



2024-2025

Nutrition &  
Physical Activity

**CLASSROOM  
CALENDAR**



PoeCenter™  
The Alice Aycock Poe Center for Health Education

[www.poehealth.org](http://www.poehealth.org)



## Are you looking for new ways to include more nutrition and physical activity in your classroom? The Poe Center can help.

Research shows that kids who are physically active and eat well learn better. The Poe Center for Health Education has developed the Nutrition & Physical Activity Classroom Calendar with that in mind.

Designed based on teacher feedback, this calendar features useful health information along with easy-to-use activities to integrate nutrition and physical activity into the classroom throughout the year.

**THEMED MONTHS**  
Each month highlights a unique aspect of nutrition or physical activity with useful information to aid learning.

**BRAIN BOOSTERS**  
Exercise activities put learning into action and create opportunities to energize the day.

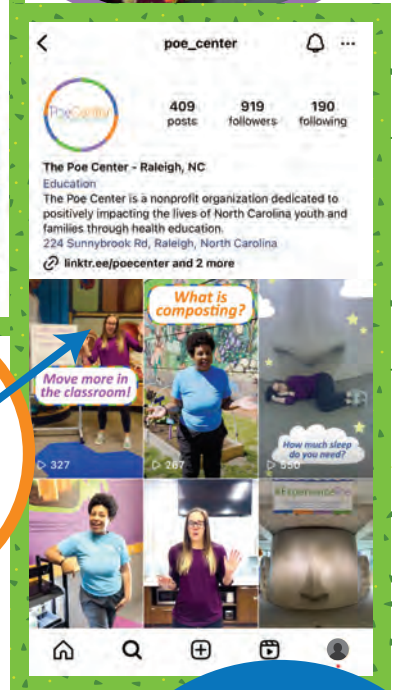
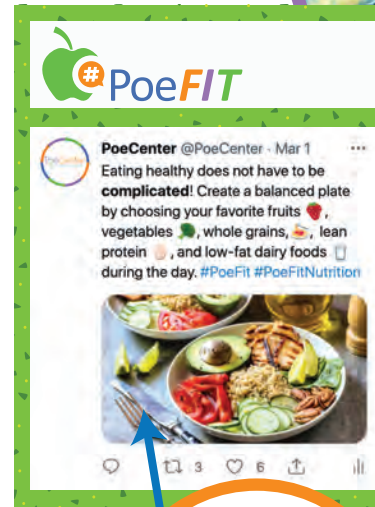
**SNACKTIVITIES**  
Food activities encourage students to make nutritious choices for snacks and meals.

**RESOURCES**  
Go to [www.poehealth.org](http://www.poehealth.org) for a list of references and more great nutrition and fitness activities to try.

**DAILY FUN**  
Fun observances throughout the year to celebrate nutrition and physical activity, gardening, and cultural diversity in the classroom all year long.

Visit [www.poehealth.org](http://www.poehealth.org), call **866.402.4799**, or email [info@poehealth.org](mailto:info@poehealth.org) to plan a program.

**Here's to a healthy and happy academic year!**



Follow us on X @PoeCenter and on Instagram @poe\_center for our series, #PoeFit. Learn about healthy eating, exercise, and gardening.

**Want More Info?**  
A list of references used to develop this calendar along with resources for more great activities is available on our website at: [www.poehealth.org](http://www.poehealth.org)

## #ExperiencePoe

Theater, lab, museum, playground, there are many ways to learn about health at the Poe Center. We offer a variety of nutrition and physical activity programs for Pre-K through 12th grades and adults. Bring your class to us, or we can come to you in-person or online.

**Plan a field trip with Poe today!**

### ON-SITE: Come to Us!

Engage with museum-quality exhibits, interactive technology, and hands-on learning.

- ✓ **Seven Themed Teaching Theaters** - Larger-than-life props and engaging activities immerse participants into each health topic.
- ✓ **Cranium Connection** - Explore the wonders of the brain in Poe's giant head and independent learning centers.
- ✓ **GrowWELL Garden** - Learn about growing fruits and vegetables, why pollinators matter, how to compost, and the science of plants.
- ✓ **CookWELL Kitchen** - Create healthy snacks and meals while learning about food science and kitchen skills.
- ✓ **WakeMed's PlayWELL Park** - Put learning into action at Poe's body-systems-themed playground.

### OFF-SITE: We'll Come to You!

Bring any of our programs directly to your school or organization. Book a single program or a series.

### ONLINE: We're just a click away, and we're virtual!

- ✓ **Online Programming** - Poe's vital educational programming is available online via video-conference.
- ✓ **Online Experiences** - Use Poe's beautifully designed virtual field trip website and interactive online exhibits to supplement classroom instruction on a wide range of health-science topics.

**The Poe Universe Virtual Field Trip | Online CookWELL Kitchen  
Poe & Grow Garden | Health History Mural | Prescription Medicine Safety Toolkit**



Classes align with the NC Department of Public Instruction's Healthful Living & Science Essential Standards.

Schools with **50% or more** of students receiving free or reduced lunches are eligible for nutrition & physical activity programs at **NO CHARGE.**



# DRINK MORE WATER

Water is a **vital nutrient**. All living things need it for survival.

Did you know over **60% of your body** is made of water?

Water regulates body temperature, lubricates joints, **nourishes the brain** and spinal cord, and more.

Kids need **4-8 cups** of water every day.

