

School Wellness News

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SERVICE

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Teacher Break Rooms

Start Media Literacy Education Early

It is important to start media literacy early because of intensive food advertising to kids. The need for media literacy is well summarized in a review article “Food Advertising and Marketing Directed at Children and Adolescents in the US” by Mary Story and Simone French—Division of Epidemiology, University of Minnesota. In recent years, the food and beverage industry in the US has viewed children and adolescents as a major market force. As a result, children and adolescents are now the target of intense and specialized food marketing and advertising efforts. Food marketers are interested in youth as consumers because of their spending power, their purchasing influence, and as future adult consumers. Multiple techniques and channels are used to reach youth, beginning when they are toddler, to foster brand-building and influence food product purchase behavior. These food marketing channels include television advertising, in-school marketing, product placements, kids clubs, the Internet, toys and products with brand logos, and youth-targeted promotions, such as cross-selling and tie-ins. Foods marketed to children are predominately high in sugar and fat, and as such are inconsistent with national dietary recommendations. (The full article is available from: <http://www.ijbnapa.org/content/1/1/3>. and is an open access article.)

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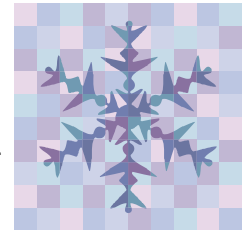
What is media literacy? Media literacy helps students become competent, critical and literate in all media forms so that they control the interpretation of what they see or hear rather than letting the interpretation control them. Media educators have identified five ideas that everyone should know about media messages.

1. All media messages are “constructed.”
2. Media messages are constructed using a creative language with its own rules.
3. Different people experience the same media message differently.
4. Media is primarily businesses driven by a profit motive.
5. Media have embedded values and points of view.

For more information on teaching media literacy, check out Center for Media Literacy website: <http://www.medialit.org/>

AFHK "Families In It Together" Videoconference

The Action For Healthy Kids (AFHK) coalition is planning an upcoming Videoconference training: Families In It Together. This winter's training goal is to get parents to support the wellness policy in their school district and empower them to make change. Conferences are scheduled for January 31, 2007 and February 9, 2007 in St. Paul, Mankato, Marshall, Duluth, Bemidji, Fergus Falls, Rochester and St. Cloud. This is a train the trainer type training. For more information, email: afhkmn@aol.com.



Student Whole Grain Investigations

Challenge students to learn about whole grains:

- What does MyPyramid recommend to eat for whole grains?
- Name different grains that are grown in Minnesota? In the US? In the world?
- What is a whole grain? What is a refined grain?
- Name the parts of a grain?
- What nutrients come from each part of the grain?
- What are the health benefits of eating whole grains?
- How is a whole grain identified in a food label?
- What is a groat?
- How is oatmeal processed—what is the difference between steel cut, old fashioned, quick and instant oatmeal?
- What are the environmental benefits of eating oatmeal (less processing means less energy used, less transportation when grown locally, less packaging if purchased in bulk)
- Compare the costs of different kinds of oatmeal (bulk, individually packaged, old fashioned, quick)
- What vitamins are found in wheat, corn, rice, wild rice and oats?
- What minerals are found in wheat, corn, rice, wild rice and oats?
- What types of fiber are found in whole grains?
- What causes oatmeal to get thick?
- Why do you add oatmeal after water is boiling?
- Identify the whole grains that you eat at home? at school?



Serve Kids Oatmeal for Super Nutrition, Heart Health and Weight Matters

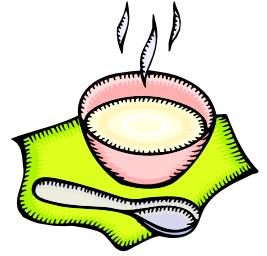
Oatmeal is not only a wonderful hot cereal to serve in the winter; oatmeal is tremendous to serve for nutritional value. In fact, oats are now widely promoted as the “most healthful” grain. Oats contain vitamins, minerals, phytochemicals, antioxidants, and both soluble and insoluble fibers.



Oats are good for the heart and waist.

Beta-glucan, found in abundance in oat and barley fiber, lowers the risk factors for heart disease. Adults and children with diets rich in whole grains are less likely to be overweight or obese. Oatmeal has a high satiety value, which means it helps fill kids up and keeps them full.

To reap the many benefits of whole grains, including oats, the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend eating **at least three servings of whole grain foods each day**. Unfortunately most kids consume less than one serving. Help kids develop a life long liking for oatmeal by serving oatmeal and incorporating oatmeal in foods.



Oatmeal Serving Ideas for the School Cafeteria

Jazz up hot oatmeal with toppings:

- Chopped dried fruit
- Sliced fresh fruit
- Toasted nuts, seeds, and coconut (chop nuts as desired.)
- Frozen berries
- Spices and sweeteners (cinnamon, brown sugar, maple syrup)

Serve cold cereals made with whole grain oat flour.

Add oatmeal to as many foods as you can:

- Oatmeal cookies
- Granola bars
- Fruit and yogurt parfaits topped with granola
- Apple crisp with oatmeal topping
- Oatmeal in muffins and breads

Old fashioned rolled oats, quick oats and instant oats contain similar nutritional value because they contain all three parts of the grain (germ, bran and endosperm.)

Oats Trivia

Oats were first grown somewhere near Germany. The most oats are eaten in Scotland.

Cultures have survived on oat-based diets because of their complete nutritional value.

Oats thrive in cold weather.

Today, 300,000 acres of land are planted in oats in Minnesota. In 1945, 5,392,000 acres were planted in oats.

Oats are a multiple use crop; 85 percent of the US crop is still used for livestock feed.

Oat breeding was one of the first applied research projects at the University of Minnesota.



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Building Healthy Futures
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The University of Minnesota Extension Service connects research-based resources to communities. This newsletter provides information to help implement your local school wellness policy and teach kids and families about nutrition and active living.

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Instant Oatmeal Recipe

Instant oatmeal is a quick, economical and highly nutritious breakfast for kids!

Suggestion for educators: Prepare instant oatmeal in the classroom and send recipe home for families to try.

Ingredient Amounts for Classroom

12 cups quick oatmeal
2 cups dried raisins
1 1/2 cups brown sugar
4 teaspoons cinnamon
2 teaspoons nutmeg (optional)
1 cup sliced almonds (optional)

1. Have kids wash hands before measuring ingredients.
2. Send individual serving sample home with kids to try at home. An individual serving equals 2/3 cups mix.
3. Taste test in classroom if feasible.

Makes 22 servings.

Instant Oatmeal Recipe for Families

6 cups quick oatmeal
1 cup raisins
3/4 cup brown sugar
2 teaspoons cinnamon
1 teaspoon nutmeg (optional)
1/2 cup sliced almonds (optional)



Directions for Single Serving

Stove Top Directions:

1. With adult supervision, bring 2/3 cup water and 2/3 cup *Instant Oatmeal* mix to a boil.
2. Stir and cook for 1 minute.

Microwave Directions:

1. In cereal bowl, microwave 2/3 cup water and 2/3 cup mix for 1 minute. Stir. Let stand 1 minute before serving.

Store mix in air tight container.

Makes 11 servings.