

Health Wealth Kids, Nutrients, and Health

Ann A. Hertzler and Karen DeBord*

Objectives

- To name body parts and nutrients needed for growth and health.
- To identify sugar as a tooth decay agent and fat as an ingredient causing heart disease.
- To name high energy foods and exercises.

Young children can learn about their bodies and foods/nutrients for growth and health. Tracing their body on newsprint or making plaster molds of hands and feet provide ways to compare big/small. Naming and counting body parts-number of eyes, noses, and arms helps children begin to build self-confidence. This unit should focus on individual respect for differences, build on diversity, and assist children in feeling good about themselves.

Comparing Children & Family Members

Note beauty or uniqueness in all traits and positive things about families.

3-5 years

- ▲ What color is your hair?
- ▲ Who else in your family has the same color hair? color and texture (feel) of skin, hair, eyes; freckles? body build and shape? food/exercise patterns?

4-6 years

- ▲ Why are some kids bigger than others? (stage of growth, family type)
- ▲ Share family photos. Who in the family is like you?

In this series, the developmental skills in the preschool years are divided into three general levels:

2-3 years = naming & identifying

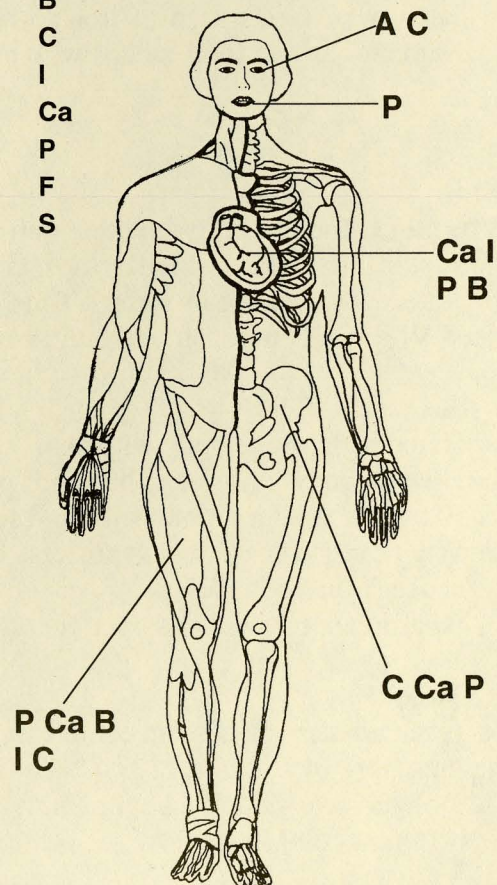
3-5 years = sorting & classifying

4-6 years = ordering, sequencing & comprehension

▲ = suggested activities and questions

Nutrient Symbols

Vitamin A	A
Vitamin B	B
Vitamin C	C
Iron	I
Calcium	Ca
Protein	P
Fat	F
Sweets	S



* Extension Specialist, Human Nutrition and Foods, Virginia Tech; Extension Specialist, Family and Child Development, University of Missouri, Columbia, respectively.

Body Parts & Nutrients

Heart

3 years

- ▲ Name things with hearts.
- ▲ Where is your heart?
Pin a heart picture on your chest.
- ▲ What does the heart look like?
- ▲ Look at chicken or other animal hearts.

3-5 years

- ▲ What does the heart do?
(pumps blood to all parts of the body—eyes, skin, bones, teeth).
- ▲ Why does the doctor place the stethoscope on your chest?
- ▲ When you cut yourself, where do you bleed—leg, foot, fingers?

4-6 years

- ▲ People with “low blood” iron levels are anemic. They do not have much energy. They feel tired. They need foods high in iron to build blood. Name foods and food groups with iron.

Skin

Vitamin C foods work with other nutrients to help build skin. Scaly skin is dried by too much sun, harsh treatment, or soaking in water. Cuts and bruises need **Vitamin C** to repair and build new skin.