**What else does water do for your body?**

- Energizes muscles
- Helps your lungs
- Flushes body waste
- Helps your kidneys
- Regulates body temperature
- Cushions your brain
- Boosts skin health
- Helps your eyes

## Snacktivity



### MAKE FLAVORED WATER GRADES K-8

- Choose a fruit that is ripe and in season. Blackberries, blueberries, lemons, raspberries, peaches, and melons are in-season fruits in August.
- Cut fruit into small pieces, about the size of a quarter.
- Fill a pitcher with cold water and fresh fruit. Let it sit while students do exercises. Pick your favorite exercise, and do it in place.
- When students finish exercises, give each student a cup filled with water and a small amount of fruit.

Seymour says:



"Choose water instead of sugary drinks."

## August 2024

National Water Quality Month

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
National Water Quality Month				World Breastfeeding Week		Watermelon Day
4 National Friendship Day Farmers' Market Week	5	6	7	8	9 Book Lovers' Day	10
11	12	13 Left Handers' Day	14	15 Relaxation Day	16 Tell a Joke Day	17 Honey Bee Day
18	19	20	21	22	23	24 Waffle Day
25 Dog Day	26	27	28	29	30	31 Trail Mix Day

# FRESH & FUN SNACKING

When preparing a healthy snack, include at least **two food groups**.

Healthy snacks are a great way to stay **energized and focused**.

Limit **highly processed snacks**, which are high in sugar, salt, and fat, and provide little lasting energy.

Fruits and veggies are **delicious and easy** options when choosing healthy snacks.

Try these delicious food group combos!

- Fruit & Dairy
- Veggies & Protein
- Whole Grains & Veggies

## Classroom Activity



### MAKING KALE PESTO

GRADES K-ADULT

#### Ingredients:

- 1 ½ cups chopped kale, stems removed
- ½ cup fresh basil leaves
- ½ cup olive oil
- 1 clove garlic
- Juice of 1 lemon
- Salt to taste
- ¼ cup walnuts
- ¼ cup pine nuts
- ¼ cup Parmesan cheese (optional)

#### Instructions:

- 1 Add kale, basil, olive oil, garlic, and lemon into the food processor and pulse/blend until smooth.
- 2 Add nuts, salt, and cheese and pulse until smooth.
- 3 Serve as a dip with veggies or whole grain crackers.
- 4 Or, serve as a sauce mixed into pasta.

Seymour says:



"Try to include a fruit or vegetable in every snack choice."

## September 2024

Fruits and Veggies: More Matters Month

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Whole Grains Month	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 Family Meal Month	9 Labor Day	10	11 9/11 Day of Service & Remembrance	12 Cheese Pizza Day Create a healthy version with whole grain crust and lots of veggies!	13 Read a Book Day	14 Acorn Squash Day
15 Suicide Prevention Week	16	17 Ants on a Log Day	18	19 Day of Encouragement	20 Kids Take Over the Kitchen Day	21
22 Keep Kids Creative Week, Child Passenger Safety Week	23	24	25 National Women's Health and Fitness Day	26 Talk Like a Pirate Day	27	28 Boys' and Girls' Club Day For Kids
29 First Day of Fall	30	31 National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month	1 National Self-Care Awareness Month	2 Better Breakfast Day	3 National Hispanic Heritage Month: Sept 15 - Oct 15	4 National North Carolina Day

## Brain Booster: Yoga and Meditation



### TREE POSE 2 minutes total



- 1 Stand with feet together and arms at your sides.
- 2 Raise right foot and place it on inner left thigh, toes pointing down.
- 3 Raise arms to the sky and place palms together.
- 4 Balance in this position for 1 minute, then switch sides.

### TRIANGLE 2 minutes total



- 1 Separate feet so they are a little wider than hips.
- 2 Turn right foot out 90 degrees and left foot in slightly.
- 3 Inhale and raise both arms to shoulder level.
- 4 Place right hand on right leg and raise left hand up towards the sky, looking at left hand.
- 5 Inhale and come up, then repeat on other side.

### DOWNWARD DOG 2 minutes total



- 1 Separate feet wide apart and turn them in slightly.
- 2 Exhale, bend forward, and place hands on the floor between feet shoulder-width apart.
- 3 Place hands on hips, inhale, and come up.
- 4 Repeat.

### MEDITATION RELAXATION 5-10 minutes



- 1 Sit up straight in a cross-legged position.
- 2 Place hands on stomach.
- 3 Inhale expanding stomach like a balloon.
- 4 Exhale. Completely empty lungs.
- 5 Clear your mind. It may help to repeat a single word, such as "om," softly in your mind.

# MENTAL WELLNESS

**Wellness means having a healthy body, healthy mind, and healthy relationships.**

Having a healthy mind is called "mental wellness," and is important for everyone. Mental wellness includes having healthy thoughts, feelings, and relationships with friends and family. Sometimes when we are stressed or anxious, we can take that out on other people by way of anger or other big feelings. Learning and practicing this month's tips will positively impact mental wellness and help regulate emotions!

## WAYS TO HELP MAINTAIN MENTAL WELLNESS



#### CONNECT WITH OTHERS.

Develop positive relationships. Spend time with people who care about you and are fun to be around.



#### BE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE.

Exercise can reduce stress, alleviate anxiety, and improve self-confidence. Try activities until you find one you love doing.



