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# *Simply Good Eating* *User's Guide*

Adapted from the *Simply Good Eating* curriculum (1997)  
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# Simply Good Eating User's Guide

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# Simply Good Eating User's Guide

## Overview

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Welcome to *Simply Good Eating*! You'll find this material useful for teaching a variety of audiences about nutrition. The design is intended for use in small group settings. In most cases, the topics may be taught in any order.

The teaching objectives are to help participants learn how to: plan healthy meals, plan meals on a limited budget, stretch the food dollar, and cook with an emphasis on safe food practices. Within each of the topics, a variety of activities and resources can be used. It may not be possible or wise to try to teach all the contents or use all the materials for each topic. Instead, choose strategies that are relevant to your specific audience. If you can, assess the participants' interests and needs before you begin. In the Minnesota Nutrition Education Programs, tools used to assess participants' interest and needs include the "Getting to Know You" form that participants are asked to complete at the beginning of each lesson series. (See "Sample Forms" at the end of this *Simply Good Eating User's Guide*.)

Always congratulate participants on their efforts and encourage them to try the new ideas. After the first session, start each topic with a brief review of the previous topic. Ask participants if they have tried any new ideas, skills, or behavior since the previous class. Follow this with a brief explanation of the purpose of the new topic and some of the activities. In other words, tell them what you have planned for the topic, teach the topic, and when the topic is finished, tell them what was taught. (Tell them what you plan to do, do it, and when finished, tell them what was done!)

## Background

*Simply Good Eating* began in 1994 when Nutrition Education Programs staff met to develop criteria that a new nutrition curriculum should have:

- be usable in individual and group teaching
- be usable with communities of diversity
- have a "hands on" and experiential approach
- focus on skill building and application of knowledge and skills
- meet the program's goals
- use a positive approach
- focus on foods, not nutrients
- limit the use of handouts or written materials

Focus groups consisting of Food Stamp Nutrition Education (FSNE) and Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) participants identified ten broad topics to include in the curriculum:

- basic guidelines for good eating and health
- vitamins and minerals
- food labels
- preparing foods and using recipes
- making meals from what's on hand
- food budgeting, meal planning, and grocery shopping
- food safety
- baby nutrition
- pregnancy nutrition
- preschool nutrition

## Organization

With this revision of *Simply Good Eating*, the curriculum has been updated and organized into four units: *Simply Good Eating for Health*, *Simply Good Eating: Now You're Cooking!*, *Simply Good Eating for Moms and Kids*, and *Simply Good Eating For Seniors*.

***Simply Good Eating for Health*** includes:

**Good Nutrition: As Easy as 1, 2, 3**

- Addresses basic nutrition principles and physical activity as part of a healthy lifestyle

**Vitamins and Minerals: What's in It for Me?**

- Describes key nutrients and how to get them in the diet

**Unlocking the Secrets of Food Labels**

- Teaches about using food label information to make informed food choices

**Breakfast in a Flash**

- Describes the importance of eating breakfast and choosing healthier, lower-fat breakfast foods

**Super Snacks**

- Discusses how to choose healthier, lower-fat, lower-cost snacks

**Fast Foods – The Healthy Way**

- Provides guidance on selecting nutritious, lower-fat fast foods

***Simply Good Eating: Now You're Cooking!*** includes:

**Don't Be Sorry: Keep Food Safe**

- Provides an overview on handling food safely, how to store various foods appropriately, and how to microwave foods safely

**Shop and Save**

- Describes food budgeting, meal planning, and economical shopping practices

**A Quick Guide to Tasty Food**

- Provides guidance to help participants succeed in cooking at home, including proper utensils, food preparation techniques, using herbs and spices for flavor, reducing fat

**Quick Meals from Foods on Hand**

- Provides guidance for making meals from ingredients that participants would commonly have in the kitchen and use most often in cooking

***Simply Good Eating for Moms and Kids*** includes:

**Baby and Me: The How-To's for a Healthy Pregnancy**

- Discusses healthy eating during pregnancy; considerations about breast and bottle-feeding

### **Baby Feeding Tips that Really Work**

- Describes age-appropriate foods and feeding practices for babies, and food safety concerns for babies

### **Healthy Eating for Kids**

- Provides information to help caregivers feed young children healthy meals and snacks and manage the feeding relationship appropriately

### **Food Safety for Kids**

- Provides appropriate food safety activities for youth audiences

*Simply Good Eating For Seniors* includes:

#### **Boning Up on Calcium**

- Explains food choices and eating strategies to help participants eat more calcium-containing foods

#### **Eating for a Healthy Heart**

- Identifies risk factors for heart disease and high blood pressure, and discusses eating habits to reduce intake of fat and salt to reduce heart disease risk

#### **Shopping and Cooking for One or Two**

- Describes strategies to help participants plan meals that are tasty, attractive, and economical when cooking for one or two

## **Chapter and Lesson Format**

The introduction to each chapter includes:

- **Goal of the chapter:** The overall goal of the chapter, summarized in one or two sentences. Each activity also has a purpose statement.
- **Basics:** Key concepts that we want the participants to understand after they have completed the lesson.
- **Learning Objectives:** Measurable behaviors that we can observe participants doing as a result of the lesson.
- **Instructional Activities:** Each activity follows the same format:

*Purpose:* A brief statement that describes the overall lesson in one or two sentences.

*Materials needed:* A list of all materials needed to teach the lesson. Materials include handouts (most of which are included with the curriculum), other handouts available through The Extension Store (<http://shop.extension.umn.edu/>), teaching tools available through the USDA Food Stamp Nutrition Connection website (<http://www.nal.usda.gov/foodstamp/>) and other sources, and other props and teaching aids to help facilitate the lesson.

*Estimated time:* An estimate of the amount of time needed to complete the activity is provided, although actual time may vary depending on the size of the group, participants' abilities, time spent in discussion, etc.

