

## It's Afterschool Time!

Afterschool is a fun, exciting time for children. According to the Afterschool Alliance<sup>1</sup>, in 2009 there were 8.4 million children in afterschool programs. This offers a great opportunity for afterschool students to expand their knowledge on a variety of topics. While it is very important that afterschool students take time to do homework and participate in extracurricular activities, it is also a time when children can learn more about nutrition.

Many children like to experiment with food, create different snacks and meals, and explore new foods through activities. Select activities that are child-directed versus teacher-directed. Child-directed activities allow children to complete the activity with very little to no direction from the teacher. Teacher-directed activities are activities in which the teacher guides the children until the task is complete.



### Afterschool Nutrition Standards

When planning meals, snacks, and activities, remember to always consider the nutrition needs of each child. According to the Environmental Standards for Nutrition and Physical Activity in Out-of-School Time Programs<sup>2</sup>, directors should abide by the following.

- Avoid serving any sugar-sweetened beverages (sodas, juice, sports drinks, etc.).
- Serve water each day.
- Serve fruits and/or vegetables during each meal and snack.
- Avoid serving any foods with trans fat.
- Serve whole grains.

<sup>1</sup>Afterschool Alliance. (2009). American after 3pm. Retrieved from [http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/AA3\\_Full\\_Report.pdf](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/AA3_Full_Report.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>Harvard Prevention Research Center. (2009). Environmental standards for nutrition and physical activity in out of school time. Retrieved from <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/>

## Afterschool Activities



December 2012, continued

### Food

*“Anytime Food” versus “Sometimes Food”*

Materials: Tape; large pictures of snack foods such as candy, apples, celery, cheese, juice, cookies, soda, milk, ice cream, French fries, and crackers

### Steps

Step 1: Tape the pictures on a wall or board.

Step 2: Ask children to select foods they would like to have for snacks.

Step 3: Discuss with children the meaning of “Sometimes Food” and “Anytime Food”. Explain to children, “Anytime Food” is healthy to eat throughout the day. The “Anytime Foods” are filled with nutrients to promote healthy growth and development. The “Sometimes Foods” should only be eaten on occasion because they lack nutrients to support healthy growth and development.

Step 4: Then review each picture and discuss why each food is either a “Sometimes Food” or “Anytime Food”.

### *Create a Salad*

Materials: Lettuce, pickles, sliced tomatoes, olives, cucumbers, drained canned corn, cheese, garbanzo beans (chickpeas), sliced chicken, chopped eggs, grated carrots; two types of fat-free salad dressing; serving spoons and tongs; plates, plastic forks, and paper napkins



### Steps

Step 1: Wash hands.

Step 2: Place each food item in a separate bowl with serving spoons or tongs. Discuss the different types of food, including their origins, colors, and shapes.

Step 3: Then allow children to take turns selecting different ingredients to create their own salad.

### *Floating Egg Experiment*

Materials: Water, apple juice, and salt (6 tablespoons per group); 3 large clear cups for each group; and 3 eggs per group

### Steps

Step 1: Separate the children into groups.

Step 2: Using the three cups, pour water in the first two cups, and juice in the third cup. Mix 6 tablespoons of salt into the first cup of water.

Step 3: Ask children to drop an egg in each cup to determine which egg will float or sink.

Step 4: After the children have observed the eggs, discuss how adding salt to the water makes the water more dense, causing the egg to float.

### **Physical Activity**

#### *Volleyball*

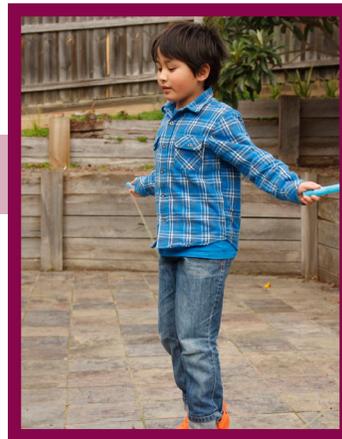
**Materials:** soft or mini volleyball, volleyball net, and personal or single use knee pads

#### **Steps:**

Step 1: In an open space, set up a volleyball net. The net's height may require modification to be developmentally appropriate for the children. Other modifications may include children catching and/or throwing the ball.

Step 2: Teach children how to serve the ball and the basic rules of the game. To learn more about rules for volleyball, search the web for school-oriented sites such as: [http://westlake.k12.oh.us/hillard/whspe/volleyball/volleyball\\_rules.htm](http://westlake.k12.oh.us/hillard/whspe/volleyball/volleyball_rules.htm)

Step 3: Play Volleyball.



#### *Free Play*

**Materials:** jump ropes, balls, soccer balls, baseballs and bats, hula-hoops, and sack race bags

#### **Steps:**

Step 1: Position the items outside on playground.

Step 2: Allow children to select different items to use during free play. In addition, items can be used to create an obstacle course.

### *Other Activities*

Cycling, Frisbee, Bean Bag Toss, Basketball, Kite Flying, Hacky Sack, Miniature Golf, and Kickball



December 2012, continued

### **Keys to Nutrition Related Activities**

1. Preparation – always prepare activities at least one week in advance.
2. Supervision – always supervise children during all activities.
3. Positive attitude – always model a positive attitude, making each activity a special occasion.
4. Cleanup – always clean up as an ongoing activity.
5. Follow-through – always follow through so each child has an opportunity to participate

### **Sources**

- Afterschool Alliance. (2009). American after 3pm. Retrieved from [http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/AA3\\_Full\\_Report.pdf](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/AA3_Full_Report.pdf)
- Harvard Prevention Research Center. (2009). Environmental standards for nutrition and physical activity in out of school time. Retrieved from [http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/research/prc/files/ymca\\_nutritionandpaenvironmentalstandardsforost110209.pdf](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/research/prc/files/ymca_nutritionandpaenvironmentalstandardsforost110209.pdf)
- National Institute on Out-of-School Time at the Wellesley Centers for Women. (2011). Healthy eating and physical activity standards. Retrieved from [http://www.niost.org/pdf/host/Healthy\\_Eating\\_and\\_Physical\\_Activity\\_Standards.pdf](http://www.niost.org/pdf/host/Healthy_Eating_and_Physical_Activity_Standards.pdf)

# Nutrition Highlights

## **NFSMI Trainings**

NFSMI has free child care training available. NFSMI will send a trainer to your location to train on a variety of topics. For more information regarding free trainings, follow the link:  
<http://www.nfsmi.org/Templates/TemplateDefault.aspx?q=cEIEPTU3>

NFSMI has a variety of online child care courses available. All online courses are free of charge and can be accessed at any time. Check out our online courses by following the link:  
<http://www.nfsmi.org/Templates/TemplateDefault.aspx?q=cEIEPTIzNg==>

## **National Message**

USDA 2010 Dietary Guidelines Communications Message Calendar, the theme for September –December is *Foods to Increase*. During this time, the selected key message is “Make at least half your grains whole grains”. Remember the theme and selected message when planning activities. To obtain more information, follow the link:  
<http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/MyPlate/CommunicationsMessageCalendar.pdf>

