

Making the Best 4-H Clubs Better

Intended Audience

- 4-H club members

Lesson Objectives

Club members and parents will:

- Utilize *Choose My Plate* visual to learn recommended amount and types of foods to eat for good health
- Identify healthy food choices for snacks and beverages for club meetings
- Learn how healthy food choices and regular physical activity promote good health

Time: 20 minutes

Equipment and supplies

- Markers
- Paper plate
- Handout:
 - o Small *Choose My Plate* Poster or "What's on your plate?" handout. (Copies available from your local Extension office.)

Do ahead

- Review lesson
- Gather equipment and supplies

Health: The Fourth H

BACKGROUND

"Health" is the fourth "H" in the 4-H Pledge. When we say the 4-H Pledge, we are pledging our health to better living. That means we are promising to strive to keep our bodies strong and healthy. Wow, this sounds impressive, but are we really practicing what we have pledged to do? Statistics indicate that one third of youth in Ohio are either overweight or obese and that an increasing number of youth are not getting enough physical activity. Poor eating habits and lack of exercise can lead to developing many health problems such as Type II Diabetes, Heart Disease, and Cancer. To grow up healthy, youth need to eat a diet that includes fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low fat milk, and lean protein. They need to less of foods high in sugar, fats, and sodium. It is also recommended that youth engage in at least 60 minutes of fun physical activity each day.

4-H club meetings can be an ideal place for youth to learn and practice making healthy eating choices and to engage in fun physical activities. Consider making a club policy to serve only healthy foods and beverages for meeting refreshments. Have club members and advisors brainstorm and come up with a list of healthy snack ideas to share with parents. Work with the recreation officer to plan a 10-minute fun physical movement activity for each meeting. To encourage members to think about healthy lifestyle choices, ask your secretary to do a health-related topic for attendance roll call at each meeting. Ask the health officers to address a healthy lifestyle topic in their presentations, as well.

WHAT TO DO

Activity 1: Roll Call for Health. When the club secretary takes attendance he/she can ask each member to stand up and call out their favorite healthy snack. Have someone record the healthy snack ideas and share them with parents for ideas for healthy club meeting refreshments. Use a new topic each meeting.

Activity 2: What's On Your Plate? (This activity could be conducted by the health officer or a nutrition project member.)



Sources

- www.myplate.gov

Show members the *Choose My Plate* poster or the “What’s on your plate?” handout and discuss how the plate is divided into sections to represent what we need to eat to be healthy.

One half of the plate should be fruits and vegetables; one fourth, grains; one fourth, lean protein; and there should be one serving of low fat milk or milk product. Each day we need about 2 ½ cups of vegetables, 2 cups of fruit, 6 ounces of grains, 3 cups of dairy, and 5 ounces of protein. (Refer to the “What’s on your plate?” handout for more information.)

Pass out a paper plate and a marker to each member. Have members draw a line down the middle of the plate and then draw another line to divide one half of the plate into fourths to make their own *Choose My Plate* visual. Next have members label the sections of the plate to correspond with the My Plate poster.

Ask them to think about what foods they ate today and have them to list or draw the foods in the correct sections on the plate.

Have members pair up with one or more members to discuss what their plate looks like. Is it filled with healthy or unhealthy choices? Is half the plate filled with fruit and veggies, a quarter with whole grains, and a quarter with lean protein? Is there a low-fat milk choice? What foods need to be removed, and what foods could be added to make the plate healthier?

TALK IT OVER

Reflect

- What other activities can your 4-H club implement to help the members become healthier?

Apply

- Have members set a short-term goal for one thing they can do to improve their health. (Example goal: To start taking a 30-minute walk 5 days a week.)
- Have members report back on the progress they have made on their health goal at the next meeting. You could use this as next month’s Roll Call for Health.

ADDITIONAL LINKS

- <https://wmich.edu/rec/veggiechallenge>
- http://www.dairycouncilofca.org/PDFs/EatWellBeActive_engl_2012.pdf

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