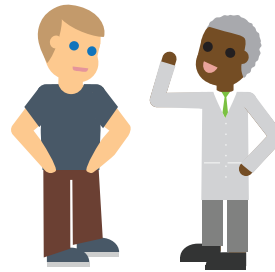
#### GET ENOUGH SLEEP.

Studies have suggested that a good night's sleep helps foster both mental and emotional resilience.



#### DEVELOP COPING SKILLS.

These skills can help reduce anxiety during stressful situations. Try meditation, reading, humor, hobbies, exercise, or friendships. Find what works best for you.



#### GET PROFESSIONAL HELP IF YOU NEED IT.

If anxiety or stress are making life hard, talk to a trusted adult about getting help.



#### BREATHE.

Taking just a few minutes daily to reset your perspective. Try five slow breaths in and out of your nose. This will reduce and ease the body's reaction to stress.

Seymour says:



"Daily exercise can make you feel happy, more confident, and less stressed out."

# October 2024

National Stop Bullying Month

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
National Book Month Eat Better, Eat Together Month	Spinach Lovers' Month Bullying Prevention Awareness Month	1 Homemade Cookie Day Mental Illness Awareness Week	2 Rosh Hashanah	3 Taco Day/ World Animal Day	4 Yom Kippur Coming Out Day	5 Farmers' Day
6	7 World Day of Bullying Prevention School Lunch Week	8	9 Walk & Roll To School Day	10	11	12
13	14 Indigenous Peoples' Day Columbus Day	15	16	17 Pasta Day	18	19
20	21	22	23	24 Food Day	25	26 Pumpkin Day
27	28 Chocolate Day	29 Oatmeal Day	30	31 Halloween	National Hispanic Heritage Month: Sept 15 - Oct 15	

## Morning Wake-Up



### "IF YOU LIKE..." GRADES: K-5

Play this "morning wake-up" game in the classroom to get moving, energize your bodies, and get those brains ready to learn. It's time to wake up!

- 1 Give students options. For example: chocolate or vanilla. Reading or math. Sweet or salty.
- 2 Assign a movement to each option. For example, wave your hands in the air for chocolate, and twist side to side for vanilla.
- 3 Call out an option: "If you like chocolate...wave those hands! If you like vanilla, twist those bodies!"
- 4 Play 6-8 rounds, with the last round being a breathing activity. Try 4-4-4 breathing: breathe in for 4 seconds, hold for 4 seconds, and breathe out for 4 seconds.

Note: Be sure to include movement modifications for students with limited mobility.



# ACTIVE CLASSROOMS

Did you know? Kids need at least **60 minutes of exercise each day**. Try adding some of those minutes of movement into the classroom! Physical activity can help in so many ways:



**INCREASE TEAMWORK**



**HELP STUDENTS FEEL BETTER**



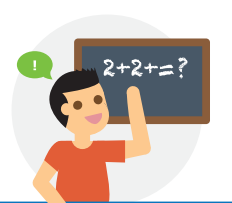
**REDUCE ANXIETY**



**STRENGTHEN BONES AND MUSCLES**



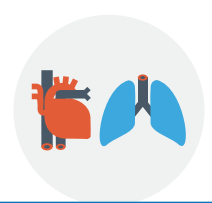
**INCREASE ENERGY**



**HELP KIDS RETAIN ACADEMIC CONTENT**



**HELP STUDENTS FOCUS AND LEARN**



**STRENGTHEN HEART AND LUNGS**

## WORK MOVEMENT INTO ANY LESSON

### Working on English?

Assign movements to different parts of speech: nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc.

Have students identify which is which by doing the assigned movement.

"Is this a noun? Twist side to side. If it's a verb, touch your toes!"

### Working on Math?

Try Yoga Math. Assign a pose to each number, 1-10.

Present math problems with answers between one and ten.

Have students solve the problem, and then do the corresponding pose to show they've finished the math problem!

### For students with limited mobility, try these movements:

- Waving hands over heads
- Nodding heads
- Wiggling toes or feet
- Twisting torso side to side
- Reaching for the ceiling

Seymour says:



"All activity counts, even short bursts of movement have great benefits!"

# November 2024

American Diabetes Month

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 Diwali Dia de los Muertos	2
3 Sandwich Day Daylight Savings Ends	4 National Family Literacy Month	5	6	7	8	9
10	11 Veterans Day	12 Election Day	13	14 World Kindness Day	15 Clean Out Your Refrigerator Day	16
17 Take a Hike Day American Education Week	18	19	20	21 Great American Smokeout	22	23
24	25	26	27	28 Eat A Cranberry Day Thanksgiving	29 Flossing Day	30

## Snacktivity



### TURKEY CUPS! GRADES: K-5

#### Ingredients:

- Small, holiday-themed paper cups
- Hummus
- Baby carrots
- Red, yellow, and orange pepper slices
- Cucumber slices or raw string beans
- Pretzels (optional)

These turkey cups include the vegetables and protein food groups from MyPlate. The colorful vegetables are good sources of vitamins and minerals.

Hummus is a lean source of protein made from chickpeas. Pretzels may be added to include the grains food group.

