

# Easy Nutrition Education Activities

## Overview

Teaching our children about healthy eating and nutrition can help them make the connection between nutritious foods, feeling good and our overall health. These activities can tie in fun and educational lessons through hands on experience and digital learning. Use these activity ideas to help promote and model healthy behaviors and choosing foods at home.

## Take Action

Nutrition education can be taught through hands on activities or digital learning platforms. Choose which fits your needs at home and will best inspire learning in your child.

### At-Home Taste Test

Having kids taste healthy food items is at the heart of nutrition education, because if they have the opportunity to try healthier foods, they'll be more likely to become healthier eaters. A series of taste tests at home paired with some fun food facts is a great way to reinforce the importance of nutrition and fueling our bodies. Click each for specific ideas for [whole grain taste tests](#), [fruit and veggie taste tests](#), and [dairy taste tests](#). Here are a few tips to get you started on your taste test!

- Taste testing is more than tasting! Encourage your child to examine how a food looks, smells and feels. Use this opportunity to expand your child's vocabulary by introducing new adjectives to describe food.
- Let your child be involved in preparing and serving samples if you have multiple children.
- Include the taste test food in a meal during the week!

- When tasting fruits and vegetables, show kids the fruit or vegetable in its whole and cut up forms. This can help them identify the fruit or vegetable at the grocery store.
- Use this [taste testing ballot](#) to officially let your child express their thoughts!

## Food Label Lab

Your kitchen is a great learning lab for your children and the best resource to use as you are teaching your children about nutrition at home. It is important for kids to understand what is in their food and how to make healthy choices by reading food labels on their own. You can start the activity by simplifying the information on nutrition labels to teach children to identify key nutrients that are common in healthy foods. Use the foods you have in your pantry, refrigerator, and freezer to create a food label lab lesson at home. Here are some tips to get started:

- Feel free to use [FDA's resource on reading nutrition labels](#) before teaching your child how to. It is okay to educate yourself to feel equipped to teach your children, this is a learning opportunity for all!
- Point out the vitamins and minerals content on the foods you and your child choose to look at. A food is considered a "good source" of that vitamin or mineral if it has 10% or more of it.
- In general, the shorter the ingredient list, the better. The first ingredient on the list has the largest amount. Pay attention to the kind of ingredients, too. Try to eat natural-sounding ingredients as opposed to chemical ones that are a hundred letters long.
- Pay attention to the serving size. Many times, the size of one serving is much less than we actually eat. Depending on how much you eat, you may have to double or triple the numbers on the label!
- Ask your child questions such as "How many calories are in a serving?" "Does this food have fiber in it?" to familiarize them with the label and nutrition lingo.
- To incorporate a digital component into this lesson, use the [FDA interactive label](#) to as a tool to demonstrate the elements of a food label.
- Finish your lesson by letting your child pick a healthy snack based on their food label learnings in your own kitchen!

## MyPlate Online Learning

If you have access to a computer, you can use the MyPlate digital tools to assist with nutrition education at home. Here some ways to use the MyPlate tools:

- You can use [free eBooks](#) to teach your children about the *MyPlate* food groups. These digital books feature interactive tools and can test your child's comprehension if you want to turn it into a reading activity as well.
- Use [MyPlate games, activity sheets, videos, and songs](#) to explore nutrition in an interactive way! Your child can choose from a variety of ways to engage in nutrition education through innovative methods of learning.
- If your child is older, they can use the [MyPlate Plan](#) for a personalized approach to learning about their nutrition needs.

## Tips



Make sure what and how your teaching is age-appropriate for your child.



Use meal times and snacks to teach your children about nutrition and eating healthy.



Continually engage your children in nutrition education. The more often the learning and discussion, the more your child will grasp the importance.



Model healthy habits by making half your plate fruits and vegetables, choosing whole grains, offering non-fat and low-fat dairy, and limiting sweets and sugar sweetened beverages.



Don't be afraid to try something new! Use these educational lessons as a time to learn as a family.



Use [MyPlate tips sheets](#) for quick facts about food to share with your children.

For more activities and ideas like this one, be sure to [sign up for our news and updates](#). And if you like what you see, please [donate to support our work](#) creating more ways to help build a healthier future for kids.

## Resources

[Explore MyPlate \(USDA\)](#)

[Go, Slow, Whoa \(NIH\)](#)

[Fruits and Vegetables Fact Sheet](#)

[Nutrition Activity Pages \(Fruits and](#)

[University of Nebraska\)](#)

[Veggies\)](#)

[Handouts and Resources \(Whole Grains](#)

[Kids Eat Right \(Academy of Nutrition and](#)

[Council\)](#)

[Dietetics\)](#)

[Nutrition Detective \(Yale School of Public](#)

[Health\)](#)

### **How to Read Nutrition Facts Labels**

Help kids make better choices by simplifying the information on nutrition labels to teach them to identify key nutrients that are common in healthy foods.

### **SMART Goals for Health and Wellness**

Encourage children to set SMART goals around nutrition and wellness in order to become healthier and happier versions of themselves.

### **Mindful Eating**

Encourage children to practice mindful eating strategies to slow down, enjoy their food and practice mindfulness throughout the day.

### **Host a Taste Test**

Expose your students to a variety of healthy food items so they'll eat better!