

Early Childhood Teaching Resource 2009

Growing Healthy Bodies



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Te Whāriki Early Childhood Curriculum Links



Principles

Holistic Development/Kotahitanga: recognising the importance of sustained healthy food choices and its impact on physical, cognitive, social, emotional and spiritual development.

Empowerment/Whakamana: to create learning opportunities for young children that promote critical thinking and enable children to learn and grow.

Family and Community/Whānau Tangata: involving the wider world of family/whānau and community in creating healthy food environments.

Relationships/Ngā Hononga: experiencing responsive and reciprocal relationships with friends, teachers, and whānau with regard to healthy food choices.

Links to the Essential Areas of Learning and Development

Strand 1. Well-being/Mana Atua

Children experience an environment where all dimensions of health are nurtured and promoted. Children will begin to develop a greater understanding of the impact that healthy food choices have on their wellbeing and the role that fruit and vegetables play with regard to this.

Strand 2. Belonging/Mana Whenua

By exploring the theme “Growing Healthy Bodies” children will be able to make links between the learning experiences in their early childhood setting, their family and the wider world.

Strand 3. Contribution/Mana Tangata

Children will collaborate with adults and other children to engage in rich learning opportunities that will affirm their individual character, strengths and differences.

Strand 4. Communication/Mana Reo

Children will have opportunities to learn vocabulary and symbols associated with physical growth, personal well-being and fruit/vegetables. Learning activities will further support children in discovering different ways to be creative and expressive.

Strand 5. Exploration/Mana Aotūroa

Children will have a variety of learning opportunities designed to assist them in making sense of their natural, social, physical and material world. These will include planting, growing and food preparation/tasting activities, stories, art, collage and physical movement.



S-T-R-E-T-C-H and Grow



- Read/tell the story of “The Very Hungry Caterpillar” by Eric Carle. Compare and contrast the nutritional needs and physical growth of the caterpillar to that of the children.
- Focusing on the fruit that is eaten from Monday to Friday what do we notice about it? (E.g. have pips or seeds, colours of the rainbow).
- Brainstorm words that describe each of the fruit and our feelings when eating them.
- What do you think the caterpillar would say if he was to tell you about the food he was eating each day? Turn to a partner – imagine you are the caterpillar having just eaten the fruit of the day. Describe what it was like.
- What happens to the caterpillar when he eats the fruit?
- Why do you think he is so hungry?
- Talk about the life cycle of the caterpillar – egg – larvae – pupa – butterfly.
- Using music and props e.g. scarves, ribbons, streamers, blankets and playground equipment, have the children move to the music acting out the lifecycle of the caterpillar.
- *Looking at some of the clothes they used to wear and baby photos, ask the children: How do you know if you have grown? (Clothes don't fit, shoes don't fit, hair changed, weigh more, play with different toys).*
- *Do we all grow at the same speed? (Talk about how all children grow every day, and that children grow at different speeds).*
- *Who else in your family is growing?*
- *In what ways are Mum/Dad still growing? (Hair, fingernails, ears, nose).*
- *What can we do to help our bodies grow and be healthy? (Play and be active, eat healthy foods, eat a variety of foods, eat breakfast, choose and eat healthy snacks).*
- *How are we similar to the caterpillar? (Need energy and nutrients from food for physical change).*
- Establish a Growth/Height chart in your centre so the children can plot their growth pattern over the year.
- Enjoy a picnic with all the foods (and more) that “The Very Hungry Caterpillar” ate.



S-T-R-E-T-C-H and Grow

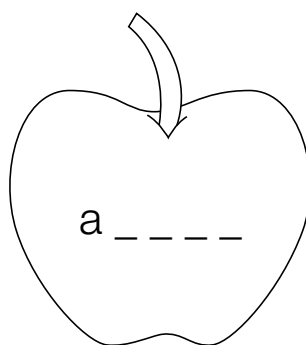


What goes where

- Draw an outline of a child's body on a large piece of paper. Have pictures of body parts familiar to the children (brain, eyes, teeth, mouth, tongue, stomach etc.). Include some unfamiliar pictures too e.g. intestines. Children hypothesize by placing the picture/body part where they think it belongs on the body (help children to amend if necessary). Have a general discussion about the function of the body parts and simplify the process of digestion (perhaps drawing it with children's help onto the body outline). Why is it important to look after our body? What do the body parts do with the food we eat? (Green vegetables help our teeth grow strong, carrots help our eyes adjust to different lights etc). How does food help our body to heal and to grow? Fruit and vegetables have extra special benefits for growing bodies - discuss some of these with the children (refer to the 5+ A Day website for Nutritional Facts).
- This activity can be reproduced as a memory game children can play independently.
- Compliment this activity by reading "Doctor Dog" by Babette Cole.



- Use a variety of fruit and vegetable graphics (including those that the hungry caterpillar ate) to make language cue cards.



Growing Activities



Cress Cross or Mustard Maze

You will need:

Unwanted ice cube trays or egg cartons

Cress or mustard seeds

How to grow:

1. Make chequerboard pattern by placing a little potting mix in alternate compartments.
2. Sprinkle seeds over potting mix.
3. Water gently and observe and discuss daily changes.



What helps the plants to grow? How are growing seeds like growing children?

Enjoy some cress or mustard sprouts in a salad or sandwich.

