

Up, Down, Move Around **Nutrition** and **Motor Skills**

Active Learning for Preschoolers



Deborah Kayton Michals

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Nutrition and
Motor Skills

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by Deborah Kayton Michals

Dedication

This book is dedicated to the inspirational examples and memories of my mother, Marjorie Kayton—a creative and passionately committed preschool music and movement teacher; and my grandmother, Lillian Klempner—a dedicated teacher who practiced fitness and nutritional awareness to age 102.

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Up, Down, Move Around Nutrition and Motor Skills

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Introduction

Well-balanced nutrition and physical activity are key components of a healthy lifestyle. *Up, Down, Move Around–Nutrition and Motor Skills: Active Learning for Preschoolers* offers practical, easy-to-use ideas that fit seamlessly into your already-packed classroom schedule.

The nutrition activities are designed to help you address nutritional requirements and standards:

- Teach children what a healthy, well-balanced diet is.
- Provide lots of opportunities for children to learn about and explore healthy foods.
- Offer children developmentally appropriate food-related activities.
- Broaden children’s food experiences.

You can easily adapt the activities in this book to emphasize the healthy, available, and locally grown foods that make up a well-balanced diet in your area.

The exercises uniquely combine nutritional learning with physical activity so that children are accomplishing goals in both areas.

Many physical fitness and nutrition programs separate the two components. The nexus of physical activity and contextual learning in the exercises can be an optimal, engaging, and enjoyable way of teaching preschoolers about healthy nutrition and exercise. By linking nutrition to physical fitness and motor skills, the preschooler will understand the idea that healthy eating and physical fitness go together.

Up, Down, Move Around–Nutrition and Motor Skills: Active Learning for Preschoolers provides the tools to help you develop gross and fine motor skills through fun, noncompetitive activities.

- Encourage children to explore their physical strengths and abilities.
- Create an atmosphere in which all ability levels are respected and accepted.
- Reach children who do not respond well to more sedentary activities or listening while sitting.
- If there are children in your class who have special needs, use the activities to highlight positive aspects of the way they learn.
- Reach English-language learners by helping them associate concepts with words before they actually know the vocabulary.

Preschool children need to move, and physical activity is a proven pathway to cognitive learning for this age group. Active play provides the most effective learning for preschoolers, giving you wonderful opportunities to influence children’s learning in both hemispheres of the brain. Active learning sharpens auditory discrimination and multiple-intelligence learning as children listen to and process information, translating that information into physical activity. A child’s attention becomes more focused during physical activity, and a great learning opportunity exists at this peak of focus.

I started out as a young teacher and dancer, teaching movement education in motor-skill development, creative thinking, self-confidence, and problem solving. As I taught, directed programs, and trained others over the course of more than 25 years, I saw that it was possible to use these methods to teach essential material from the rest of the preschool day. My experience integrating these aspects of action and learning inspired me to incorporate fitness, body awareness, and obesity prevention into a total-child approach. Then, First Lady Michelle Obama’s 2009 “Let’s Move” public-awareness campaign motivated development of this book, a user-friendly guide to incorporate children’s movements in developing their cognitive abilities.

According to a report issued by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, more than 21 percent of preschool children in the United States are overweight or obese, and poor diet and lack of physical exercise are contributing factors. To combat childhood obesity, teaching children physical fitness from an early age is essential. If you teach children about nutrition and motor-skill exercises, you increase children’s lifelong awareness of the importance of proper nutrition and physical fitness. By incorporating physical activity seamlessly into the structure of the school day, it naturally becomes an integral part of how children learn, how they grow, and how they think and feel about their bodies. The body is a child’s first playground, and by connecting it clearly to the learning process, it can remain so in a world in which technology competes for their attention.

How to Use the Exercises

These exercises are keyed to specific research components—exposure to foods, social influence of peer and adult role models, and eating patterns—that have shown results in encouraging preschool children to learn about nutrition and make healthy food choices.

