

# WELLNESS CHAMPIONS



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

CHILD CARE RESOURCE SERVICE

FIELD SERVICES

October 2015

[www.crs.ymca.org](http://www.crs.ymca.org)

SUPPORTING HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION.



## HAVE A HEALTHY HOLIDAY!

The holidays offer many opportunities to spend time with family, celebrate life, and reflect on what's important to us. It's also a time to appreciate the gift of health. Here are some tips to help support your efforts to promote healthy habits this holiday season.

### HALLOWEEN CANDY BUY BACK PROGRAM

Trick-or-treating is a fun family activity. Taking a stroll around the neighborhood is a great way for parents to spend quality time with their kids while being physically active. However, kids often end up with an excess amount of sugary treats. Encourage families to reduce their kids' sugar intake by donating their Halloween candy to a local charity or by participating in a candy buy back program. For more information, check out the [HALLOWEEN CANDY BUY BACK PROGRAM](#).

### HEALTHY CELEBRATIONS

Adopting a healthy celebration policy is a great way to ensure you are maintaining the healthiest nutrition standards. Replace sugary foods with fun and healthy treats or non-food items and activities when celebrating holidays or special occasions. For ideas on how to make your celebrations healthy and fun check out [MAKE HEALTHIER HOLIDAY CHOICES](#).

### LIVE WELL SAN DIEGO

*Live Well San Diego* is the County of San Diego's vision for creating healthy, safe, and thriving communities. This was inspired to address San Diego's epidemic of chronic disease and rising healthcare costs. Becoming a Recognized Partner is easy! You, as a provider, can showcase best practices examples and success stories through the web, media and events and develop a collaboration with other *Live Well San Diego* partners and Health and Wellness Champions for an effective collective impact. To find out more, please visit [www.livewellsd.org](http://www.livewellsd.org)

### HEALTH EDUCATOR INFORMATION

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### WELLNESS CHAMPION REFERRALS

YMCA Childcare Resource Service Resource and Referral Department has produced 523 Wellness Champion Referrals for San Diego County in June and July!

### WELLNESS CHAMPION REFERRALS

Share the Wellness Champion video on your Facebook page today! View the video here: <http://bit.ly/beawellnesschampion>

### FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK

Get additional tips and resources online!



# STRUCTURED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

## NATURE TREASURE HUNT

Bring nature indoors! This activity can be done anytime during the day to get children moving in different ways.

### MOVEMENT SKILLS

bending, reaching, crawling, twisting

### MATERIALS

"Treasures" from nature, such as leaves, rocks, twigs, and pinecones (optional: masking tape)

### HOW TO PLAY

Collect objects from nature on your own, or let children help you as you take a nature walk together outside.

Hide the objects around the room and then let children know that it's time for a "Nature Treasure Hunt." Together, **reach** high, **bend** low, and search above, under, around, and through the space to find treasures from nature. You can use masking tape to create straight, curved, and zigzag pathways on the ground for them to follow as they search.

Every 2 to 3 minutes, call out different ways for children to move, such as **jumping** like a kangaroo, **waddling** like a duck, **stomping** like an elephant, or **crawling** like a crab. Help them notice how some of these movements get their hearts pumping very quickly by asking them to put one hand over their hearts before they begin a movement and to keep it there as they move. Do they feel a difference in how fast their hearts beat?

### POSSIBLE VARIATIONS

Divide children into smaller groups that look for different types of things. For example, one group can look for leaves while another hunts for rocks.

Expand the search area by taking children outdoors to hunt for the objects, or increase the distance between hiding places.

Create and hide any kind of "treasures" for children to find: letters written on note cards, cutouts of different shapes, or pictures related to a topic in your curriculum.



## PICKER-UPPER VACUUM CLEANER

Cleanup time is a big part of the day for both the children in your care and for yourself. Using imagination is a fun way to get children moving at a moderate pace as they put away toys and supplies.

Materials:

Toys and supplies to be put away  
How to play:

- When it's time to clean up, you can say, "Vroom! Vroom! It's time to turn on your vacuum cleaners to clean up!" Ask children to pretend they are vacuum cleaners. Tell them that their arms are hoses that suck up toys and supplies, and their legs are wheels that move around to put things back in the right places.
- As you clean up together, bend, reach, and grab in all kinds of directions: forward, backward, above, below, around, and through. Learning these vocabulary words will also guide children in the cleanup process and help them build spatial awareness. Make vacuum cleaner sounds as children move around the room and encourage them to join in!