Different people, different tastes

Pizza Art

- Children design a healthy pizza on a paper plate. Use a selection of coloured paper, yellow glitter, seasonings, red paint for the tomato sauce and other materials that represent different fruit/vegetables. Children create a healthy pizza they would like to eat e.g. green pepper (green paper); brown mushroom (brown paper); tomato (red paper); cheese (yellow yarn). Challenge the children to put on one type of vegetable that they would not normally choose but would be willing to give a go. Learning to understand that different people have different preferences, children can discuss what they like and dislike about the chosen food in each other's pizzas.
- Extension: Children make their own real Pita Bread pizza.

Yay! Nay!

Have a selection of fresh fruit and vegetables cut up in bite size pieces.

- Draw a four-column chart and title it "Taste Testing".
- Write "fruit/vegetable" at the top of the first column. Draw a smiley face for the second column and a frowning face for the third column. For the fourth column, draw a face with eyes and closed lips/mouth (straight line).
- Write/draw or stick a picture of the food children are to taste in the first column.

Employing the challenge by choice concept, invite children to taste the food.

- Ask students to give a smiley face if they liked the fruit or vegetable tasted. Have students help you count how many smiles there are. Record the number in the smiling face column.
- Then ask students to frown if they "did not like" the fruit or vegetable. Record the number in the frowning face column.
- Finally, ask how many did not taste the fruit or vegetable. Record the number in the "lips" column.
- Repeat with other produce.

Discuss the chart, talking about "likes" or "dislikes" of food, and how different people have different tastes and reasons why that may be (taste buds, familiarity, etc.) Congratulate the children for taking a taste test. Remind them that sometimes they will not like a new taste, and that's okay. What is important is for children to be "food tasters" and to always give nutritious foods a try.

Growing Activities



Big Dippers

Using the chart on page 5, add to it with this activity. Cut up a selection of fruit or vegetables to be used as dipper sticks. Having a selection of dips available, (e.g. hummus, salsa, yoghurt and fruit dips, guacamole, etc.), children select a dipper stick of their choice to test out each dip. Record reactions to each food as outlined above. Congratulate children on the number of “new” foods they have tried.

Discuss how using dipper sticks is a good way to try out new foods and eat a selection of yummy fruit/vegetables.



Fridge snack box

- Discuss the role of snacks (snacking on small amounts of nutritious food at set times throughout the day can keep your energy level high and your mind alert). Have a selection of healthy snacks available for the children to try (e.g. mini carrots, celery and pepper sticks, chopped fruit in cups, pineapple on a stick)
- Children to communicate with each other, what snacks they like and why (remind children of the snacks tried in the Yay Nay and Big Dipper activity above).
- Using grocery advertising flyers and other food pictures, children cut out examples of healthy snacks that they may enjoy and stick them onto the template of the snack box indicating healthy snack foods they would enjoy eating at snack times. Encourage children to include a range of snacks especially fruit/vegetable options.
- Put a magnet strip on the back of the snack box poster, children take home their snack box poster to put on the fridge. Encourage children to communicate their preferences by sharing snack box suggestions with family members.



Mix It Up



Lets go shopping!!

- Ask questions like: *What is your favourite vegetable? Which do you like better; raw or cooked vegetables? Have you ever grown vegetables? What do vegetables need to grow? Place a variety of fresh vegetables on a workspace. How many of these vegetables can you name? How might you group these vegetables? Which of these vegetables do you eat at home?*
- Using grocery shopping flyers help children write out/draw a fruit/vegetable shopping list
- Role play "Going shopping". Carefully select fruit and vegetables to put in your shopping basket, go to the checkout to pay.
- Role play reading and following a recipe.

Superduper Soup

- Introduce verbs: wash, peel, cut, measure.
- Children assist in the process of making vegetable soup.
- Invite parents in for lunch, share the soup and have children explain the process to their parents.
- **My very own talking book.** Children draw pictures or take photos of the soup making process. Making their own picture book/electronic story book.
- Record children retelling the process of soup making. Prompt with questions if necessary. *What are the most important ingredients to put in the soup? What is the first thing the cook has to do? What is the hardest part of making soup? How long does the soup have to cook? How does the soup smell when it is cooked? What does the soup taste like? What would be a good name for this soup?* Burn their recording onto CD.
- Children take picture book and CD home to enjoy.

Fingerlicious Fruit and Vegetables

Make finger or stick puppets of various fruit and vegetables. Have children tell all they know about the puppet they are holding. With other children and their puppets encourage children to create their own fruit and vegetable stories. Support them if necessary by brainstorming story starters. E.g. The day in the life of a peach. How healthy am I? How Charlie Carrot won a place in the soup. How Percy Parsnip made his way into the shopping cart. Fighting for space in the vegetable patch.

Alternative:

Children make up tunes to sing with puppets e.g. to the tune of five green apples.

*Mary had a bean growing on a vine,
Mary had a bean growing on a vine
She picked the bean and put it in the stew
One less bean growing on the vine.*



Early Childhood Resources

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Visit www.5aday.co.nz to order extra resources if required.

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PO Box 66047, Beach Haven, Auckland. Unit H, Chelsea Park, 162 Mokoia Road, Birkenhead. Ph: 09 480 5057 Fax: 09 480 5058 Web: www.5aday.co.nz