*Begin the Session:* Each lesson begins with a short paragraph reminding the facilitator to review the material covered in the previous lesson and to ask what new skill or behavior participants have tried since the previous class. In some cases, additional instructions for the facilitator to complete are included before the lesson.

*Notes (to facilitator):* Throughout the lesson there may be reminders to the facilitator on important information related to the lesson. Watch for these reminders!

*Conclusions, Check for Understanding and Behavior Change:* A brief summary of concepts taught and reminders to ask each participant to state one or more concepts learned and what he or she plans to try during the next week.

*References and Resources:* Resources used to develop each activity are listed for access as needed; complete citations for references and resources are included at the end of each chapter.

## **Order of the Lessons**

The lessons were not developed with any order in mind. Start teaching lessons that meet your participants' needs and move to lessons that you determine that they need. In the Minnesota Nutrition Education Programs, the needs assessment process begins with asking participants to complete the "Getting To Know You" form, which lists a number of nutrition topics from which participants can select future lessons. (See "Sample Forms" at the end of this *Simply Good Eating User's Guide*.)

## **Your Role**

Before teaching any lesson, read it through carefully. Think about your learners and match the activities in the lesson to their needs and interests. The learning objectives will help you identify clearly what the participants will do differently as a result of the lesson.

Familiarize yourself with the activities. Gather the materials you will need for the activities you plan to teach. Practice teaching the activities so you are comfortable with them. At first, you may want to follow the activities just as they are described in the lesson. However, as you become more familiar with the activities and your participants, you may want to try new ways to do an activity. When revising an activity, always practice the activity before using it with participants. Make sure that if you present an activity in a new way you are still teaching the learning objectives listed.

Some activities include a recipe to prepare as part of the lesson. You may also choose to prepare a recipe with other activities, even if recipe suggestions are not provided. Recipes should reinforce foods or concepts from the lesson you will be teaching. When possible, ask participants to help you choose the recipe.

## **Handouts**

Handouts are included for some *Simply Good Eating* lessons. However, many lessons were planned with few or no handouts, to emphasize the use of activities, discussion, and other interaction with participants. When handouts are provided, encourage the learners to use the handouts fully, by writing notes on them and circling information that is important to them.

Food can enhance many nutrition education experiences. Participants are intrigued by new foods that you show them at various lessons. Participants also benefit from observing how to prepare new foods, and how to prepare familiar foods in new ways. But facilitators must take extra precautions when using food as part of the teaching experience. When demonstrating and teaching with food, facilitators must use safe food handling practices.

Some audiences are at greater risk for developing food-related illnesses. At-risk audiences include older adults, young children, pregnant mothers, and people of all ages with weakened immune systems or chronic illnesses.

If you are preparing food in an unfamiliar setting and cannot check the cleanliness of a kitchen facility ahead of time, be sure that the host agency understands that you must have a clean kitchen. If you find the counters, sink, and appliances are not clean or cannot be cleaned quickly, do not do the food demonstration.

Check the ideas listed below for specific directions for safe food handling. If you have questions, talk to your supervisor or state specialists about ideas for transporting, handling, and preparing food safely.

## Food Safety Tips

***Use commercially available foods or recipe ingredients.*** Do not use foods from your garden or foods that you have canned or frozen yourself.

***Practice good personal hygiene.*** Wash your hands frequently. Keep your fingernails groomed and clean. Check your hands for small cuts. Wear plastic gloves if you have small cuts or an infection on your hands. Keep your hands away from your mouth, nose, ears, eyes, and hair. If you touch your face or hair, blow your nose, or sneeze, wash your hands immediately.

***Throw away used tissues, napkins, or paper towels immediately.*** Do not put them in your pockets or leave them on the counter.

***Wash fresh fruits and vegetables before cutting them.*** Scrub firm vegetables and fruits, such as carrots or melons, with a brush. Some foods such as berries are too fragile to wash vigorously, so rinse them carefully and drain thoroughly. Do not use so-called “fruit and vegetable detergents,” as they are often no more effective than plain water. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the University of Minnesota Extension Service do not recommend these sprays or washes. (*Wash Fruits and Vegetables – Why and How*, 2001, <http://www.extension.umn.edu/info-u/nutrition/BJ779.html>)

***Check all the equipment before demonstrating.*** Also, check the room for adequate electrical outlets and adequate power.

***Use thermometers to check the thermostats in the oven and the refrigerator temperature.*** Does the oven heat to the required temperature setting? If it is inaccurate, can you set the temperature so the oven is the correct temperature? Is the refrigerator temperature at 40°F or colder? A refrigerator needs to have good circulation. If it is full of bag lunches or other leftovers, it is likely that it will not cool food quickly (refer to <http://www.fightbac.org>).

***Check garbage disposals or inquire about how to get rid of your garbage.***

***Sanitize all the previously cleaned equipment and surfaces before and after the food demonstration.*** Use two teaspoons of chlorine bleach in two quarts of warm water as a sanitizing solution.

***Store and transport all ingredients, cold and covered, in a clean insulated carrier.*** Use ice packs among the containers of food to keep it cold. Do not remove the foods from the carrier until you are ready to use them.

***Demonstrate the process of preparing the food or recipe using intact utensils or equipment.*** Be sure that containers and utensils, such as rubber scrapers or spatulas, are free of any cracks or nicks where dirt and microorganisms could collect.

***Use separate pans or utensils for handling raw and cooked products.*** Never place cooked and raw products on the same pan or plate. Always use a clean plate for cooked products.

***Wash your hands carefully.*** Use these six steps as recommended by the Minnesota Department of Health (Minnesota Department of Health, *Handwashing*, Minnesota Food Code Fact Sheet, <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/food/code/handwash.html>):

1. Roll up sleeves and wet hands with warm water.
2. Using soap, not a hand sanitizer solution, work up a soapy lather that covers hands and forearms.
3. Rub hands together for at least 20 seconds; make sure to wash palms, back of hands, between fingers, and forearms.
4. Use a fingernail brush to clean under fingernails and between fingers.
5. Rinse hands and forearms in warm water. Keep fingertips pointed down while rinsing.
6. Dry hands with single-use paper towels or cloth roller towel. Turn off the faucet with paper towels to prevent re-contamination of hands.