3 years

- ▲ Name parts of the body with skin.
- ▲ How do body lotions and bandaids protect skin?
- ▲ Experiment with lotions, oils, and sunscreen.
- ▲ What can you do to prevent blisters, dry skin, skin cancer from too much sun?
(sunscreen, hat, and shoulder covering)

3-5 years

- ▲ Compare skin shades and complexions of family members, of children.
- ▲ Do you have skin like your parents?
different color?

4-6 years

- ▲ Describe hands before and after washing dishes.
-before and after scrubbing floors and tables,
-before and after indoor and outdoor activities.

Teeth

3 years

- ▲ Name things with teeth and tell what teeth do (bite, chew/grind).
- ▲ Make teeth brushing rhymes. Brush, brush, brush your teeth, up, down, back, and forth.
- ▲ When do baby teeth appear?
When do you lose baby teeth?
- ▲ Which part of the tooth do you brush?

4-6 years

- ▲ Have a dentist or dental hygienist talk about which teeth are for biting. –for grinding.

Bones

3 years

- ▲ Name body parts with big bones (arms, legs); with small bones (fingers, toes).
- ▲ Use a Halloween skeleton to sing—“Your foot bone is connected to your leg bone....”

3-5 years

- ▲ Look at bones from meat, fish, and poultry (outside and inside the bone).
- ▲ Which bones are hard, soft? small, big? Why?

4-6 years

- ▲ Tell about people with broken bones.
- ▲ Why did the bone break?
- ▲ How did they take care of the broken bone?

Eyes

Vitamin A helps the eye to adjust quickly to bright lights so it is easy to see in the dark. Many people need glasses for reasons unrelated to nutrition.

3 years

- ▲ Name eyes and what they do.
- ▲ Where are your eyes?
- ▲ What do eyes do?

3-5 years

When you go from bright areas (sunshine, lights, bright snow) to dark areas (movie theater, dark road), it is difficult to see.

- ▲ Can you see in the dark?
- ▲ Do eyes adapt?

Risks

Sugar—Tooth Decay

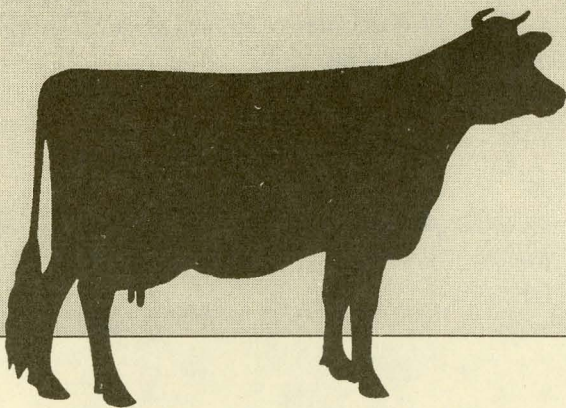
3 years

- ▲ Name sweets (See Virginia Cooperative Extension Publication 348-013, *Sugar*.)
- ▲ What foods contain sugar? Are these foods eaten alone?
or with other foods?
- ▲ What can you plan for sugarless holiday celebrations so sugar is not the food focus?
Banana Birthday
Healthy Holidays
Fruit Festivals
Broccoli Party
Carrot Celebration
4th of July Juice Jamboree
Grapefruit Gala
Cottage Cheese Holiday
Fajita Fiesta
other?

Creative Play

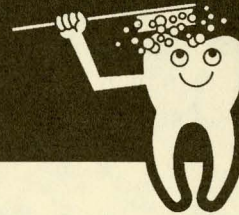
Prop Box—dairy farmer

picture of cows
large boxes for barns
milk pails
hats
coveralls
farm animal models
unit blocks
milk cartons
boots
books about a dairy farm



Prop Box—dentist

dental charts
tooth brushes
mirrors
set of teeth
books about the dentist
tooth charts
dental floss
capes
healthy food pictures



Tell how to keep teeth healthy.