The exercises combine learning in nutrition with physical action so that children connect nutritional awareness with the physical fitness of their bodies. The motor-skill exercises utilize innovative creative structures and games for a noncompetitive fitness curriculum that can be done in any classroom.

The exercises are flexible and easy to incorporate into your classroom routine:

- No special materials, props, or extra space are required. Everything you need is already in your classroom!
- Exercises can be done as 5- to 10-minute enrichment activities with your regular curriculum lesson.
- Activities can be extended from 10 to 20 minutes to use as self-contained lessons.
- Exercises can be stacked, in groups of two to five, for up to an hour's worth of physical activity.
- Use the exercises toward the 60 minutes of structured physical activity recommended for preschoolers in national guidelines, and complement your standard physical fitness games and exercises.*
- Use the activities with large and small groups, in circle time, and as transitions. Small-group time allows for more particularized attention to the individual child; whereas, whole-group exercises benefit from the high energy level and multiple shapes and suggestions of a larger group.

Up, Down, Move Around—Nutrition and Motor Skills: Active Learning for Preschoolers presents solutions to the problem of fitting enough physical activity into your school day. Give the children in your classroom the physical activity and fitness they need while learning and working toward meeting your goals in nutrition and motor skills. Enjoy moving the children and yourself with productive action throughout the day!

*National Association for Sports and Physical Education. 2009. *Active Start: A Statement of Physical Activity Guidelines for Children from Birth to Age 5*, 2nd ed. Reston, VA: NASPE.





Move for Nutritional Learning



The Way We Eat

Where Food
Comes From

Making Healthy Choices

Yummy Foods that
Help Me Grow

Make Transitions Fun

This Is the Way We Eat Our Meal

Teach the children the progression of mealtime and a slow, healthy rhythm of eating.

How to Do It

1. Teach the children the following song, sung to the tune of "Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush."
*We get ready to eat our meal
Eat our meal, eat our meal.
We get ready to eat our meal
So we can have our snacktime. (or breakfast, lunchtime, dinner)
This is the way we wash our hands
Wash our hands, wash our hands.
This is the way we wash our hands
So we can have our snacktime.
This is the way we set out the plates
Set out the plates, set out the plates.
This is the way we set out the plates
So we can have our snacktime.*
2. Continue singing, adding stanzas to describe the steps of eating: set out our cups, place our forks, sit at the table, use our forks, chew our food, drink our water, clear our plates, wash our plates, and so forth.
3. Sing the song again, miming the actions.

Expand It!

Encourage the children to sing this song when they play in the home living center or as the class prepares for mealtime.

Eat Breakfast! Eat Breakfast!

Use this fun call-and-response to reinforce the importance of eating a healthy breakfast in the morning.

How to Do It

1. While standing, start by tapping a steady beat on your legs.
2. Teach the children the following call-and-response:
Teacher: What do you do when you get up?
Children: Eat breakfast! Eat breakfast! (shimmy and shake head and body side to side)
Teacher: What do you do when you start the day?
Children: Eat breakfast! Eat breakfast! (shimmy and shake)
Teacher: What do you do after you get dressed?
Children: Eat breakfast! Eat breakfast! (shimmy and shake)
Teacher: What do you do to have a good day?
Children: Eat breakfast! Eat breakfast! (shimmy and shake)
All Together: Eating breakfast every day is the way I feel okay!
Eating breakfast every day is the way I say hurray! (Jump up in air)

Expand It!

Talk about the foods that make a good breakfast: oatmeal and milk with fruit, yogurt and cereal, eggs and toast, and pancakes. Ask the children to share their ideas about what makes a healthy breakfast.



Wash Your Hands Dance

Teach children healthy hygiene habits and develop their cross-patterning mobility.

