Caregiver Workshop – Build a Healthy Plate Using MyPlate

Audience: Caregivers

I. Nutrition Education Objective

Goal 1: Students will comprehend concepts consistent with USDA guidance related to eating and physical activity for good health.

Objective: As a result of Pennsylvania’s SNAP-Ed plan, students will know, understand, analyze, and apply concepts, as developmentally appropriate, that are consistent with USDA guidance about the benefits of:

1. Eating a variety of whole grain products, fruits and vegetables, low-fat milk and calcium-rich food for meals and/or snacks.

Goal 3: Caregivers will be able to access materials that will reinforce concepts to their school-age children related to eating and physical activity for good health.

Objective: As a result of Pennsylvania’s SNAP-Ed plan, caregivers will:

1. Access valid, reliable and appropriate resources that promote health.

II. Outcome

A. Participants will learn the key messages of MyPlate.
B. Participants will identify tips for building healthy meals.
C. Participants will include the recommended amounts of foods from MyPlate into their own meal planning.

III. Materials

A. Laptop/Projector with PowerPoint presentation: Eating According to MyPlate
B. Visuals: MyPlate Poster
C. Handouts:
   1. “Build a healthy plate” worksheet
   2. “Get to Know MyPlate Food Groups”
   3. "MyPlate" double-sided info sheet
   4. “Build a Healthy Meal” 10 tips sheet
   5. Copies of recipe to be prepared
   6. ERN information sheet
   7. SNAP brochure and insert
   8. Caregiver Newsletter- MyPlate
D. Optional Activities:
   1. "MyPlate Worksheet"
   2. How many fruits of every color can you name? Contest
E. Supplies: Pencils, Handwipes, Gloves
F. Cooking Activity: Supplies for Sweet Potato Black & Bean Chili Recipe
G. Reinforcement that conveys the appropriate nutrition message
IV. Procedure

A. Introductory:

1. Introduction of Nutrition Educator.
   a. Introduce self

2. Ice Breaker: Ask participants:
   a. What are your child’s favorite and least favorite foods? Record responses.
   b. We will be discussing the different food groups and how some of these foods fit into the groups. Refer to responses as the lesson discusses the food groups.

3. Lesson Introduction
   a. Hang poster of MyPlate.
   b. Ask the participants: Why is a healthy diet important? Solicit answers and discuss the following bullets:
      i. Better school performance for your children
      ii. Developmental Growth
      iii. Weight management and the prevention of overweight and obesity for both children and adults.
      iv. Reduced risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol, and stroke
      v. Reduced risk of early mortality.

B. Developmental

1. What is MyPlate? Ask the participants if they know what MyPlate is and determine their familiarity with the concept.
   a. MyPlate is a tool designed to help Americans make healthy food choices. MyPlate was revised in 2010 by the USDA in conjunction with the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. It helps explain the different food groups and how much we should be eating from each food group.
      i. Encourage participants to visit the MyPlate website, ChooseMyPlate.gov, to calculate daily calorie needs, learn recommended amounts from each food group and find sample menus.

2. Distribute “Build a Healthy Plate” worksheet. As we discuss the components of MyPlate, follow along by filling out this worksheet.
a. Note that each food group has recommended servings given in either ounces or cups. These recommendations are actually based on a 2000-calorie diet, which is average for most people. Your individual needs will vary depending on your gender, age, and activity level. So the amounts of food in each group that you require according to MyPlate may be a little more or a little less than the amounts listed.

b. Now let’s take a look at each section of MyPlate. Remember to follow along by filling out your worksheet.

i. Ask caregivers to provide examples of foods their family enjoys that fall into each food group as they are reviewed. Refer back to the chart of the children’s favorite and least favorite foods.

ii. Vegetables- In the bottom left corner of MyPlate, representing slightly more than a quarter of the plate, is the vegetable group. The average individual should eat approximately 2.5 cups of vegetables per day. Vegetables are divided into several subgroups including dark green, orange, starchy, dry beans and peas, & other. You should try to eat foods in the different subgroups daily. What are some foods in the vegetable group that your family enjoys?

iii. Fruits- In the top left corner of MyPlate, taking up the rest of the left half of the plate, is the fruit group. The average person needs 2 cups of fruit per day. That is equal to about 2 baseball-sized pieces of fruit. While 100% juice does count toward your fruit intake, try to stick to whole fruit, as it provides fiber and antioxidants absent in juice. What are some of your kids’ favorite fruits?

