

Young Families

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A family-focused newsletter with young children in mind

Include Healthy Foods and Exercise in Summer Family Plans

Summer is here. It's hot, and the kids are out of school. What plans are in store for your family? Do those plans include physical activities and eating nutritious foods? Exercising and eating a balanced diet can become family goals. Each member of the family, depending on the age, can plan family activities that include some form of exercise and a nutritious snack or meal. Each member can plan one day, one weekend, or one week. It doesn't matter what schedule a family follows, just as long as each member is able to get a turn.

Parents and grandparents can teach children games they used to play as kids. Kids can teach their parents and grandparents games they are playing today. Be creative; make up games. Just have fun and get the family moving. The Dietary

Guidelines for Americans 2005 recommends children should take part in at least 60 minutes of physical activities on most days of the week.

Snacks can be as simple as a piece of fresh fruit or vegetables. Lunch can be as simple as a peanut butter and jelly sandwich on whole wheat bread, apple slices, carrots, and low-fat milk. Make sure fruits and vegetables are cut into bite-size pieces for small children.

Have fun, be active, and eat right!

Below is a recipe from the Kids a Cookin' Web site www.kidsacookin.ksu.edu to get you started. Check out the site for more ideas.

Frozen Fruit Cup

- 3 bananas
- 3 containers (8 ounces each) fat-free strawberry yogurt

- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen strawberries, thawed and undrained
- 1 can (8 ounces) crushed pineapple, undrained

Directions:

1. Line 18 muffin-tin cups with paper baking cups.
2. Dice or mash bananas and place in a large mixing bowl.
3. Stir in remaining ingredients.
4. Spoon into muffin-tin cups and freeze at least 3 hours or until firm. Remove frozen cups and store in a plastic bag in freezer.
5. Before serving, remove paper cups and let stand 10 minutes.

Tanda Kidd

kidd@humec.ksu.edu

Take Early Steps to Confront Bullying by Building Self-Respect

Preschool children sometimes argue and fight with their peers. Aggression in young children, however, lacks the predatory nature of true bullying. While young children are self-centered and protective, older children understand that others have a unique personal experience. This knowledge creates a vulnerability that did not exist during the early years. True bullying is predatory because it undermines another's self-worth and status within the peer group. Bullying is nasty because its goal is to crumble another person's dignity.

Don't wait till bullying first appears. Prepare children to respond to this assault during their first six years. The most important step is to build a foundation of self-respect. Taking time to play with your children and listening to their ideas and stories strengthens their belief in themselves. They feel worthy in the eyes of someone they love. This belief will help your children when they face the test of peer pressure. For more information about nurturing self-respect, take the free "I'm Positive" course at www.ksu.edu/wwparent/courses/ip/ and visit www.ksu.edu/wwparent/hero/.

Charles A. Smith,
casmith@ksu.edu

Are Food Allergies Part of Childhood?

Many children suffer from one or more food allergies – an exaggerated immune response triggered by a specific food. While many people have food intolerances, true food allergies are less common. In a food allergy, the immune system produces antibodies and histamine in response to the specific food.

Any food could cause an allergic reaction, but some foods are known to be likely culprits. In children, the most common food allergens are: *eggs, peanuts, milk, soy, tree nuts, wheat, and shellfish.*

Fortunately, many children will outgrow allergies to milk, egg, wheat, and soy by the time they are five years old if they avoid the offending foods when they are young. Allergies to peanuts, tree nuts, and shellfish tend to be life-long. It is controversial whether food additives such as dyes, thick-

eners and preservatives cause true allergic reactions.

While fewer than 1 percent of Americans have true food allergies, the symptoms of a food allergy can be severe, even fatal in extreme cases. Symptoms that may occur after eating an offending food include scratchy throat; hives; shortness of breath; wheezing; itching of the mouth throat, eyes, skin or any area; swelling of the eyelids, face, lips and tongue; and anaphylaxis – a severe, whole-body allergic reaction that can result in death.

If you suspect your child has food allergies, contact your physician about testing. There is no cure for food allergies, but there are some known methods of preventing them before they occur. Breastfeeding helps prevent allergies, and delayed introduction of allergy-causing foods to infants until the digestive

system is mature is known to be effective.

Sources:

American Academy of Allergy Asthma and Immunology Web site: www.aaaai.org.

Medline Plus Medical Encyclopedia: Food Allergy.

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000817.htm>

Sandy Procter

procter@humecc.ksu.edu

Kitchen Safety: Change Kitchen Dishcloths Often

Busy cooks rely on dishcloths and towels for untold numbers of chores in the kitchen, but it is important to change dishcloths and towels daily.

Dishcloths and towels should be washed in hot, soapy water. A dirty dishcloth is a perfect breeding ground for bacteria, and it could spread germs. Throw out old, dirty or smelly sponges or wash them in a bleach-water solution.

For more kitchen tips, family-friendly cooking tips and recipes, visit the Kids a Cookin' Web site at: www.kidsacookin.ksu.edu.

Kathy Walsten.

walsten@humecc.ksu.edu

Couples Should Maintain Friendship for Successful Marriage

Researchers who study couple relationships suggest that it is very important to maintain your friendship with each other. By being friends with each other, you will be kinder and gentler with each other when tough issues come up. You also will have a happier and more satisfying relationship.

How does one be good friends with their spouse or partner? In the book "The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work," John Gottman suggests that partners keep updated on each other's likes and dislikes as well as each other's "deepest longings, beliefs, and fears." He calls it knowing your partner's love maps. For instance, here are a few ques-

tions he suggests to keep up-to-date with your partner: 1. Name my two closest friends. 2. What do I most like to do with time off? 3. What makes me feel most competent? 4. Name one of my hobbies. 5. What am I most sad about?

He suggests 55 more questions to know about your partner. Some answers may not change over time, but other answers will change as a person goes through life.

Keeping tuned into what is going on with your mate and having satisfying conversations are important for maintaining that friendship.

Charlotte Shoup Olsen

colsen@oznet.ksu.edu

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