***Touch the food as little as possible.*** Use tongs or forks when it is necessary to handle the food.

***If you serve samples of the food you are demonstrating,*** select low-risk items, such as food mixtures using commercial canned foods, well-cooked foods, or washed and peeled fresh fruits and vegetables. Prepare the foods yourself using safe food practices.

***Instead of offering to participants to taste, show only the finished product so people can see what the product looks and smells like.*** Then, serve samples of food that has been prepared by a licensed food facility that also uses safe food handling practices, such as a restaurant or caterer. Consider serving commercially prepared items that do not require handling or preparation, such as low-fat crackers and juice.

***Do not use a bathroom as a source of water or a place to rinse or clean dishes.***

***Do not lick your fingers or utensils during food preparation or serving.***

***Do not taste food using the utensil that you use in cooking it.*** Use a clean fork or spoon each time.

***Do not let participants serve themselves.*** Put samples on separate plates or cups. Do not use a common serving plate.

***Do not serve any food that you have provided that has been at room temperature for more than two hours.***

### How to Make Fat Tubes

Several chapters in *Simply Good Eating* suggest using “fat tubes” to demonstrate the amount of fat found in various foods. You can buy ready-made fat tubes through various vendors, but the ready-made tubes may not include all of the foods you wish to demonstrate to your audience. You can also make your own fat tubes using plastic coin tubes or test tubes and filling them with colored wax to show the amount of fat in foods.

#### You will need the following supplies to make fat tubes:

1. *Obtain coin or test tubes.* Plastic quarter-sized coin tubes that are clear, round, capped, and flat-bottomed can often be purchased from hobby and craft supply stores. You can also obtain coin tubes from hobby supply and coin-collecting supply stores on the Web, including the Collector’s Outpost, Inc. (<http://www.collectors-outpost.com/>, and Centerville Coin & Jewelry (<http://www.centercoin.com/> or <http://www.coins4me.com/>). Prices may range from 35 cents to 50 cents per tube, though you can often save by buying tubes in bulk. You may also check with local hospitals and clinic laboratories to ask if you can obtain plastic test tubes and syringes (without needles) through them.
2. *Buy clear wax.* Most grocery stores sell clear wax. You will need about 4 pounds of wax to make one set of about 30 fat tubes.
3. *Buy several yellow and orange color crayons.* You can make the “fat” a yellow orange color by adding yellow and orange color crayons (peel the paper off!) to the wax.
4. *Use a double boiler* to melt the wax.
5. *Use a plastic syringe*, about 60 cubic centimeter (60-cc) size to fill the tubes; you may also use a graduated cylinder or metal household measuring spoons. For measuring purposes, 1 cc equals 1 gram of fat; 1 measuring teaspoon holds 5 cc, and one tablespoon holds 15 cc.
6. *Find an old wooden spoon* or paint stick to stir the melting wax.

#### To make fat tubes, follow these steps:

1. Arrange newspaper around work area to protect your work surface.
2. Label empty tubes with the desired grams of fat and the name of the food the tube represents. (As an alternative, you can make “generic” fat tubes, each with a specific number of fat grams that have not been labeled as a particular food.)
3. Fill a double boiler with water. Add the clear wax to the top pan and melt. Add yellow and orange peeled color crayons to make the “fat” a yellow orange color. Use an old wooden spoon or paint stick to stir.

- Transfer the hot wax to tubes using a 60-cc plastic syringe or graduated cylinder, if available, or use metal measuring spoons. Work quickly before the wax hardens. Approximately 1 cc or 1 ml of wax equals 1 gram of fat. For example, if you want to prepare a fat tube with 8 grams of fat, fill the syringe with hot wax and expel 8 cc into your tube (or about 1½ teaspoons, if using measuring spoons).

Another way to get the correct amount of wax in the tube is to fill one tube with water to the correct level, then place a second tube next to the first and add wax up to the level of the water level in the first tube. A graduated cylinder, if available, also works well for measuring hot wax. Place filled tubes on a flat surface and let wax cool before capping.

- When transporting and using the finished tubes, be careful not to expose the tubes to heat (for example, in the car, in the sun), or melted wax may leak from tipped tubes through the cap.

**Note:** Another way to illustrate the amount of fat in foods is to use “butter pats.” Each teaspoon or pat of butter/margarine has 4 grams of fat. You can make “butter pats” by cutting a thin piece of yellow foam or yellow sponge into small rectangles the size of real butter pats.

## Amount of Fat in Foods

The following chart is a list of all of the foods mentioned in the *Simply Good Eating* curriculum for the following lessons:

- A Quick Guide to Tasty Food (*Simply Good Eating: Now You’re Cooking!*)
- Super Snacks (*Simply Good Eating for Health*)
- Fast Foods – The Healthy Way (*Simply Good Eating for Health*)
- Breakfast in a Flash (*Simply Good Eating for Health*)

This information can be used to make fat tubes. Foods are listed by *Simply Good Eating* chapter (and by food category, in chapters where numerous foods are listed).