- At this point, emphasize that half of the plate is made of fruits and vegetables. Note that this is the first tip in how to build a healthy meal.

iv. Grains- To the right of the fruit group we find the grains group, taking up slightly more than half of the right half of the plate. Try to eat about 6 ounces of grains a day. An ounce of grains is equivalent to a slice of bread or half a cup of pasta. Try to incorporate more whole grains into your family’s diet, with a goal of making half of your grains whole. Look for the word “whole” to appear at the top of the ingredients list. Ask participants: What are some foods in the grains group you eat at home? Note if any of the grains mentioned are whole grains.

v. Protein- The rest of the plate, the lower right corner, belongs to the protein group. Try to limit protein intake to 5.5 ounces per day. When buying meat for your family, choose lean cuts, and vary the proteins you eat. Don’t forget: eggs, beans, nuts, and seeds are sources of protein as well. Ask participants: What protein foods does your family regularly eat?

vi. Dairy- The last section of MyPlate, the circle to the right of the plate, is the Dairy part of the plate. Dairy foods provide calcium important for strong teeth and bones in children and adults. The average adult needs about 3 cups of dairy per day. Choose low-fat...
or fat-free dairy products to eliminate unneeded fat. *Ask participants:* What dairy foods do your families eat?

3. Applicable Messages
   a. Simply speaking, MyPlate has three key messages: Balancing calories, foods to increase, and foods to reduce. *Don’t go too into depth on the overview slide. The following slides will provide more detail on each message.*
   b. Balancing calories is the first key message and focuses on the equation: Calories in = Calories out.
      i. The “calories in” side of the equation tells us to:
         - Eat the right amount of calories for you.
         - Enjoy your food, but eat less.
         - Avoid oversized portions and stop eating when you are full.
         - Try to replace foods high in SOFAS (solid fat and added sugar) and empty calories with more nutrient-dense alternatives.
      ii. The “calories out” side of the equation looks at how we burn calories through physical activity.
      iii. *Next slide for more detail on physical activity.* Physical activity is important to help you maintain a healthy weight, live longer, feel better about yourself, decrease your chance of becoming depressed, sleep better, meet new friends, build stronger bones and muscles, and decrease your likelihood of developing chronic diseases such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol, and stroke.
      iv. Being active doesn’t need to follow a strict pattern. Choose activities you like to do. Start by doing what you can, at least 10 minutes at a time.
      v. *Next slide:* Physical Activity Recommendations
         - For Children - 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity per day.
         - For Adults 2 hours and 30 minutes per week of moderate activity, but some may need up to 5 hours per week to achieve and maintain a healthy body weight.
         - *Ask participants about the ways in which they or their family choose to be physically active.*
   c. Foods to increase: This is the second key message of MyPlate
      i. Choose foods that are nutrient-dense instead of calorie-dense. Eat protein foods that are low in fat. Switch to low-fat (1%) or fat-free (skim) milk and dairy products
      ii. Make half your plate fruits and vegetables. Try to eat a variety of fruits and vegetables in a rainbow of colors. Different colors generally represent different nutrients. By broadening your fruit and vegetable intake, you will be able to better include a wide variety of vitamins and minerals into your family’s diet.
iii. Make at least half your grains whole. Whole grains are rich in fiber, which is important for digestion. Remember, when you are comparing food labels, look for the word “whole” in the first ingredient.

   d. Foods to reduce: The final key message of MyPlate

   i. Cut back on solid fats. Saturated fats and trans fats lead to heart disease. Replace these with healthier unsaturated fats.

   ii. Cut back on added sugar. Added sugar in drinks and foods adds calories which lead to weight gain over time. Drink water instead of sugary drinks. Try serving fruit for dessert instead of sugary sweets.

   iii. Cut back on sodium. Choose foods with less sodium. Sodium raises blood pressure, which can lead to hypertension. Processed foods, fast food, and frozen meals tend to have high sodium content. Try seasoning your food with spices and herbs instead of relying on salt.

   e. Not all foods are created equal.

   i. Remember, eating healthily doesn’t mean you can never have your favorite treat again, but learn to choose between the foods that are okay to eat anytime and those that should be limited to eating sometimes. What other foods can you think of that are anytime foods? What about sometimes foods?

4. Cooking Activity

   a. Review the recipe with the group. Provide each participant with a copy of the recipe. Encourage them to prepare it with their children at home.

   b. Prepare the recipe as a group.

5. Optional Activities

   a. If there is down-time while the recipe is being prepared, have caregivers individually list as many fruits and vegetables in each color group as they can. The participant with the best/longest list can be given a prize.

   b. Alternatively, have caregivers complete the “MyPlate Worksheet” during downtime in the food prep process.

V. Conclusion:

   A. Thank the participants for their time and answer any questions they may have.

   B. Distribute hand wipes.

   C. Provide each participant with a tasting of the prepared recipe and encourage him or her to make small changes in his or her diet now to apply what we learned today. Explain why the food is a healthy option.