How to Do It

1. Invite the children stand in a circle with feet hip-distance apart in a comfortable position.
2. Ask them to act out the following directions:
 - Pick up the soap* (pretend to pick up a bar of soap)
 - And turn on the water.* (pretend to turn on faucet)
 - Wash your hands* (Rub hands for eight counts)
 - And shake them off.* (Shake hands with open fingers for eight counts)
 - Wash them high,* (Rub hands together overhead)
 - Wash them low,* (Rub hands together as you lean over)
 - Shake them to the left,* (Turn to left and shake hands as if flinging water)
 - Shake them to the right.* (Turn to right and shake hands as if flinging water)
 - Shake them, shake them* (Shake hands with open fingers for eight counts)
 - With all of your might! Grab a towel,* (Mimic reaching for a towel)
 - Dry them well,* (Clap hands right, then left)
 - Clean and neat* (Extend right arm, then left. Cross arms touching hands to opposite shoulders)
 - Let's eat!* (Open arms, close arms, and clap hands)



I Help Set Up and Clean Up

Reinforce responsibility, self-respect, fine motor skills, and math skills of one-to-one correspondence and patterns—all by setting the table!

How to Do It

1. This activity works well with small groups of children, and it is a great way to use placemats that the children make themselves.
2. On a table, provide enough placemats, plates, cups, forks, spoons, and napkins for all of the children in the group.
3. Set one place setting on the table where the children eat their meals. Include a placemat, plate, cup, fork, spoon, and napkin. Ask the children to notice the elements of the place setting.
4. Say, "It's time to set the table! What do we need?" Listen as the children offer their suggestions:
 - Placemats! Where do they go? In front of each chair.
 - What comes next? Plates! Where do the plates go? One plate in the middle of each placemat.
 - Next we need napkins. Where do they go? Next to the plate on this side (point to left side).
 - Now what do we need? Forks and spoons! How many forks and spoons do we need? How many children are here in our group? We need one fork and one spoon for every child.
 - Where do the forks and spoons go? The fork goes on one side of the plate, over here (point to left side), and the spoon goes on the other side of the plate (point to right side).
 - Now what is missing? A water or milk cup. Where does it go? Above the spoon, on this side of the plate (point to the right side).
5. Say, "Look, our table is all set!" Pretend to eat, or eat a snack together.

Expand It!

Encourage the children to set the table in the home living center, or let them take turns setting the table for lunch or snack.

Yes, Please, and No, Thanks!

Reinforce social skills as you teach children to say, “Yes, please!” to healthy foods and “No, thanks!” to unhealthy foods.

How to Do It

1. Ask the children to stand in a line. Teach them how to respond when someone offers them something: to nod their heads as they say, “Yes, please!” or to shake their heads as they say, “No, thanks!”
2. Tell them they will get to practice responding politely when someone offers them food. For example, you might offer the children a healthy food, such as apple slices. Ask them how they would respond politely if they were offered apple slices: “Yes, please!” with a vigorous nod.
3. Have fun making up your own variations. Next, offer them an unhealthy food, such as fried pickles. Ask them how they would respond politely to the offer of fried pickles: “No, thanks!” with a vigorous shake of the head.

Expand It!

Ask for volunteers to offer the class a food. How will the class respond politely to each offer?



The USDA provides great information on portion sizes and well-balanced nutrition at www.ChooseMyPlate.gov.

I Serve Myself Some Food

This is a fun activity to do along with teaching about proper portion sizes and how much to eat at each meal or snack.

How to Do It

1. Ask the children to sit in a big circle.
2. Teach them the following song to the tune of "The Farmer in the Dell."
I serve myself some food. (Use big gestures to mime serving yourself some food.)
I serve myself some food, (Mime serving yourself some food.)
I serve myself and that's enough,
That's enough to eat! (Nod head)
3. Talk with them about the types of foods to eat in a well-balanced diet: fruits, vegetables, grains, proteins, and dairy. Ask them to name some of the foods from each category that they would like to eat.
4. As you discuss each food category, sing the song and pretend to serve yourselves some of those foods. For example, ask, "What proteins do you like? Chicken? fish? beans?" (Listen to the children's responses.) Say, "Yum! Let's eat!" and sing the song together:
I serve myself some beans.
I serve myself some beans,
I serve myself and that's enough,
That's enough to eat!

Expand It!