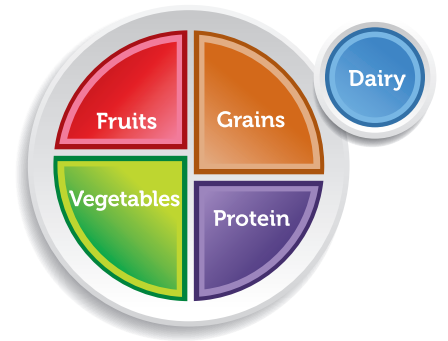
- 1 Have students color and cut turkey face. Go to this blog to print: [blog.chickabug.com/printable-turkey-snack](http://blog.chickabug.com/printable-turkey-snack)
- 2 Put 2 tablespoons of hummus (can also use low-fat ranch) in paper cups.
- 3 Cut vegetables into sticks about 4-5 inches long.
- 4 Place veggies in hummus in any order.
- 5 Glue turkey face to front of paper cup.
- 6 **ENJOY!**



# MyPlate

## Use MyPlate to navigate healthy eating.

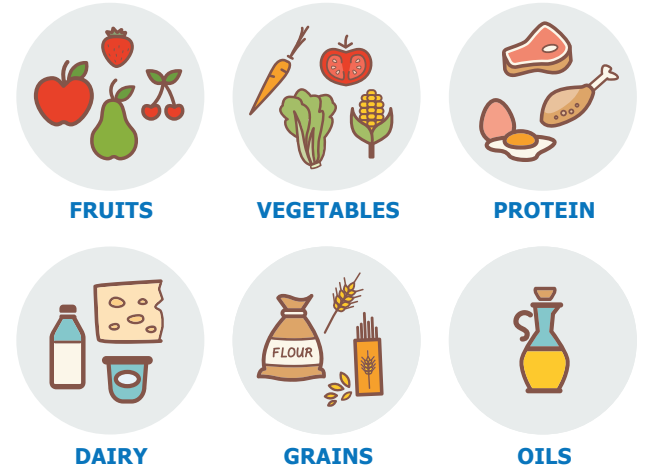
There is a lot to celebrate this time of year, and it is often done while enjoying food and time together with friends and family. In the midst of all the celebrations, you can make healthy choices and enjoy the holiday season. MyPlate can help you enjoy your favorite holiday meals and make fresh, tasty choices. Let's make a balanced, nutritious meal!



## BUILD A FOUNDATION FOR HEALTHY EATING AT EVERY STAGE OF LIFE BY STARTING SIMPLE WITH MYPLATE.

- 1 **Follow a healthy eating pattern every day.**  
No two bodies are the same, so find your own nutritious eating style and stick to it. MyPlate can help you choose a balance of the 5 food groups: fruits, grains, vegetables, protein, and dairy.
- 2 **Focus on variety, nutrient density, and "how much."** To get your vitamins, minerals, and nutrients, choose a variety of nutrient-dense foods across and within all the food groups in recommended amounts.
- 3 **Limit added sugars and saturated fats, and reduce sodium intake.** Try foods and drinks that are low in sugars, saturated fats, and sodium (salt). Try having an apple instead of apple juice, or baked chicken instead of fried chicken. These choices can be just as delicious.
- 4 **Switch up your food and beverage choices.** Choose nutrient-dense foods and beverages across and within all food groups. Consider your culture and personal preferences to make these shifts easier.
- 5 **Support healthy eating patterns for everyone.** If you can, ask for different lunch options in your cafeteria or in your packed lunch. Switch it up until you find nourishing foods that you love.

### A healthy eating pattern includes:



### Choose foods low in:



Seymour says:



# December 2024

Healthy Holidays

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Eat a Red Apple Day	2	3 #GivingTuesday	4	5	6	7 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
8 Handwashing Awareness Week	9	10 Human Rights Day	11 Gingerbread House Day	12	13	14
15	16	17	18 Oatmeal Muffin Day	19	20	21 First Day Of Winter
22	23	24	25 Hanukkah Christmas Day	26 Kwanzaa	27	28
29	30	31 New Year's Eve				

## Snacktivity



### MINI MYPLATE PIZZAS

GRADES: K-8

#### Ingredients:

- Mini whole-grain bagels or English muffins
- Tomato sauce
- Part-skim mozzarella cheese
- Grilled chicken
- Other toppings may include: sliced tomatoes, spinach, pineapple, or broccoli

These mini pizzas are a delicious and filling snack that includes all five food groups of the MyPlate!

Choose whole-grain bagels (grain), fresh tomato sauce (vegetable), part-skim mozzarella cheese (dairy), grilled chicken (protein), and your choice of crunchy fruit or vegetables (fruit/vegetable).

- 1 Cut mini bagels in half.
- 2 Place a tablespoon of tomato sauce on top of bagel slice.
- 3 Sprinkle with cheese.
- 4 Top with chicken pieces and a few slices of fresh fruit or veggies. Note: green veggies go best under cheese.
- 5 Place in toaster oven until cheese melts and bagel is toasted.
- 6 **ENJOY!**



# RESILIENCY

## It's a new year.

The transition back to school can be tough sometimes, and starting a new year can seem overwhelming. There are tools, physical activities, and techniques you can use to stay **resilient**, which means strong and ready to take on challenges. Self-care is an important part of resiliency.

**Here are some ways to encourage resiliency by including self-care in your day.**



### MAKE REACHABLE GOALS

Try "habit stacking:" Pair exercises with everyday activities.

Ex.: Do 10 crunches after brushing your teeth.

Add movement breaks into the day.

Track the time exercised or write down movements or exercises that you've tried.

Celebrate successes and challenges you've overcome!



### TAKE A WALK TO RESET

Walk or march in place. Speed up. Now, walk or march even faster. What do you notice? Is your breathing faster? How is your heart rate? Are your muscles warm?