<b>A Quick Guide to Tasty Food</b>	
<b>Food</b>	<b>Grams of fat</b>
Traditional meatballs	43
Traditional meatballs, the healthy way	17
Banana bread	7
Banana bread, the healthy way	2
<b>Fast Foods – The Healthy Way</b>	
<b>Food</b>	<b>Grams of fat</b>
<i>Entrees</i>	
Beef taco, hard shell	13
Breaded chicken sandwich	29
Cheeseburger	15
Chunky chicken salad, breaded	20
Chunky chicken salad, not breaded	11
Double cheeseburger	29
Fried chicken, breast and thigh	52

<b>Food (Continued)</b>	<b>Grams of fat</b>
Fried chicken, breast, thigh and leg, skin removed	17
Grilled chicken sandwich	13
Sub sandwich (about 8 ounces or 6 inches, with cold cuts, meatballs or tuna salad, and cheese)	27
Sub sandwich (about 8 ounces or 6 inches, with turkey, roast beef or ham, no mayonnaise)	7
Taco salad with the shell	35
Taco salad, without the shell	20
<b><i>Sides and Salads</i></b>	
Baked snack chips, 1 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>8</sub> ounces	2
Biscuit	11
Cole slaw	12
French fries, medium	19
French fries, small	12
Garden side salad (without dressing)	2
Mashed potatoes	4
Mashed potatoes with gravy	4
Refried beans with cheese	5
Snack chips, 1 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> ounces	15
Spanish rice	5
<b><i>Desserts</i></b>	
Apple pie	13
Soft-serve ice cream cone, medium	7
<b><i>Beverages</i></b>	
1% milk, 8 ounces	2.5
Milkshake, medium, 16 ounces	11
Soft drink, diet, medium, 20 ounces	0
Soft drink, sugar-sweetened, medium, 20 ounces	0
<b><i>Salad Dressings</i></b>	
Reduced-calorie dressing, 2 ounces	3
Regular salad dressing, 2 ounces	26
<b>Super Snacks</b>	
<b>Food</b>	<b>Grams of fat</b>
<b><i>Bread, Cereal, Rice, and Pasta Group</i></b>	
Bagel, 3 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> inch diameter	1
Doughnut	12
English muffin, 1 plain	1
Graham crackers, 2 large crackers	3
Light microwave popcorn, 3 cups	8
Muffin, 2-ounce	7
Popcorn, popped in oil, 3 cups	9
Pretzels, 2 ounces	2
Ready-to-eat cereal, 1 cup (dry)	1
Regular microwave popcorn, 3 cups	13

<b>Food (Continued)</b>	<b>Grams of fat</b>
Snack chips, corn, 2 ounces	19
Soft pretzel, 3 ounces	2
Toaster pastry, 1	6
<b><i>Vegetable Group</i></b>	
Carrots or carrot sticks, 1/2 cup	0
French fries, small, 3 ounces	12
Snack chips, potato, 2 ounces	20
<b><i>Fruit Group</i></b>	
Apple, medium	0
Banana, medium	0
Grapes, 1 cup	0
Pear, medium	0
Raisins, 1/2 cup	0
<b><i>Milk, Yogurt, and Cheese Group</i></b>	
Frozen yogurt, low-fat, 1 cup	4
Frozen yogurt, not low-fat, 1 cup	8
Milkshake, 16 ounces	11
Premium ice cream bar	21
Premium ice cream (16% milk fat), 1 cup	24
Yogurt, low-fat, fruit flavored, 3/4 cup	3
<b><i>Combination Foods</i></b>	
Baked tortilla chips (2 ounces) and salsa (1/4 cup)	2
Baked tortilla chips (2 ounces) and bean dip (1/4 cup)	5
Cake, 1 slice with icing	10
Carrot sticks (1/2 cup) and low-fat ranch dip (2 tbsp.)	5
Cheddar cheese (1 ounce) with 1 ounce whole grain crackers	13
Cheddar cheese (1 ounce) with 2 ounces whole grain crackers	17
English muffin with jam, 1 tablespoon	1
Pie, 1 slice	19
Ready-to-eat cereal (1 cup) with low-fat (1%) milk (1/2 cup)	2
Snack chips, corn (2 ounces) and chip dip (2 tbsp.)	25
Snack chips, potato (2 ounces) and chip dip (2 tbsp.)	26
Soft-serve ice cream cone, medium	7
Tortilla chips (2 ounces) and con queso dip (1/4 cup)	24
<b><i>Fats, Oils, and Sweets</i></b>	
Candy bar, 1 1/2 ounces	15
Fruit flavored gelatin, 1/2 cup	0
<b>Breakfast in a Flash</b>	
<b>Food</b>	<b>Grams of fat</b>
<b><i>Bread, Cereal, Rice, and Pasta Group</i></b>	
Cereal bar	2
Cereal, not whole grain, 1 cup	1
Cereal, whole grain, 1 cup	1
Doughnuts, 2	24
English muffin	1

<b>Food (Continued)</b>	<b>Grams of fat</b>
Pancakes, three 4-inch	11
Rice, enriched, 1 cup cooked	0
Toast, made with white bread, 2 slices	2
Toast, made with whole wheat bread, 2 slices	2
Toaster pastry, 1	6
<b><i>Vegetable Group</i></b>	
Hash brown potatoes, 1 cup	20
<b><i>Fruit Group</i></b>	
Apple, medium	0
Banana, medium	0
Orange, medium	0
Orange juice, <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> cup	0
<b><i>Milk, Yogurt, and Cheese Group</i></b>	
Whole milk, 1 cup	8
Whole milk, <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> cup	4
1% milk, 1 cup	2.5
1% milk, <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> cup	1
Skim milk, 1 cup	0
Cheese, reduced fat, 1 slice	6
<b><i>Meat, Chicken, Turkey, Fish, Dry Beans, Eggs, and Nuts Group</i></b>	
Canadian bacon, 2 slices	4
Lean ham (5% fat), about 2 ounces	3
Sausage links, 3	12
Scrambled eggs, 2	14
Scrambled eggs, 3	21
<b><i>Combination Foods</i></b>	
Cheese omelet (made with 2 eggs, 1 ounce part-skim mozzarella cheese, and <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> tablespoon margarine)	20
Cheese omelet (made with 3 eggs, 1 ounce cheddar cheese, and 1 tablespoon butter)	36
Pizza, cheese, 1 slice of 14-inch	9
Stir-fry, about 1 cup (made with broccoli, carrots, onions, snow peas, garlic, ginger, vegetable oil, soy sauce)	9
<b><i>Fats, Oils, and Sweets</i></b>	
Bacon, 3 slices	11
Butter, 1 tablespoon	12
Coffee, 8 fluid ounces (with 1 teaspoon non-dairy creamer and 1 teaspoon sugar)	1
Fruit drink, orange flavored, <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> cup	0
Jam, 2 tablespoons	0
Pancake syrup, <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> cup	0
Reduced calorie pancake syrup, <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> cup	0
Soft drink, 20 ounces	0

## Adult Learning Principles

Whether you are teaching nutrition to one person in his or her home, or to a group of adults at a job training center, it helps to think of each adult as a unique learner. Use the following guiding principles as you prepare your lessons.

