Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Protein is a building block of the body. It builds our bones, muscles, cartilage, skin, blood and so much more. Here are some tips on how to get low-cost proteins into your family's diet.

Shopping for protein sources

- The Protein Food Group includes meat, poultry, fish, eggs, nuts, seeds, beans, and peas.
- Protein foods provide B vitamins, iron, magnesium, and zinc. Seafood and fish also contain various amounts of Omega-3 fatty acids, which are good for the heart. Eating canned fish is a great way to get both protein and Omega 3.
- Cut saturated fats by choosing meats with “lean” on the label, or choose skinless meats. Baking meats, rather than frying, also reduces fat. Saturated fats may increase your risk for high cholesterol and heart disease.

How much?

- Children 2-3 years old need 2-ounce equivalents of protein daily; children age 4-8 need 4-ounce equivalents.
- Girls 9-18 years old need 5-ounce equivalents of protein daily.
- Boys age 14-18 need 6 ½ ounce-equivalents of protein daily.
- Moms, dads, and other adults 19 and older need 5 ½- to 6 ½-ounce equivalents of protein daily.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture (2016), All about the proteins food group; retrieved from http://www.choosemyplate.gov/protein-foods

Nutrients that vegetarians may need to focus on include protein, iron, calcium, zinc, and vitamin B12.

For more tips for vegetarians, visit http://www.choosemyplate.gov/tips-vegetarians.

Physical Activity Corner

Running and walking will make the muscles in your legs and back stronger. Swimming, pushups, pull-ups, and lifting things will make the muscles in your arms and shoulders stronger. Strengthen your back by standing up straight. Get up and move and make all your muscles stronger!