This activity will wake up the body and reset the mind, preparing you to take on challenges.



### TAKE A SIP TO RESET

Try this activity to "reset."

Take a sip of water. Is it hot? Cold? Warm?

What's the taste? How are you breathing? Deep or shallow?

How is your heart rate, fast, or is it slow?

Spend a few moments in this practice, noticing any sensations in the body.



### TRY A BREATHING EXERCISE

Gently inhale through the nose for 4 seconds.

Hold at the top of the breath for 4 seconds.

Gently exhale through the mouth for 4 seconds.

Pause at the bottom of the breath and hold for 4 seconds.

Repeat 4 times or until calm.

Seymour says:



"Make your plate half fruits and vegetables."

# January 2025

Family Fit Lifestyle Month

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 New Year's Day Kwanzaa Hanukkah	2	3	4 Spaghetti Day
5 National Mentoring Month	6 Bean Day	7	8 Bubble Bath Day	9 Apricot Day	10	11 Milk Day
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19 Popcorn Day	20 Cheese Lovers' Day Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. (observed)	21	22	23	24 National Compliment Day Peanut Butter Day	25
26 Green Juice Day	27 Blueberry Pancake Day	28	29 Lunar New Year	30	31	



## Classroom Activity



### WHAT'S IN YOUR BONES?

GRADES: 5-8

#### Materials:

- 2 clear mason jars with lids
- 2 clean, cooked chicken wing bones with meat and cartilage removed
- Milk
- Vinegar
- Pins

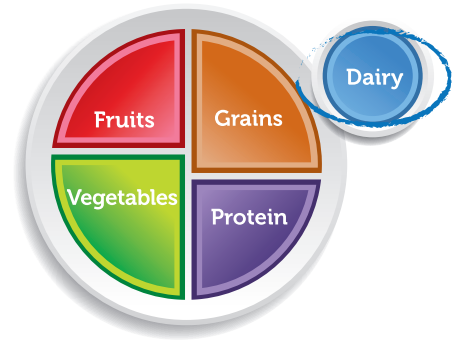
- 1 Have students examine bones before they are placed in jars. Poke the bones with straight pins to test how hard the bones are. Instruct students to record results.
- 2 Place one chicken bone in a jar and cover it with milk. Place other chicken bone in second jar and cover with vinegar. Cover both with lids and let soak overnight.
- 3 Each day for 7 days, replace milk in jar so it does not spoil.
- 4 After one week, take the bones from each jar and rinse them off. Allow students to test bones again by pricking with pins and bending.
- 5 Record results. Which bone was stronger in the end? Discuss how the bone soaked in vinegar was weaker. Vinegar is an acid that pulls calcium from the bone. Sodas contain a type of acid called phosphoric acid, which can prevent your body from getting enough calcium if you choose soda over calcium-rich foods.



# DAIRY

Dairy foods include milk and many foods made from milk, such as cheese and yogurt.

Dairy foods contain the mineral calcium, which is important for teeth and bone health. Dairy foods are also rich in potassium, which helps maintain healthy blood pressure, vitamin D, and protein. Low-fat and fat-free dairy products are great options for our health as they contain little to no solid fats.



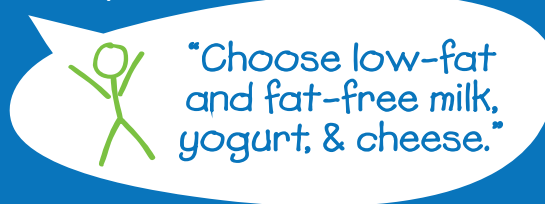
## TIPS FOR MAKING WISE CHOICES WHEN IT COMES TO DAIRY

- ✓ Try **low-fat** or **fat-free** milk.  
Try reduced fat (2%), then low-fat (1%), or fat-free (skim).
- ✓ Choose **low-fat** or **fat-free** yogurt as a snack or add to a fruit smoothie.
- ✓ Top soups, salads, casseroles, and pastas with **reduced-fat** or **low-fat** cheese, such as cottage cheese, part-skim mozzarella, or feta.
- ✓ Top baked potatoes or tacos with plain, **fat-free** yogurt.

For those who are lactose-intolerant, these foods are all good sources of calcium:



Seymour says:



## February 2025

National Children's Dental Health Month

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
Black History Month	Library Lovers' Month	Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month	American Heart Month			National Freedom Day
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Groundhog Day	Carrot Cake Day	Homemade Soup Day	Girls and Women in Sports Day	Frozen Yogurt Day	Send a Card to a Friend Day	Kite Flying Day
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
		Make a Friend Day			Valentine's Day	
16	Random Act of Kindness/ Cabbage Day	18	19	20	21	22
Almond Day	President's Day			Love your Pet Day		
23	24	25	26	27	28	
Banana Bread Day	National Eating Disorder Awareness Week			Strawberry Day	Ramadan begins	

# FRUITS & VEGGIES

Eating a variety of fresh fruits and veggies will help you get the **vitamins, minerals, folic acid, and fiber** your body needs for growth and development.

Eating fruits and vegetables may **reduce your risk** of cancer, diabetes, and many other diseases.

Aim to eat a **rainbow of fruits & veggies** every day. Each color offers our bodies something unique.

Most fruit and vegetables are **full of fiber.**

- Tips to add fruits & veggies to your diet:**
- Eat a rainbow.
  - Visit farmers' markets.
  - Be a role model.
  - Try something new.
  - Add veggies to your meals.
  - Add veggies to the grill.