   D. Distribute parent handouts and explain the purpose behind each.

   E. Distribute and explain reinforcements.
Sweet Potato & Black Bean Chili

Serving Size: ½ cup  
Yield: 15 servings  
Time: 40 minutes

Ingredients:
- 2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 onion, finely diced
- 1 sweet potato, peeled and diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tablespoon chili powder
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/3 cups of water
- 1 15-ounce can black beans, drained
- 1 15-ounce can diced tomatoes
- 2 teaspoons lime juice
- 2 Tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro

Instructions:
1. Heat oil in skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion and sweet potato and cook, stirring often, until the onion is slightly softened.
2. Add garlic, chili powder, cumin, and salt, stirring constantly, about 1 minute.
3. Add water, bring to a boil, cover, reduce heat to maintain a gentle simmer and cook until the potato is tender, about 12-15 minutes.
4. Add beans, tomatoes, and lime juice; increase heat to high and return to a boil, stirring often. Reduce heat to maintain a simmer and cook until slightly reduced, about 4 minutes.
5. Remove from heat and stir in cilantro.

Source:  
www.eatingwell.com
A healthy meal starts with more vegetables and fruits and smaller portions of protein and grains. Think about how you can adjust the portions on your plate to get more of what you need without too many calories. And don’t forget dairy—make it the beverage with your meal or add fat-free or low-fat dairy products to your plate.

1. Make half your plate veggies and fruits
   Vegetables and fruits are full of nutrients and may help to promote good health. Choose red, orange, and dark-green vegetables such as tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and broccoli.

2. Add lean protein
   Choose protein foods, such as lean beef and pork, or chicken, turkey, beans, or tofu. Twice a week, make seafood the protein on your plate.

3. Include whole grains
   Aim to make at least half your grains whole grains. Look for the words “100% whole grain” or “100% whole wheat” on the food label. Whole grains provide more nutrients, like fiber, than refined grains.

4. Don’t forget the dairy
   Pair your meal with a cup of fat-free or low-fat milk. They provide the same amount of calcium and other essential nutrients as whole milk, but less fat and calories. Don’t drink milk? Try soymilk (soy beverage) as your beverage or include fat-free or low-fat yogurt in your meal.

5. Avoid extra fat
   Using heavy gravies or sauces will add fat and calories to otherwise healthy choices. For example, steamed broccoli is great, but avoid topping it with cheese sauce. Try other options, like a sprinkling of low-fat parmesan cheese or a squeeze of lemon.

6. Take your time
   Savor your food. Eat slowly, enjoy the taste and textures, and pay attention to how you feel. Be mindful. Eating very quickly may cause you to eat too much.

7. Use a smaller plate
   Use a smaller plate at meals to help with portion control. That way you can finish your entire plate and feel satisfied without overeating.

8. Take control of your food
   Eat at home more often so you know exactly what you are eating. If you eat out, check and compare the nutrition information. Choose healthier options such as baked instead of fried.

9. Try new foods
   Keep it interesting by picking out new foods you’ve never tried before, like mango, lentils, or kale. You may find a new favorite! Trade fun and tasty recipes with friends or find them online.

10. Satisfy your sweet tooth in a healthy way
    Indulge in a naturally sweet dessert dish—fruit! Serve a fresh fruit cocktail or a fruit parfait made with yogurt. For a hot dessert, bake apples and top with cinnamon.

Go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov for more information.
# MyPlate Worksheet

Check how you did today and set a goal to aim for tomorrow

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Write in Your Choices for Today</th>
<th>Food Group</th>
<th>Tip</th>
<th>Goal Based on a 2000 calorie pattern.</th>
<th>List each food choice in its food group*</th>
<th>Estimate Your Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GRAINS</td>
<td>Make at least half your grains whole grains</td>
<td>6 ounce equivalents (1 ounce equivalent is about 1 slice bread, 1 cup dry cereal, or ½ cup cooked rice, pasta, or cereal)</td>
<td></td>
<td>ounce equivalents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VEGETABLES</td>
<td>Try to have vegetables from several subgroups each day</td>
<td>2 ½ cups Subgroups: Dark Green, Orange, Starchy, Dry Beans and Peas, Other Vegetables</td>
<td></td>
<td>cups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FRUITS</td>
<td>Make most choices fruit, not juice</td>
<td>2 cups</td>
<td></td>
<td>cups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DAIRY</td>
<td>Choose fat-free or low fat most often</td>
<td>3 cups (1 ½ ounces cheese = 1 cup milk)</td>
<td></td>
<td>cups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROTEIN FOODS</td>
<td>Choose lean meat and poultry. Vary your choices—more fish, beans, peas, nuts, and seeds</td>
<td>5 ½ ounce equivalents (1 ounce equivalent is 1 ounce meat, poultry, or fish, 1 egg, 1 T. peanut butter, ½ ounce nuts, or ¼ cup dry beans)</td>
<td></td>
<td>ounce equivalents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PHYSICAL ACTIVITY</td>
<td>Build more physical activity into your daily routine at home and work.</td>
<td>At least 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity a day. 10 minutes or more at a time.</td>
<td></td>
<td>minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How did you do today?  □ Great    □ So-So    □ Not so Great

My food goal for tomorrow is: ____________________________________________

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*Some foods don’t fit into any group. These “extras” may be mainly fat or sugar—limit your intake of these.