- *Adult learners can direct their own learning.* Adults learn on their own to decide what is relevant to their lives, and how and when to take in information.
- *Adult learners have strong, individual learning styles.* Use many different kinds of activities to appeal to different learning styles.
- *Adult learners need and want to talk about their experiences.* People learn better when they can think and talk about how their past experience relates to their new knowledge and skills.
- *Adult learners need and want to fit new information into their lives and families.* Participants need to decide that the information they are learning is important for both them and their families. Ask, “How will this fit with your family?”
- *Adult learners need to apply what they have learned.* Ask participants to practice a new skill or behavior in the coming weeks, and check with them at the next meeting.
- *Adult learning happens more easily when learners can decide on their own what they need to learn and can choose their own learning goals and how they want to change.* Participants can set up their own goals for changing their behaviors.

## The Adult Learner

- Is interested in things that concern him or her at the moment.
- Often wants practical, rather than theoretical, information.
- Brings many life experiences and acquired knowledge.
- Is influenced by changing life situations.
- Often wants skills rather than knowledge.
- Wants materials that are personally interesting and valuable.

Some participants may have had negative educational experiences that make them anxious in new learning situations. Be sensitive to those experiences and to the pressure the participants may feel to perform or know the “right” answer. Adult learning most often involves transforming knowledge (i.e., changing what they already know to fit new information) rather than learning new concepts. Changing behavior by transforming the information and making it part of one’s way of living takes time, energy, and trust.

## References:

Knowles, M.S. *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: From Pedagogy to Andragogy*. New York: Cambridge Books, 1980.

Mackeracher, Dorothy. *Making Sense of Adult Learning*. Toronto, Canada: Culture Concepts Inc., 1996.

Merriam, Sharon B., ed. *The New Update on Adult Learning Theory, New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, No 89. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass, 2001.

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# Teaching Methods

The goal of *Simply Good Eating* is to help participants find ways to change their food- and nutrition-related behaviors. Using experiential (hands-on) teaching methods will allow participants to practice making behavior changes. The challenge can be to tailor teaching methods to choose or adapt materials to meet individual learning needs. Consider the following as you plan lessons for individuals and groups.

**Age:** Children and adults have very different needs for information. For example, children are not yet worried about cholesterol; adults have life experiences that the facilitator can build upon; and older adults may have had the same eating habits for decades.

**Health Status:** A person's health status or physical limitations can profoundly affect his or her learning ability. Vision or hearing loss and chronic or temporary illnesses all affect one's ability to learn. Medications can sometimes affect a person's level of alertness or cause mood swings. By getting to know the individual and staff of the community partner organization, the facilitator can often learn about participants' health issues and change teaching methods as needed.

**Mental Health Status:** Some people in your groups may have mental health concerns. When personal issues and medications seem to affect how an individual participates, you will need to change your expectations of both yourself and that individual.

**Learning Challenges:** In community settings, you may encounter participants with developmental delays or other learning challenges. In some cases, participants may have learning disabilities that have not yet been diagnosed. Work with community partners to determine the specific nutrition information that needs to be taught and how to adapt the method for teaching it. Observe, adapt the activities, and modify your materials and methods.

**Outside Circumstances:** Many participants face circumstances in their lives that cause stress and may distract them from taking in the information provided. Family problems, unemployment, or unstable living situations may affect the individual's participation in nutrition education. Patience and understanding can help build a trusting relationship. Help participants see how the information can help them manage their stress levels.

**Culture:** Does the information relate to the participant's culture? Try to learn about the cultural and religious practices of the groups of people that you serve. Does any of the information that you are providing go against any of these practices? What changes can be made? Are culturally inclusive materials available, such as food pictures that include familiar foods?