## Snacktivity



### CATERPILLAR KABOBS

GRADES: K-3

#### Ingredients:

Variety of fresh fruits and vegetables (choose vegetables that can be eaten raw, such as carrots, zucchini, cucumber, peppers, broccoli, and tomatoes). Wash and cut into bite size pieces.

These easy kabobs are a great classroom snack. They are fun, delicious, and a great way to illustrate how to eat a rainbow.

**1 Fruit kabobs:** Assemble chunks of fruit, such as melon, apple, oranges, grapes or pears on skewers in any order. Use low-fat yogurt as a side for dipping.

**2 Vegetable kabobs:** Use raw veggies, such as zucchini, cucumber, sweet peppers, tomatoes, or squash. Pair with a ranch or hummus side for dipping.

Seymour says:



"Focus on whole fruits. Vary your veggies."

## March 2025

National Nutrition Month

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 Peanut Butter Lovers' Day
2 Banana Cream Pie Day Read Across America Day	3	4 Grammar Day	5	6 Frozen Foods Day	7 National Day of Unplugging Cereal Day	8
9 Daylight Savings Begins	10	11	12 Plant a Flower Day	13	14 Pi Day Learn About Butterflies Day	15
16 Artichoke Hearts Day	17 St. Patrick's Day	18 Poultry Day	19 Let's Laugh Day	20	21 First Day of Spring	22 World Water Day
23 Take-A-Walk-In-The-Park Day	24	25	26 Spinach Day	27	28	29
30	31 Eid-Al Fitr					

# GARDENING



Kids are more willing to eat veggies that they've **helped to grow**. It builds familiarity and curiosity!

Gardens help grow food and **strengthen** family and social relationships.

Studies show that students who participate in garden education **score higher** on science achievement tests.

Nurturing plants helps create **positive attitudes** towards health and nutrition.

**What else can gardening do for you?**

- Relieves stress.
- Spends time outdoors.
- Taste new veggies.
- Brings people together.
- Vitamin D from the sun.
- Veggies taste better.

## Classroom Activity

### POE & GROW GARDEN

GRADES: 3-6

Did you know? The North Carolina Science Curriculum supports gardening education for grades 3-6?

Because gardens engage students by providing a dynamic environment in which to learn about nutrition, plant science, the environment, and general health and wellness, the Poe Center has developed an online interactive garden to assist schools and communities in developing their own learning laboratories.

Other resources and a garden toolkit are also online. Check it out!

Go to [www.poehealth.org](http://www.poehealth.org) and click on **Features & Exhibits**.



Seymour says:

*"Gardening is a great form of exercise & can boost your mood."*

## April 2025

National Garden Month

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
World Autism Month	Poetry Month	1 Peanut Butter and Jelly Day	2 Walking Day	3 Find a Rainbow Day	4 International Carrot Day	5
6 Food Waste Prevention Week Library Week	7 Garden Month	8 April Fools' Day	9	10 Siblings' Day	11	12 Grilled Cheese Sandwich Day Passover begins
13	14 National Garden Day	15	16 Day of the Mushroom Orchid Day	17 Banana Day	18	19 Garlic Day
20 Lima Bean Respect Day Easter Sunday Volunteer Week	21	22 Earth Day	23 Picnic Day	24	25 Arbor Day	26 Pretzel Day
27	28	29	30 Raisin Day			

## Snacktivity



### WHOLESOME TRAIL MIX GRADES: K-8

#### Ingredients:

- Whole-grain cereal
- Popcorn (low-fat)
- Chocolate chips
- Variety of dried fruit (raisins, cranberries, dates, figs)

#### Optional:

- Nuts or seeds, such as pumpkin or sunflower

Trail mix is a great way to explore whole-grain options, and students get to discover new flavors.

**1** Pour each ingredient into separate bowls with spoons and create an area where students make their own trail mix!

**2** While students are eating, teachers can discuss the importance of choosing whole grain food.

Whole-grain foods have:

- more vitamins
- more minerals
- and more fiber, which helps keep you feeling full.

## CLASSROOM ACTIVITY



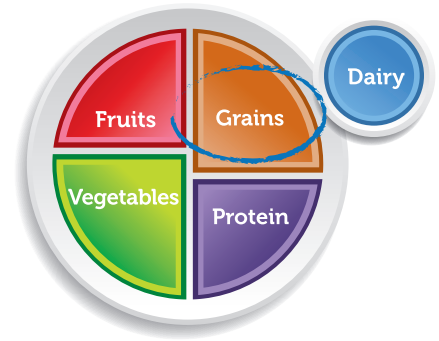
### BRAIN BREAK GRADES: K-8

Need a break? Try these classroom activities:

- Make a calendar to track energizer breaks. Plan for a certain number of minutes each day, and record how many your class did.
- Incorporate physical activity into subjects: learn and practice historical dances, spell out letters with your body...get creative!
- Take short exercise breaks between lessons.

# WHOLE GRAINS

Grains are divided into two categories, whole and refined. Whole grains contain more vitamins, minerals, and fiber. Examples of whole grains include: whole-wheat flour, bulgur, oatmeal, and brown rice.