3 years

- ▲ What foods have very sticky sugars?
(caramels, etc.)
- ▲ Do you brush after eating sugars?
sticky sugars?
How many times a day?
- ▲ Demonstrate how to brush.
- ▲ Practice tooth brushing. Divide into helper/partners.

3-5 years

- ▲ Invite a dentist, hygienist, nutritionist to talk about dental health.
- ▲ Some dentists stock chewable **disclosing tablets** to help spot missed places after brushing. Do this outside where preschoolers can be messy and experiment freely.

4-6 years

- ▲ Bacteria living in the mouth eat sugar, make acid, and decay teeth. Explore how sugar decays teeth.
- ▲ Explore how milk and calcium build strong teeth and bones.

Risks Health Wealth

Foods and nutrients providing energy are protein, fat, and carbohydrate (sugar and starch). Fat contains more than twice the energy of protein, starch, or sugar. Exercise burns energy to help maintain weight. Exercise also keeps you fit by keeping the heart and bones healthy.

3-5 years

Everyone needs some food fat every day. Many people are trying to cut down on the amount of fat in the food they eat because of heart problems.

- ▲ Name unhealthy fat foods.
- ▲ Use the Fat Test in Virginia Cooperative Extension Publication 348-652, *Cart Smart*, to find fat foods.
- ▲ Which iron foods are high in fat?
- ▲ How can you tell a fatty food?

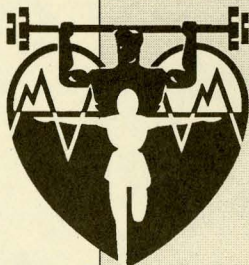
Heart Health Energy

3 years

- ▲ Name ways the body uses energy.
- ▲ Name exercises and activities for younger or older people; for reclining, sitting, walking; for outdoors, indoors; for leg or arm exercises.
- ▲ Feel pulses

3-5 years

- ▲ When does the heart beat fast and use lots of energy?
(running, jumping)
- ▲ When does the heart beat slow and use little energy? (sleeping, sitting).
- ▲ Compare heart beat, pulse rate, and breathing rate for yourself and your family.
- ▲ Heart Parade Exercise (fast run/skip/jump).
I'm a little heart that pumps and pumps
*I go fast when I **jump** and **jump** (substitute activities)*
When I eat my iron rich food
It puts me in a really good mood!



Prop Box—exercise instructor

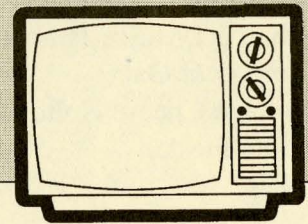
- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| leg cuffs | exercise outfit |
| exercise mats and chart | soda bottles with water for weights |
| tennis shoes | leotards |
| exercise tapes | records |
| posters | steps |
| rubber to stretch | |

Creative Play—TV stereotypes

Videotape excerpts from soap operas, sitcoms, and cartoons to show to children.

- ▲ Ask children to name/show exercises the TV characters do and foods they eat.
- ▲ Are fat and skinny people shown on TV?
- ▲ Are they viewed as good or bad or funny?
- ▲ How do we treat heavy men?
heavy women?

(See Virginia Cooperative Extension Publication 348-008, *Kids, Foods, and Television*.)



4-6 years

- ▲ Use a stethoscope to listen to the heart pump blood.
- ▲ Let children put their ears to partner's chest to listen to heartbeat.
- ▲ Place hand on own heart to feel beat after vigorous exercise.
- ▲ Classify foods or nutrients advertised on TV and in magazine ads and in stories for energy; for healthy hearts.
- ▲ Are children in TV using a lot or a little energy? adults? grandparents?
- ▲ Are they pictured eating a balanced diet—iron? fat?
- ▲ When you watch TV, are you using a lot or a little energy?

Respect differences. We are all different. Begin by noting physical attributes: taller, shorter; bigger, smaller; heavier, lighter.