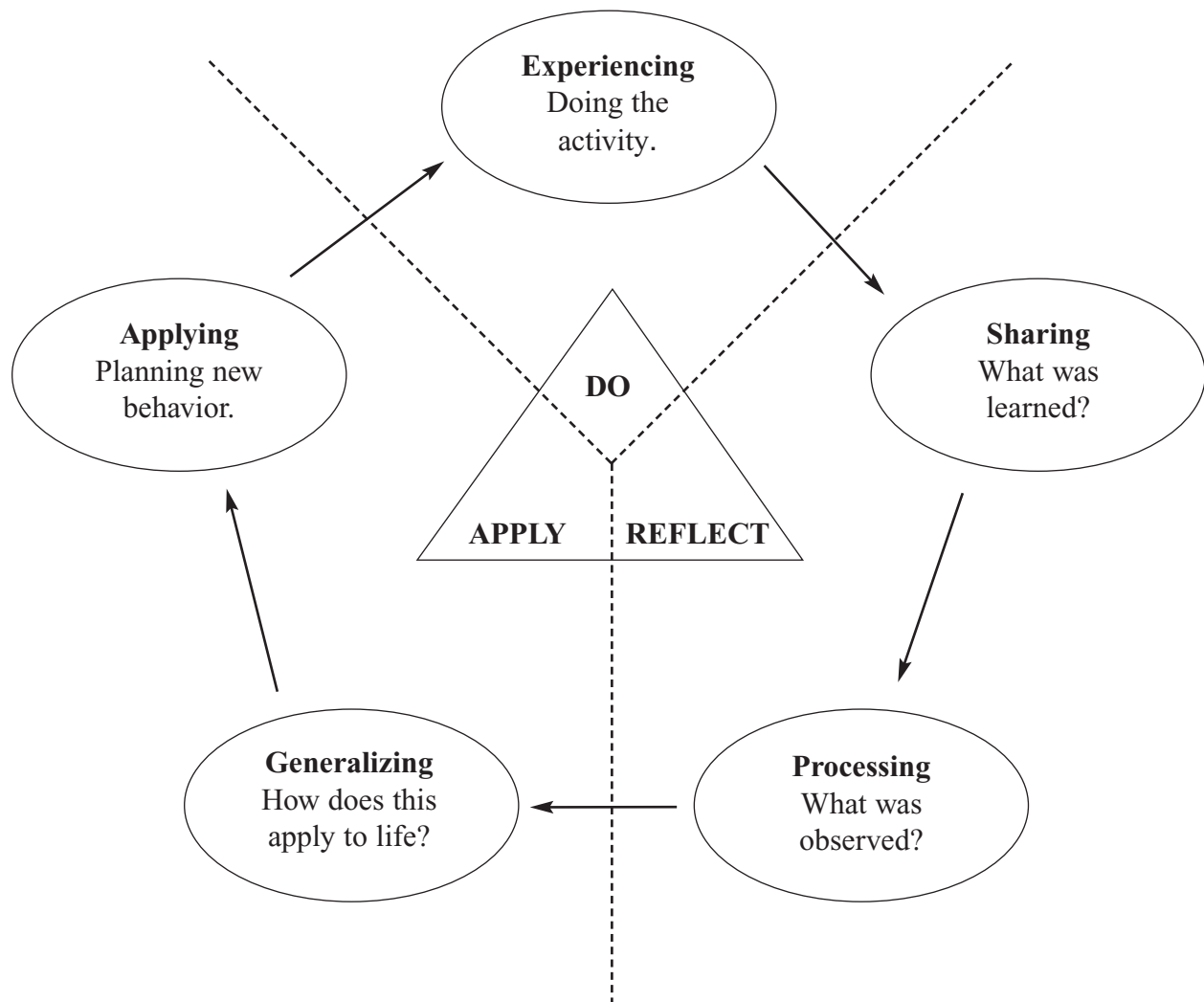
**Language and Literacy Level:** Providing nutrition information in the participant's first language can often be very helpful and respectful. Be aware, however, that some individuals may not be able to read or write in their native language. Others may look to your class as an opportunity to enhance their English language skills.

**Learning Environment:** A classroom filled with very active third graders, a crowded community center meeting room, or a job training center with uncomfortable chairs can all affect how people learn. Can any changes be made to make the space better for people to learn? Setting some ground rules to manage behavior might help. If the situation is unworkable, try to find another place to meet.

# Learning by Doing Using an Experiential Learning Approach

People face decisions about food choices and food safety every day. Experiential learning opportunities can help participants to change their behavior by taking the information they have learned and applying it directly to their own lives. Experiential learning is more than just doing a hands-on activity. It involves asking people to talk about their experiences, discuss the activity, and then apply the information to everyday life. Experiential learning activities are suitable for any age group.

## Phases of the Experiential Learning Cycle



From United States Department of Agriculture, Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service. *Curriculum Development for Issues Programming: A National Handbook for Extension Youth Development Professionals*. 1992, pp.27-28. Also in Pfeiffer, J. W., and J. E. Jones. *The Reference Guide to Handbooks and Annuals*, Vol. 1-10, 1972-1985. San Diego, CA: University Associates Publishers and Consultants, 1985.

## Examples for each of the Experiential Learning Cycle phases include:

**Experiencing:** Involve the group or individual in an activity, such as making and tasting a low-fat snack.

**Sharing:** Engage the group or individual in discussing their experience. Discussion questions might include:

- What was this like?
- Was it easy or difficult to do?

**Processing:** Discuss their observations and the information shared in the activity. Discussion questions might include:

- Did any problems or issues come up during the activity?
- What similar experiences have you had?
- Have you tried to introduce low-fat snacks to your family? What did they like or dislike?

**Generalizing:** Point out experiences that people have in common and relate them to real life. Discussion questions might include:

- Did you learn anything about yourself today?
- How do you usually make decisions about food choices?
- What other things, such as cost, need to be considered?

**Applying:** Discuss how the new information and/or skill can be used in the future. Questions might include:

- How can you apply what you learned to a new situation?
- What changes could you make in selecting and preparing snacks in the future?
- Are there other ways you can reduce fat and sugar in your diet?

## Methods for Engaging Participants in Experiential Learning

A number of methods can be used to engage participants in experiential learning. Examples of methods include:

<b>Drawing</b>	Participants create a picture or an object that represents an experience or concept discussed in the lesson.
<b>Hands-on</b>	Participants practice new skills or are involved in creating a group or individual project.
<b>Discussion</b>	Teacher or facilitator guides an informal exchange of ideas by asking questions or presenting problems and variations to a group(s).
<b>Brainstorm</b>	Participants speak or call out ideas. The facilitator writes the ideas on a flipchart or writing board as they are given, and then leads a discussion.
<b>Case Study</b>	Small groups or individuals respond to written or oral presentations of an event or situation.
<b>Debate</b>	Two people or two groups present opposing views.
<b>Demonstration</b>	Instructor, guest speaker, or participant demonstrates a skill.

<b>Field Trip</b>	The group or individual visits a community site to observe, engage in an on-site activity, and/or talk with staff or local people.
<b>Journal</b>	Learners keep a written record of their experiences.
<b>Role Play</b>	Individuals act out roles to practice skills or empathize with characters. Situations are based on participants' real-life experiences.
<b>Panel</b>	Three or four participants with various backgrounds and opinions are asked to react to a video or speaker.
<b>Games</b>	Participants learn new information and practice new skills by either competing or cooperating in a structured activity.
<b>Critical Incidents</b>	Participants describe an important life event and apply the experience to a new situation.
<b>Storytelling</b>	Participants tell stories that relate to the information or learning activity.

