7-6-2011

SP714 Healthy Steps: Food and Physical Activity for Preschoolers

Janie Burney
Carrie Barker

Follow this and additional works at: http://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_agexfood

Part of the Food Science Commons, and the Nutrition Commons

Recommended Citation

"SP714 Healthy Steps: Food and Physical Activity for Preschoolers," Janie Burney and Carrie Barker,
SP714
, http://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_agexfood/66
Young children learn healthy habits through

- Having repeated exposure to healthy foods and physical activity.
- Watching teachers and parents model healthy behaviors.
- Receiving carefully selected rewards for desired behaviors.

*Healthy Steps* is brought to you by University of Tennessee Extension Family and Consumer Sciences, developers of the successful training program for teachers called *First Steps*. For more information, contact your county Extension Family and Consumer Sciences agent or Janie Burney, PhD, RD, Professor, jburney@utk.edu, 865-974-7402

This Family & Consumer Sciences Department project is funded under an agreement with the Tennessee Department of Human Services and USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Visit the UT Family and Consumer Sciences website at fcs.tennessee.edu.

Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and resource development. University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating. The University of Tennessee is an EEO/AA/Title VI/Title IX/Section 504/ADA/ADEA institution in the provision of its education and employment programs and services. All qualified applicants will receive equal consideration for employment without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, physical or mental disability, or covered veteran status.
What is Healthy Steps?

*Healthy Steps* is a nutrition and physical activity program for preschoolers designed to prevent childhood obesity. It is part of *Tennessee Shapes Up*, a statewide University of Tennessee Extension initiative implemented by the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences in response to the obesity epidemic.

Unhealthy eating habits and lack of physical activity can begin at an early age. National surveys show that about one in four children ages 2 to 5 are overweight.

Who Can Participate?

*Healthy Steps* is available to child care centers and pre-kindergarten classes. Centers and classes interested in participating should serve children ages 3 to 5.

What Resources Are Provided?

**Training**—One of the most important resources provided by University of Tennessee Extension is teacher training. Training includes

- Research-based information on feeding preschoolers.
- Ways to increase physical activity.
- Strategies for implementing *Healthy Steps*.

**Curricula**—The curricula and resources provided are geared to preschoolers and include both nutrition and physical activity education.

**Nutrition content is presented in popular preschool themes, such as**

- Alphabet
- How I Grow
- Colors
- Counting
- Fall
- Home and Family
- Shapes
- Spring
- Summer
- Winter

*Color Me Healthy*, a nationally recognized preschool curriculum, is incorporated into the themes in addition to other resources, such as books and puzzles. Actual food preparation experiences are designed to promote food acceptance.

The physical activity curriculum, *Healthy Strides*, provides lesson plans that encourage active play and skills development. Each activity has been designed to achieve physical developmental milestones that are critical to the growth and development of preschoolers.

Curricula used in *Healthy Steps* meet Tennessee Department of Education’s Early Learning Developmental Standards for Voluntary Pre-K and correlate with Head Start Performance Standards.