

Dear Family Member,



My class is starting a program called *Nutrition Pathfinders* to learn about healthy eating and physical-activity choices. I will be learning to:

- Balance breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks with healthy choices using the five food groups.
- Name the main nutrient and their health benefit for each food group.
- Analyze food packages and advertisements that may influence my food and beverage choices.
- Determine an appropriate serving size using hand symbols and household measures.
- Understand the recommended number of daily servings from each food group.
- Explain the kinds and amounts of moderate-vigorous physical activity needed each day and how physical activity helps learning in school.
- Create a plan and set personal nutrition and physical-activity goals.

After some of the lessons, I will bring home activities that we can do together. At the end of the program, I will bring home a workbook to show you what I learned about good nutrition and physical activity.

Student name: _____

One thing I am excited to learn about making healthy food choices is: _____

Parent name: _____

One thing I am excited for my child to learn about making healthy food choices is: _____

You are an essential part of your child's good health! Start on a new path today by asking your child what he or she has learned in school during the *Nutrition Pathfinders* program. Also, talk to your child about foods from the five food groups that you can add to your shopping list. Post this chart on your refrigerator as a reminder of healthy food choices.

DAIRY GROUP Get your calcium-rich foods	VEGETABLES GROUP Vary your veggies	FRUITS GROUP Focus on fruits	GRAINS GROUP Make half your grains whole	PROTEIN GROUP Go lean on protein

If your child has an allergy, be sure to let his/her teacher know.

The nutrition information in this program is based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, as reflected in the USDA's *MyPlate* food icon.

For more information about good health for your child and your family, visit **HealthyEating.org**.



Better Breakfasts ...

Studies confirm that students who eat breakfast each morning are more attentive in school and perform better on their schoolwork. In less than five minutes, you can put these or other quick breakfast choices on the table—or bag them to eat on the run!

- Cereal, milk and fruit
- Bagel toasted with melted cheese and raisins
- String cheese, whole-wheat crackers and fruit
- Yogurt and fruit smoothies with Graham crackers
- Scrambled eggs, corn tortilla and salsa
- Peanut butter and banana sandwich
- Oatmeal with applesauce and nuts
- Apple slices with peanut butter and a granola bar

Smart Snacking ...

Children actually *need* healthy snacks each day because they have smaller stomachs than adults and, therefore, may fill up quickly at mealtime. Healthy snacks are important for children because they act as “mini-meals,” providing up to one-quarter of your child’s daily energy needs and helping to fill nutrient gaps.

But take care! Constant snacking throughout the day can lead to overeating. And, snacks of “extra” foods—those filled with sugar and fat (e.g., candy, cookies, chips, regular soft drinks)—do **not** help fill nutrient gaps.

Here are some ideas for nutritious, tasty, child-friendly snacks:

- Peanut butter or cheese on whole-wheat crackers
- Fruit (fresh or dried)
- Low-fat yogurt
- Raw, crunchy vegetables (cut into small pieces) and served with dip (*optional*)
- String cheese
- Quesadilla: whole-wheat or corn tortilla with grated, melted cheese



Rainbow Pizza (on our website at HealthyEating.org)

Top English muffins with veggies and cheese for a healthy and colorful pizza!

Total preparation time: less than 15 minutes. Cook time: less than 15 minutes. Serves 6.

Ingredients

3 English muffins, split (6 halves)

½ cup Pizza or Pasta sauce

½ cup Mozzarella cheese, grated

Pizza toppings (choose any three):

Grated Carrots

Chopped Broccoli

Pineapple chunks

Chopped green or red Pepper

Sliced Zucchini

Preparation

1. Spread about one tablespoon sauce on each muffin half.
2. Arrange your favorite toppings on the “crust” in a single layer. Use at least three colors.
3. Sprinkle one tablespoon cheese on each pizza.
4. Place pizzas on a baking dish and bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes, or until cheese is melted.