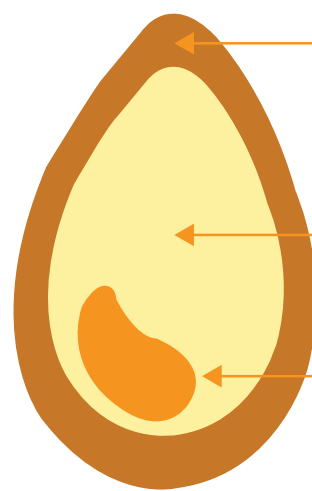
## TIPS ON HOW TO INCLUDE MORE WHOLE GRAINS INTO YOUR DAY

- ✓ Try **brown rice or whole-wheat pasta** with your meals.
- ✓ Choose **unsweetened** whole-grain cereals and add fresh fruit.
- ✓ Use **whole-grains** in mixed dishes, such as soups, casseroles, and salads.
  - ✓ Choose **whole-wheat** bread for sandwiches.
- ✓ Snack on **homemade** popcorn, pretzels, or whole-grain crackers.

### WHOLE GRAIN

VS

### "WHITE" GRAIN



#### BRAN

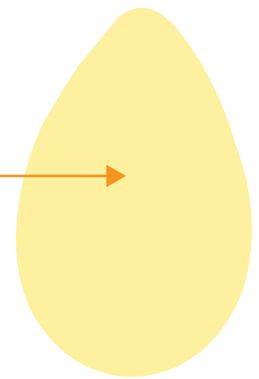
The fiber-rich outer layer that protects the seed and contains B vitamins and trace minerals.

#### ENDOSPERM

The middle layer that contains carbohydrates along with proteins.

#### GERM

The small nutrient-rich core that contains antioxidants, including vitamin E, B vitamins, and healthy fats.



Seymour says:



"Make half your grains whole grains."

## May 2025

National Physical Fitness & Sports Month

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month				School Principals' Day		Two Different Colored Shoes Day
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Star Wars Day Lemonade Day	Teacher Appreciation Week	Nurses Day	Walk & Roll to School Day			
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Mother's Day Women's Health Week			Dance Like a Chicken Day		Love A Tree Day	Walnut Day Learn to Swim Day
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
		World Bee Day Pick Strawberries Day			Don't Fry Day Lucky Penny Day	
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
	Memorial Day					Meditation Day

## SNACKTIVITY



### ANY-BEAN DIP

ALL AGES

This protein-packed dip can be made with any kind of bean (kidney, black, white, or chickpeas work). It's a great addition to turkey or cheese sandwiches.

#### Ingredients:

- 1 (15-ounce) can beans, drained and rinsed with cold water
- 1 garlic clove, peeled and finely minced
- 1/4 cup cup olive or vegetable oil
- 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice (about 1 lemon) or apple cider vinegar
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

#### Instructions:

- 1 Put all the ingredients in the food processor fitted with a steel blade and process until completely smooth.
- 2 Enjoy on a sandwich, as a dip, or however you like!

Source: ChopChop Magazine

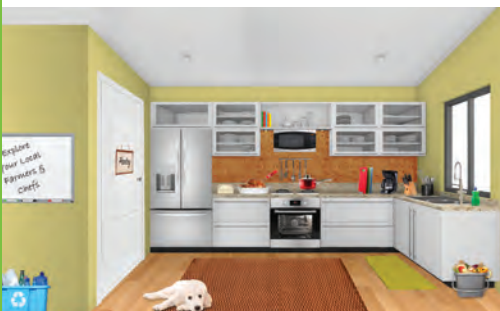
## ONLINE ACTIVITY



Did you know? The Poe Center has an online virtual kitchen!

Cooking and kitchen skills can help develop better food choices, preferences, attitudes, and behaviors. Visit Poe's online kitchen to learn more about food prep, healthy recipes, safety, cleaning, and so much more.

[www.poehealth.org](http://www.poehealth.org)



# PROTEIN

Protein in foods functions as building blocks for bones, muscles, cartilage, skin, and blood. There are many protein rich foods, such as meat, poultry, fish, beans, peas, eggs, nuts, and seeds. Most Americans eat enough protein, but need to make leaner and more varied selections.

## TIPS FOR MAKING HEALTHY PROTEIN CHOICES



#### Choose seafood twice a week.

Eat seafood that is low in mercury, such as salmon, trout, and herring.



#### Choose lean or low-fat meats.

Trim or drain fat from meat and remove skin from poultry.



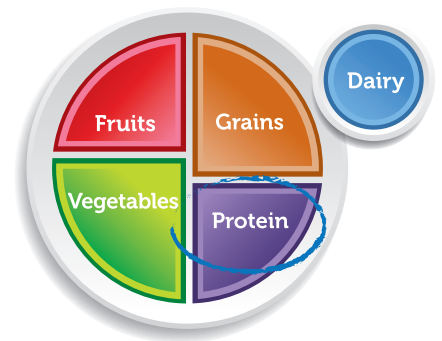
#### Eat plant protein.

Try beans, peas, nuts, and seeds. Choose unsalted nuts and seeds.



#### Get creative.

Try grilling, broiling, roasting, or baking. These cooking methods do not add extra fat.



Seymour says:



"Eat a variety of proteins: beans, meat, chicken, & seafood."

## June 2025

National Fresh Fruits & Vegetables Month

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Say Something Nice Day Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Month	2	3	4 National Running Day	5	6	7
8	9 Egg Day	10	11 Flip Flop Day	12 World Environment Day	13 Gardening Exercise Day	14 National Trails Day
15 World Ocean Day	16 Men's Health Week	17	18	19	20	21 National Family Health & Fitness Day
22 Father's Day	23	24	25	26 Juneteenth	27 First Day of Summer	28
29	30 Hydration Day					

# NUTRITION FACTS LABEL

Use the Nutrition Facts Label to learn about making food choices.