Adapted from: University of Minnesota, College of Human Ecology and the University of Minnesota Extension Service. *The Nutrition Education Assistant (NEA) Handbook*. 2002.

**Sources:**

Jackson, Lewis and Rosemary Cafferella, eds. *Experiential Learning: A New Approach, New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, No. 62. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass, 1994.

University of Minnesota Extension Service. *Leaders/Helpers Guide to Food Curriculum*, 4-H Cooperative Curriculum System Publication 4HCCS BU-07145. 2001.

# Teaching Strategies for Children and Youth Participants

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Teaching children about good nutrition can be enjoyable, but challenging. Children progress through a number of developmental stages that influence their physical, cognitive, social, and emotional growth, all of which affects their ability to learn at a given time.

Eating and activity habits are also influenced by their environments—what food choices are available to them, where they can play, and what eating and activity behaviors are modeled by the significant elders in their lives. In many cases, younger children in particular have limited control over many of their food choices. For the choices that kids cannot control, you likely will plant seeds for the future and help them learn about healthy eating habits that they can continue to develop as they acquire more autonomy.

General strategies for effective nutrition education with children include the following:

- Choose materials and activities that are age appropriate. Introduce new ideas, as children seem ready.
- Identify and emphasize nutrition and healthy choices that kids *can* control, such as washing their hands, or selecting food in the cafeteria.
- Emphasize the importance of eating many different kinds of foods. Introduce children to new foods whenever possible.
- Concentrate on the present. For example, most children are not concerned about heart disease or osteoporosis, but they are concerned about having energy.
- Tell children about how eating the right foods gives them energy for play and helps them do better in school.
- Show kids how advertisements and the media influence how they choose their food.
- Emphasize the benefits of physical activity.
- Have fun! Kids will be more engaged and interested if you get their attention with hands-on activities, like games.

## Learning Characteristics

### 3 – 6 Year Olds

- Are curious, and want to explore and experience new things.
- Are beginning to use ideas and imagination to express themselves. The ideas are not necessarily connected in a logical way, and the children in this age group may not yet understand cause and effect.
- Want to explore how the environment around them works. They are interested in how things look, feel, taste, and smell. They begin to compare similarities and differences in things like size, color, and distance. Activities can include sorting and measuring things.
- Are beginning to understand rules, and at times, can cooperate well with children their own age.

### 7 – 10 Year Olds

- Are beginning to think logically and to better understand cause and effect.
- Can classify information and the relationships between categories. They use concrete thought processes (i.e., think in terms of facts), so activities should use real, observable events.
- Are beginning to depend less on adults and to be less egocentric and more social.
- Have a lot of energy. Activities that encourage physical movement work well.
- Prefer individual evaluation over group competition. They are easily embarrassed, and adults should provide lots of support and encouragement in helping them to complete tasks.

## **11 – 13 Year Olds**

- Generally think logically and symbolically, and are beginning to understand abstract ideas. They tend to think in extremes: ideas are either right or wrong, fun or boring (with very little middle ground).
- Are experiencing many physical and emotional changes as they go through puberty. They can be preoccupied with these changes and are critical of their appearance. Begin to test values, social identities, and behaviors.
- Tend to have intense friendships with one or two people.
- Look for approval from adults, but are beginning to move away from completing an activity just to please an adult to doing something for their own satisfaction.
- Can be argumentative and will challenge adult ideas and opinions.
- Are moving from concrete to more abstract thinking. They often reject ready-made solutions from adults in favor of finding their own solutions. Small groups provide an opportunity to test ideas.

## **14 – 16 Year Olds**

- Tend to be very concerned with themselves and their peer group. Opinions of peers become more important than opinions of parents and other adults.
- See relationship skills as a priority. Many begin dating and are exploring their sexuality.
- Have changeable moods and behaviors. They may be experimenting with adult behaviors. They may act mature one week and childish the next. As they strive for independence, they are seeking successful “adult” experiences.
- Begin to think about their future and start to set goals based on their personal needs and priorities and on those of their peer group. They are likely to reject goals set by others.
- Are competent in abstract thinking skills, but don’t always apply these skills in their own lives. “It won’t happen to me” is an example of their egocentric thought process.
- Can start and finish tasks without supervision. The adult’s role should be that of adviser or coach.

## **17 – 19 Year Olds**

- Are beginning to make the transition to adult life and are concerned with choices about education, careers, and lifestyles. Their goals for the future influence which activities they continue.
- Are becoming more autonomous and need only general directions from adults when given familiar tasks.
- Begin to relate to adults as adults themselves. Often seek acceptance and approval of other adults as they emancipate from parents.
- Make and carry out serious decisions but still need adults for support and guidance.

Adapted from: University of Minnesota, College of Human Ecology and the University of Minnesota Extension Service. *The Nutrition Education Assistant (NEA) Handbook*. 2002.

### **References:**

Evers, Connie Liakos. *How to Teach Nutrition to Kids: An Integrated, Creative Approach to Nutrition Education for Children Ages 6 - 10*. Tigard, Oregon: 24 Carrot Press, 1995.

University of Minnesota Extension Service. *Leaders/Helpers Guide to Food Curriculum*, 4-H Cooperative Curriculum System Publication 4HCCS BU-07145. 2001.



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*Simply Good Eating User's Guide*  
*Sample Forms*





### Adult Getting To Know You

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Ethnicity (check one): \_\_\_ Hispanic \_\_\_ non-Hispanic

Race: \_\_\_ American Indian or Alaskan Native

(Check \_\_\_ Asian

one or \_\_\_ Black or African American

more) \_\_\_ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

\_\_\_ White

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Male: \_\_\_\_\_ Female: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please check current family resources**

\_\_\_ WIC

\_\_\_ Food Stamps (EBT Card)

\_\_\_ Food Distribution (Commodities)

\_\_\_ Head Start

\_\_\_ Free or reduced school meals

\_\_\_ Government Assistance Programs (e.g., Supplemental Security Income, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families)

\_\_\_ None of the above

Number of children in household or for whom you provide care \_\_\_\_\_.