## FAMILY TIME

### MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR FAMILY MEALTIME

- Turn off television, radio, mobile devices, etc., during dinner.
- Have family dinners at least four or five times a week.
- Enjoy positive conversation during the meal.
- Spend an hour eating dinner, conversing, and cleaning up together.

### GET THE CONVERSATION STARTED

- Name one thing you saw this summer that you'd never seen before.
- What is your favorite thing to do outside?
- Who at school makes it feel fun?
- What is it like to be a kid? What is it like to be a parent?
- Who is the funniest person you know?
- Who did you play with today?
- What would you say to someone who was sad?
- What was your last thought before going to sleep last night?
- Tell me what you think the future will be like.
- Why do you think it's important to not give up on something right away?

## DINE TOGETHER

Research suggests that having dinner together as a family at least four times a week has positive effects on child development. **Family dinners have been linked to a lower risk of obesity, substance abuse, eating disorders, and an increased chance of graduating from high school.**

### DEVELOPMENTAL BENEFITS

The sense of security and togetherness provided by family meals helps nurture children into healthy, well-rounded adults. Frequent family dinners have a positive impact on children's values, motivation, personal identity, and self-esteem.

Children who eat dinner with their family are more likely to understand, acknowledge, and follow the boundaries and expectations set by their parents. A decrease in high-risk behaviors is related to the amount of time spent with family—especially during family dinners.

### NUTRITIONAL BENEFITS

Eating dinner together as a family also encourages healthy eating habits and provides a model for children to carry with them into adulthood. Studies show family dinners increase the intake of fruits and vegetables; families who eat dinner together tend to eat fewer fried foods and drink less soda; and family meal frequency is linked to the intake of protein, calcium, and some vitamins.

Here are some mealtime suggestions:

- Cook as a family and include everyone in the preparation process.
- Experiment with fun recipes.
- Create your own recipes.
- Remake old recipes with healthier alternatives.
- Have "theme" cuisine nights such as Italian, Mexican, or Caribbean.
- Know your children's favorite meals and cook them on a rotating basis.

Nightly family dinners may require effort in planning, but the benefits in mental and physical health to you and your family are more than worth it.

### CONVERSATION

Eating dinner together as a family provides the opportunity for conversation. This lets parents teach healthy communication without distractions from smart phones, television, computers, and mobile devices.

By engaging your children in conversation, you teach them how to listen and provide them with a chance to express their own opinions. This allows your children to have an active voice within the family.

Conversations at the dinner table expand the vocabulary and reading ability of children, regardless of socioeconomic status. Family dinners allow every family member to discuss his or her day and share any exciting news. Be an active listener and be sure your child learns to listen as well. Encourage your child to participate. Do not underestimate your child's ability to hold a conversation.

# RECIPE OF THE MONTH

## PUMPKIN APPLE BUTTER

### Ingredients

- 1 (15 ounce) can pumpkin
- 2 Tablespoons brown sugar
- ½ cup apple juice
- ¾ teaspoon pumpkin pie spice



### Directions

- Combine ingredients in a saucepan and mix together.
- Cook on medium-high heat until the mixture boils.\*
- Reduce heat to low and continue cooking for 1½ hours, stir mixture occasionally.
- Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator.
- Serve cold and spread on whole wheat crackers or whole wheat toast.

\*This recipe can be made using a microwave. Use a microwave safe container and cook on high heat until the mixture boils (stir every minute). Continue to cook until it has thickened. For more fun recipes download [THE HEALTHY LUNCHTIME CHALLENGE COOKBOOK](#).

## WELLNESS CHAMPIONS IN THE NEWS!

Justine Champion's Family Child Care was the featured Wellness Champion for the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative's media event held at the Copley-Price Family YMCA. The children participated with community leaders in a cooking demonstration while the cameras rolled. Supervisor Ron Roberts and other community leaders spoke on the topic and several media outlets were in attendance.



### REMEMBER TO UPDATE

#### FRIENDLY REMINDER!

Update your child care provider profile every three months to continue getting referrals to your program.

**Contact us today!**



1-800-481-2151 (local)



[www.bit.ly/crsproviderupdate](http://www.bit.ly/crsproviderupdate)



County of San Diego HHS

a program of



This material was produced by the California Department of Public Health's Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Branch with funding from USDA SNAP-Ed, known in California as CalFresh. These institutions are equal opportunity providers and employers. CalFresh provides assistance to low-income households and can help buy nutritious food for better health. For CalFresh information, call 2-1-1. For important nutrition information, visit [www.CaChampionsForChange.net](http://www.CaChampionsForChange.net).

**OUR MISSION** The YMCA of San Diego County is dedicated to improving the quality of human life and to helping all people realize their fullest potential as children of God through the development of the spirit, mind and body.