Give them a small taste at first and be patient with them.

Offer only one new food at a time. Serve something that you know your child likes along with the new food. Offering too many new foods all at once could be overwhelming.



For more great pointers on these
and other subjects go to:
mypyramid.gov/preschoolers/

Picky Eating is Temporary.

Patience works better than pressure. Let your child choose how much to eat. Kids are more likely to enjoy a food when eating it is their own choice.

Offer choices. Rather than ask "Do you want broccoli for dinner?" ask "Which would you like for dinner: broccoli or cauliflower?"

Play Actively Everyday.

Make play time a family time. Make physical activity fun for the whole family. It includes anything that gets your child moving both inside and outside the house. Walk, run, and play with your child rather than sitting on the sidelines.

Focus on fun not performance. Not all children are athletes. But all can make activity a lifetime habit.



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Activity 2: Reading the Nutrition Facts Label

Preparation Time: 15 min

Activity Time: 30 min

Ingredients (optional)

samples of food(s) that could be healthier alternatives to items on their center menu that are not DGA consistent

Supplies

Nutrition Facts Label Poster
photocopies of *Use the Nutrition Facts Label to Eat Healthier* handout
photocopies of Nutrition Facts labels from selected foods



Preparation Prior to Class

1. Review at least one current week's menu at the child care center.
2. Identify two or three packaged foods on the menu that do not meet DGA recommendations, such as foods high in saturated or *trans*-fat, sugar, salt and/or foods that are low in micro-nutrients. Some possibilities include fish sticks, chicken nuggets, cookies, high sugar cereals, etc.
3. Find Nutrition Facts labels for the foods identified, cut them out and make photocopies for all participants.
4. Find Nutrition Facts labels for healthier alternatives to the identified foods, cut them out and make photocopies for all participants.
5. Bring in samples of the foods identified from the child care center menu that are not DGA consistent and samples of healthier alternatives to these foods for participants to sample and compare.

Implementation

1. Review the key recommendations from DGA emphasizing the overall message to consume a variety of nutrient-dense food within the basic food groups and limit saturated and *trans*-fats, cholesterol, salt and added sugars. (See: Key Recommendations DGA*)
2. Explain that the DGA and the Nutrition Facts label work together. (See: Working together: DGA, MyPyramid, Nutrition Facts Label)
3. Post the *Nutrition Facts Label* poster on the wall and pass out the *Use the Nutrition Facts Label to Eat Healthier* handout.
4. Using the handout and poster, review the basic information on the Nutrition Facts label: serving size, calories, total fat, % DV, etc. (See: Working together: DGA, MyPyramid, Nutrition Facts Label)
5. Ask the group to name foods that are on the child care center menu that may not be DGA consistent.
6. Pass out photocopies of the Nutrition Facts labels for the foods from the child care center menu that you identified as not consistent with DGA. Discuss the information on the labels with the participants, asking them questions to assess their

* Underline denotes Points to Cover discussed in the Trainer's Notes in the lesson plan.

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Activity 2: Reading the Nutrition Facts Label

Preparation Time: 15 min

Activity Time: 30 min

understanding:

- What are the % DVs for total fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol?
 - Are these low or high?
 - Is there *trans*-fat in this food?
 - What are the % DV for vitamins A and C, calcium and iron?
 - Are these low or high?
7. If the food is a high sugar food, have participants look at the ingredient list and guide them in identifying ingredients which are sources of added sugar (corn syrup, high fructose corn syrup, cane sugar, etc.).
 8. Pass out copies of the Nutrition Facts labels for the healthier alternative foods. Ask the group to compare the two labels and discuss why the healthy alternative is a better choice. Possible comparisons may include saturated and *trans*-fat levels, sugar, sodium, fiber, vitamin A, etc.
 9. Invite the group to taste samples of healthy foods that could be substituted for center menu items that are not consistent with DGA. Ask the group how they could incorporate healthier alternatives on their center menu.

Additional Discussion during the Activity

- Fresh produce doesn't have a food label but fresh fruits and vegetables are always healthy choices.
- Discuss the ingredients list and how to recognize a whole grain and if a product contains a significant amount of whole grains.
- Discuss how to recognize added sugars on the ingredients list.
- Seek foods that contain 0 gram *trans*-fat. When a label shows 0 gram *trans*-fat per serving it may contain up to 0.49 grams of *trans*-fat per serving. Manufacturers are allowed to round down with *trans*-fat.
- *Trans*-fats are a double health threat. They lower the 'good' cholesterol (HDL) and raise the 'bad' cholesterol (LDL). Avoid them.
- Remember to check the serving size. Food you might think is one serving in the package can contain more than one serving size. This may make the food seem lower in calories, fats, etc.



USE THE NUTRITION FACTS LABEL TO EAT HEALTHIER

Check the serving size and number of servings.

- The Nutrition Facts Label information is based on ONE serving, but many packages contain more. Look at the serving size and how many servings you are actually consuming. If you double the servings you eat, you double the calories and nutrients, including the % DVs.
- When you compare calories and nutrients between brands, check to see if the serving size is the same.

Calories count, so pay attention to the amount.

- This is where you'll find the number of calories per serving and the calories from fat in each serving.
- Fat-free doesn't mean calorie-free. Lower fat items may have as many calories as full-fat versions.
- If the label lists that 1 serving equals 3 cookies and 100 calories, and you eat 6 cookies, you've eaten 2 servings, or twice the number of calories and fat.

Look for foods that are rich in these nutrients.