Are you pregnant? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

Are you breastfeeding? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

Would you like more information about food resources available in your community? \_\_\_ Yes

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

NEA: \_\_\_\_\_

Group

Individual

How many people are in your household (yourself, spouse & children under 22)? \_\_\_\_\_

Is your Gross monthly income lower than the income amounts listed? Gross income is your income before taxes. \_\_\_\_\_ Yes If "no" see below

# of people	Gross Income
1	\$1,037
2	\$1,390
3	\$1,744
4	\$2,097
5	\$2,450
6	\$2,803
7	\$3,156
8	\$3,509

For each additional member, add \$354.

**If you answered yes, you may be able to get Food Support.**

If you answered "No" above, is your gross monthly income lower than the income amounts listed below? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes

# of people	Gross Income
1	\$1,475
2	\$1,978
3	\$2,473
4	\$2,983
5	\$3,486
6	\$3,988
7	\$4,491
8	\$4,994

For each additional member, add \$503.



## I'm Interested In Learning More About.....

### Diet Quality

- \_\_\_\_\_ Making better food choices
- \_\_\_\_\_ Eating more fruits and vegetables
- \_\_\_\_\_ Eating more whole grains
- \_\_\_\_\_ Eating breakfast
- \_\_\_\_\_ Eating less fat
- \_\_\_\_\_ Eating less salt
- \_\_\_\_\_ Eating less sugar
- \_\_\_\_\_ Eating fewer calories
- \_\_\_\_\_ Vitamins and minerals
- \_\_\_\_\_ Being physically active

### Food Security

- \_\_\_\_\_ Different food assistant programs
- \_\_\_\_\_ Having enough food available so I'm not hungry

### Food Safety

- \_\_\_\_\_ Hand washing
- \_\_\_\_\_ Keeping the kitchen clean
- \_\_\_\_\_ Cooking foods to the proper temperature
- \_\_\_\_\_ Keeping food safe to eat

### Food Resource Management

- \_\_\_\_\_ Tips to save money when grocery shopping
- \_\_\_\_\_ Using coupons
- \_\_\_\_\_ Gardening, hunting or fishing to save money
- \_\_\_\_\_ Basic cooking
- \_\_\_\_\_ How to store foods for later use
- \_\_\_\_\_ Having enough money to buy food at the end of the month

**Other:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_



## Senior Getting To Know You

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip

**Ethnicity (check one):**

\_\_\_\_ Hispanic \_\_\_\_ non-Hispanic

**Race:**

(Check \_\_\_\_ American Indian or Alaskan Native

one or \_\_\_\_ Asian

more) \_\_\_\_ Black or African American

\_\_\_\_ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

\_\_\_\_ White

**Male:** \_\_\_\_ **Female:** \_\_\_\_

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	
NEA: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Group	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual

How many people are in your household (yourself, spouse or your children/grandchildren under 22)?

Is your *net* monthly income lower than the income amounts listed? *Net Income* is your income after subtracting expenses like shelter, utility and medical costs from your gross income (income before taxes). \_\_\_\_ Yes If "no" see below

# of people	Net Income
1	\$ 798
2	\$1,070
3	\$1,341
4	\$1,613
5	\$1,885
6	\$2,156
7	\$2,428
8	\$2,700

List the ages of all of the children in your household that you provide care for: \_\_\_\_\_

For each additional member, add \$272. **If you answered yes, you may be able to get Food Support.** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please check current family resources**

- \_\_\_\_ Food Stamps (EBT Card)
- \_\_\_\_ Food Distribution (Commodities)
- \_\_\_\_ Government Assistance Programs (e.g., Supplemental Security Income, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families)
- \_\_\_\_ Other
- \_\_\_\_ None of the above

If you answered "No" above, is your *net* monthly income lower than the income amounts listed below? \_\_\_\_ Yes

# of people	Net Income
1	\$1,475
2	\$1,978
3	\$2,473
4	\$2,983
5	\$3,486
6	\$3,988
7	\$4,491
8	\$4,994

For each additional member, add \$503.

Would you like more information about food resources available in your community? \_\_\_\_ Yes



## I'm Interested In Learning More About.....

### Diet Quality

- Making better food choices
- Eating more fruits and vegetables
- Eating more whole grains
- Eating breakfast
- Eating less fat
- Eating less salt
- Eating less sugar
- Eating fewer calories
- Vitamins and minerals
- Being physically active

### Food Security

- Different food assistant programs
- Having enough food available so I'm not hungry

### Food Safety

- Hand washing
- Keeping the kitchen clean
- Cooking foods to the proper temperature
- Keeping food safe to eat

### Food Resource Management

- Tips to save money when grocery shopping
- Using coupons
- Gardening, hunting or fishing to save money
- Basic cooking
- How to store foods for later use
- Having enough money to buy food at the end of the month

**Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Youth Getting to Know You

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade in School: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Ethnicity (check one): \_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic \_\_\_\_\_ non-Hispanic

Race (Check one or more):

\_\_\_\_\_ American Indian or Alaskan Native

\_\_\_\_\_ Asian

\_\_\_\_\_ Black or African American

\_\_\_\_\_ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

\_\_\_\_\_ White

\_\_\_\_\_ Boy \_\_\_\_\_ Girl

Are you a member of a 4-H Club?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Do you live?

\_\_\_\_\_ On a farm

\_\_\_\_\_ In a town or in the country

\_\_\_\_\_ In a city over 10,000 people

\_\_\_\_\_ In a city over 50,000 people

\_\_\_\_\_ In a suburb of a city

