

Staff Pages

This Week's Topic: **Vary Your Veggies**
This Week's Lesson: **Vegetable Mystery Bag**

Today in your classroom children learned why it is important to eat colorful vegetables every day.

Vegetables provide vitamins, minerals, and fiber, and they are low in fat and salt.

- On the back of this page is your lesson plan for this week's lesson "Vegetable Mystery Bag." Use this lesson to reinforce the concepts from the Eat Well Play Hard in Child Care Settings (EWPHCCS) lesson provided to your class this week.
- Attached is a parent letter that explains what the children learned from this lesson and includes a fun activity to complete at home. Please make copies and send home following your lesson.

5 Ways to Vary Veggies in Your Classroom



1. **You teach children lessons they'll learn for life.** Help them increase the types of vegetables they like by setting a good example.
2. Each time your class tries a new vegetable, have the **children draw a picture of it.**
3. Have each child **plant a bean seed** and grow bean plants in your classroom.
4. **Children like to try foods they help make.** Set up a "salad making station" and teach them to tear lettuce. Have additional prepared colorful vegetables to add to the lettuce.
5. **Highlight a "Vegetable of the Month"** and plan activities that focus on a vegetable that is in season.



For more EWPHCCS lessons go to: http://www.nyhealth.gov/prevention/nutrition/cacfp/ewphccs_curriculum/index.htm

This Week's Lesson: Vegetable Mystery Bag

Goals & Objectives: To provide children with knowledge and awareness of the importance of eating more vegetables, especially colorful ones.

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Activity Time: 20 minutes

Supplies You Will Need

- Choose 2 or 3 fresh colorful vegetables. Example: carrots, broccoli, cucumbers.
- Cutting board, knife, serving plate or bowl, small plates, small tongs, napkins.
- Small paper lunch bag or mystery box (cut a hole in the side of a cardboard box, large enough for a child to slip a hand and arm through without getting stuck).

Preparation for Activity

- Read through entire lesson.
- Purchase vegetables. Wash and cut into bite size pieces. Place on serving plate or in serving bowl. Save one whole sample of the vegetable for mystery bag/box.
- Place one uncut vegetable into each paper lunch bag or mystery bag/box.

Activity

- 1. Ask the children to wash their hands.** 
- 2. Ask the children what they remember from the nutritionist's visit.** Remind them of the following points:
 - Vegetables come in many colors.
 - Eating a variety of colorful vegetables helps your body grow healthy and strong.
 - Vegetables grow on farms and come fresh, canned, frozen or dried at the store.
 - Vegetables taste great.
- 3. Show children the mystery bag/box.** Ask the children to guess what vegetable is in the bag/box by the way it feels including shape and texture (smooth, rough, hard, soft, etc).
- 4. Take the mystery vegetable out and show them if they guessed correctly.** Discuss the color, shape, feel, and size of the vegetable.
- 5. Cut the mystery vegetable open.** Discuss how the vegetable looks on the inside compared to the outside. Repeat steps 3 to 5 for each vegetable.
- 6. Provide each child with a napkin and a small plate.**
- 7. Pass serving plate or bowl of veggies and small tongs.** Allow children to serve themselves.
- 8. Encourage children to look, touch, smell and then taste the vegetable** (if they choose to do so).
- 9. Ask the children:** What does it smell like? How does it taste? Did you like it?

Adapted from [Grow It Try It Like It! Preschool Fun with Fruits and Vegetables](#)

Extension Activity

Draw a picture of a "soup pot." Ask children to cut out pictures of vegetables and tape them to the pot to make "vegetable soup."

Options

For a CACFP creditable snack prepare enough vegetable for each child to have a ½ cup portion and serve an additional component such as 4 Triscuits[®] to meet the CACFP Healthy Child Meal Pattern. Water must be served with a snack if no beverage is provided.

Dear Parent,

Today your child learned that vegetables come in many colors and that eating a variety of colorful vegetables helps your body grow healthy and strong.

Home Activity: Have a color contest and see how many green, red, yellow, and orange vegetables you can include in one meal.



Tips



- Prepare vegetables together. Teach your child to tear lettuce, or add vegetable toppings to pizza.
 - Children learn from watching you. Eat colorful vegetables and your children will too.
 - Fresh, frozen, and canned vegetables are all smart choices. Buy some of each to last until your next shopping trip.
 - Try to make half your plate vegetables and fruits.
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Make half your plate vegetables and fruits



Put your child in charge. Ask your child to name a vegetable they help prepare. Make a big deal of serving "Maria's Salad" or "Juan's Sweet Potatoes."



Today we made _____.

Directions: Write the name of the vegetable your child helped prepare.
Your child can draw a picture of the vegetable.