- Use the label not only to limit fat and sodium, but also to increase nutrients that promote good health and may protect you from disease.
- Some Americans don't get enough vitamins A and C, potassium, calcium, and iron, so choose the brand with the higher % DV for these nutrients.
- Get the most nutrition for your calories—compare the calories to the nutrients you would be getting to make a healthier food choice.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)	
Servings Per Container 2	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 250	Calories from Fat 110
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
Trans Fat 3g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 470mg	20%
Potassium 700mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	20%
Iron	4%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Know your fats and reduce sodium for your health.

- To help reduce your risk of heart disease, use the label to select foods that are lowest in saturated fat, trans fat and cholesterol.
- Trans fat doesn't have a % DV, but consume as little as possible because it increases your risk of heart disease.
- The % DV for total fat includes all different kinds of fats.
- To help lower blood cholesterol, replace saturated and trans fats with monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats found in fish, nuts, and liquid vegetable oils.
- Limit sodium to help reduce your risk of high blood pressure.

Reach for healthy, wholesome carbohydrates.

- Fiber and sugars are types of carbohydrates. Healthy sources, like fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains, can reduce the risk of heart disease and improve digestive functioning.
- Whole grain foods can't always be identified by color or name, such as multi-grain or wheat. Look for the "whole" grain listed first in the ingredient list, such as whole wheat, brown rice, or whole oats.
- There isn't a % DV for sugar, but you can compare the sugar content in grams among products.
- Limit foods with added sugars (sucrose, glucose, fructose, corn or maple syrup), which add calories but not other nutrients, such as vitamins and minerals. Make sure that added sugars are not one of the first few items in the ingredients list.

The % Daily Value is a key to a balanced diet.

The % DV is a general guide to help you link nutrients in a serving of food to their contribution to your total daily diet. It can help you determine if a food is high or low in a nutrient—5% or less is low, 20% or more is high. You can use the % DV to make dietary trade-offs with other foods throughout the day. The * is a reminder that the % DV is based on a 2,000-calorie diet. You may need more or less, but the % DV is still a helpful gauge.

For protein, choose foods that are lower in fat.

- Most Americans get plenty of protein, but not always from the healthiest sources.
- When choosing a food for its protein content, such as meat, poultry, dry beans, milk and milk products, make choices that are lean, low-fat, or fat free.

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Audience: Teachers, Cooks & Administrators

Activity 3: MyPyramid Menu Makeover

Preparation Time: 10 min

Activity Time: 20 min

Supplies

photocopies of the child care center's menu for one week for each participant

MyPyramid for Preschoolers poster

pens/pencils

easel

easel pad

marker



Preparation Prior to Class

1. Photocopy a child care center menu for each participant.
2. Look at the child care center's menu and determine areas that need to be improved. Select one day to make over in detail.
3. Assemble the easel and place a pad on the easel.

Implementation

1. Review the messages conveyed by the *MyPyramid* symbol: physical activity, variety, proportionality, moderation, gradual improvement, personalization. (See: *MyPyramid/MyPyramid for Preschoolers*)
2. Review the color bands on *MyPyramid* and what they mean. (See: Color bands on MyPyramid and proportions)
3. Review DGA recommendation to choose foods that limit saturated and *trans* fats, cholesterol, salt and added sugars. (See: Key DGA Recommendations)
4. Pass out copies of the child care center's one week menu.
5. Explain to participants that they are going to make over their menu using the principles behind DGA and *MyPyramid for Preschoolers*.
6. Tell the group that you are going to begin by looking at the week's menu as a whole. Use any problems you've identified on the child care center's menu ahead of time to focus your discussion. Guide the group in discussing the menu by prompting with questions such as:
 - How many times per week is juice served?
 - What kind of meat is being served? Is it high in fat and salt (i.e. nuggets and sticks, high-fat ground beef, hot dogs, bologna, cheese)?
 - How much variety is there? Are you serving the same snacks every day? The same fruit? Are all foods the same texture, the same color? (See: Child care menu planning to put it all together).
 - What kind of cereal is being served? Is it high in sugar?
 - Where could whole grains be included in the menu?

*Underline denotes Points to Cover discussed in the Trainer's Notes in the lesson plan.

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Activity 3: MyPyramid Menu Makeover

Preparation Time: 10 min

Activity Time: 20 min

7. Select one day from the menu to make over in detail with the group. (If there is a large number of participants, divide the class into groups of two or three and have each group make over one day.) Go through each item on the menu asking the group if this is the best choice or if they would like to make a change. Record the new menu on the easel pad.
8. Ask each participant to name one way their center could make their menu more consistent with the DGA.

Additional Discussion during the Activity

- Discuss % fat in ground beef served and strategies for reducing it, such as draining and rinsing. Fat content can drop by 4 or more grams from drained meat with a higher fat content. When you rinse ground beef in a fine strainer or colander, you can further reduce fat by at least 4 or 5 more grams. The leaner the meat, the smaller the effect that draining and rinsing can have on the fat content. Studies show that draining and rinsing ground beef doesn't lower the protein, iron, zinc or vitamin B-12 content of the meat.
- Suggest using ground turkey (without skin) in place of ground beef and using beans/legumes as meat alternates.
- Water should be available to children during the day. Water can be the beverage at snack time and 2 solid foods can be served. Water satisfies thirst without adding sugars and calories.
- Discuss strategies for incorporating whole grains into the menu: buying 100% whole-grain bread; serving whole-wheat English muffins, bagels and waffles; choosing cereals made from whole grains such as Toasted O's (Cheerios) or oatmeal; using half brown rice and half white rice; making muffins or quick breads with half whole-wheat flour and half all purpose flour.
- Discuss reducing the sugar used in baked goods made on site by simply using 1/3 less sugar than called for in any regular recipe.