## Classroom Activity



### UNDERSTANDING NUTRITION FACTS LABELS

GRADES: 4-8

A week before the activity, collect about 25 food boxes, cans, and labels from a variety of foods. Choose a variety of healthy and less healthy foods.



Before the activity, teach students how to read the nutrition facts label.

#### ACTIVITY:

- Use this month's graphic to teach students how to read the nutrition facts label.
- Split students into 5 groups.
- Give each group 5 nutrition facts labels (make sure each group has a mix of nutrient-dense and less nutritious foods).
- Instruct students to place foods in order from healthiest to least healthy using the various measures on the facts label: amount of calories, fats, sugars, or vitamins.
- Check each group's answers when complete.
- Discuss the importance of choosing healthy snacks that are rich in vitamins and minerals. Choosing whole, fresh foods, such as fruits and vegetables, are the most nutritious options for snacking!

#### START HERE

- Check the serving size & number of servings.
- The Nutrition Facts Label is based on what is listed here.

#### SATURATED VS. UNSATURATED FAT

- On the Nutrition Facts Label, look for foods that are low in saturated fat, trans fat, and cholesterol.
- Many foods have unsaturated fat, which provides energy and helps protect your internal organs, like your heart! Try avocados, olives, fish, nuts, and seeds for unsaturated fat.

#### MAKE CHOICES

- "Added sugars" will tell you how much sugar is not naturally found in the product.
- Carbohydrates come from fiber and sugar. Try to get carbohydrates from foods that are high in fiber.

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
<b>Serving size</b>	<b>2/3 cup (55g)</b>
<b>Amount per serving</b>	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>230</b>
% Daily Value*	
<b>Total Fat</b> 8g	<b>10%</b>
Saturated Fat 1g	<b>5%</b>
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg	<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 160mg	<b>7%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 37g	<b>13%</b>
Dietary Fiber 4g	<b>14%</b>
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	<b>20%</b>
<b>Protein</b> 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	<b>10%</b>
Calcium 260mg	<b>20%</b>
Iron 8mg	<b>45%</b>
Potassium 235mg	<b>6%</b>

\*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

#### CALORIES MEASURE ENERGY

- Calories are energy. They fuel your body, giving you the energy to think and breathe, for your heart to beat, and to be active, play, and learn!
- Depending on size, age, and activity level, kids need about 2,000 to 2,200 calories each day. Fuel those bodies!

#### 20% RULE

- Foods with daily values of 20% or more are considered high in that nutrient.
- Look for foods rich in vitamins and minerals.

#### VITAMINS & MINERALS

- Follow MyPlate to get all 5 food groups in each meal for a balance of **macronutrients**: fats, carbohydrates, and proteins.
- Make your plate a "rainbow" of colors to ensure you are getting the variety of vitamins and minerals that your body needs.

### CUSTOMIZE YOUR MEALS: ALLERGIES, ALTERNATIVES, AND SERVING SIZE

#### Did you know?

The Nutrition Facts Label is an important tool for people with allergies or other dietary restrictions. Learning to read the food label helps you find foods that are right for you.



#### Packaging Affects Servings

Package size affects how much people eat and drink. For example, both 12- and 20-ounce bottles equal 1 serving, since people typically drink both sizes in one sitting.



1 SERVING PER BOTTLE FOR EITHER BOTTLE SIZE

Seymour says:



"Use the Nutrition Facts Label to choose foods that keep your body strong."

## July 2025

National Picnic Month

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
Picnic Month				Eat Your Beans Day	Eat Your Caesar Salad Day Independence Day	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Father-Daughter Take-A-Walk Day				Blueberry Muffin Day	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	Mac & Cheese Day		Personal Chef's Day			
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
						Dance Day
27	28	29	30	31		
		Lasagna Day				



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Poe Center has served **1.7 million participants** from 94 counties in North Carolina, and reached over **100 million** on social media.

You can count on the Poe Center to deliver **effective, valuable, and one-of-a-kind** health education.

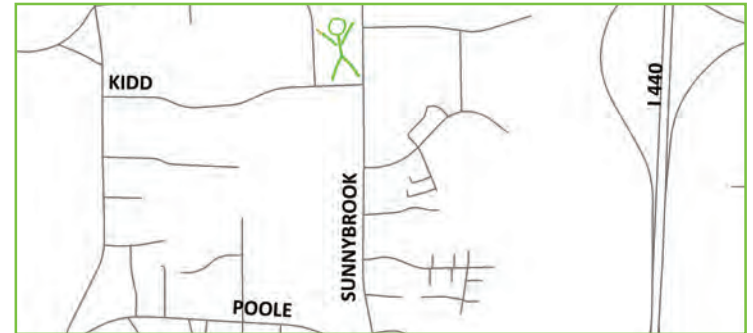


This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program -- SNAP.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

## Find the Poe Center

Located in the heart of Raleigh, NC off of I-440 at Poole Road, the Poe Center is a convenient destination for a day of learning.



“Inviting environment, knowledgeable instructor, age-appropriate activities and the amazing playground made it a perfect field trip. We will be back next year.”

- 5th Grade Teacher



Follow the Poe Center