Go around the room and ask each child what his favorite food is. Have him show the actions of one verse for his classmates.

Chew-Chew!

Teach the children a calm, slow pace for eating meals.

How to Do It

1. Ask the children to sit in circle. Establish a rhythm by tapping your knees.
2. Begin with a fast rhythm. Say, "If you eat fast, your tummy will ache." Mime chewing quickly and making funny faces. Then, rub your tummy and pretend to ache.
3. Slow the rhythm and say, "But if you eat slowly, you'll feel great!" Mime slow chewing, then pat your tummy and raise your hands in a cheer, "Hooray!"
3. Repeat, asking for volunteers to lead the actions.

Expand It!

Do this activity as a transition to lunch or snacktime, or any time the children have to wait for a few minutes between activities.



The Food Rainbow

Teach the children that healthy, delicious foods come in lots of colors. The more colors we eat, the better!

How to Do It

1. Gather the children on one side of the room, and ask them if they have ever seen a rainbow. Ask them if they know some of the colors in a rainbow. Let them offer their ideas. Name any of the colors that the children do not name.
2. Say, "Let's make a rainbow." Start on one side of the room, crouched low, and raise arms up overhead as you make the arc of the rainbow as you move together across the room. Crouch again on the other side of the room.
3. Repeat the action, naming a different color (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple) each time.
4. Tell them that healthy foods from nature come in all the colors of the rainbow. Say, "The rainbow comes after the rain, which helps our foods of many colors grow! Let's see what colors of the rainbow come out of the ground."
4. Ask, "What foods can you think of that are red?" Encourage the children to name some foods. (Note: If a child names an artificially colored food, explain that that food does not come from nature and is not as healthy for us. Give that child another chance to name a food.)
5. As the children name foods, such as apples or tomatoes, say, "Let's find them! An apple is red. Let's go find an apple tree and pick some apples." Pretend to search around the room for an apple tree and reach up high to pick some apples.
6. Continue naming foods that are different colors of the rainbow, pretending to search for and gather them:
 - Red—apple, tomato, strawberry, raspberries, pepper
 - Orange—pumpkin, peach, cantaloupe, carrots, oranges
 - Yellow—banana, corn, pepper, lemon, pineapple
 - Green—grapes, pear, kiwi, broccoli, peas
 - Blue—blueberries
 - Purple—plum, figs, eggplant, cabbage, grapes

Expand It!

- Take the foods back to the home living center or restaurant dramatic play area and prepare them to eat, then have a "feast."
- Bring in actual foods of different colors to spark the exercise and to taste afterward.

What's on My Food Plate?

This fun song will reinforce the importance of eating healthy foods every day.

How to Do It

1. Teach the children the following song, sung to the tune of the Christmas carol "Up on the Housetop":

What's on my food plate? (Children look at "plate" in their arms)
Oh, let's see! (Dance around with "plate")
Fruits and vegetables,
Grain, and protein!
Vegetables, fruits!
Protein and grain!
I'll eat it today and tomorrow again!

(chorus)
Oh, oh, oh! That's what I know! (nod head yes)
Oh, oh, oh, and I can show you! (Hold "plate" out to show it)
I'm going to eat some every day,
Because I know I'll grow that way!
What's on my food plate? (Children look at "plate" in their arms)
Oh, let's see! (Dance around with "plate")
Fruits and vegetables,
Grain, and protein!

2. Change the categories of food to name specific foods, for example:

What's on my food plate? (Children look at "plate" in their arms)
Oh, let's see! (Dance around with "plate")
Apples and carrots,
Rice and fish!
Broccoli, pears!
Nuts and pasta!

Expand It!

Sing this song as a transition to meals or snacktime.

Healthy-Eating Obstacle Course

Teach children about good nutrition while reinforcing counting, pattern sequencing, and fine and gross motor skills.

How to Do It

1. Set up an obstacle course using mats, climbing wedges, and tunnels.
2. Set up five stations along the way: breakfast, morning snack, lunch, afternoon snack, and dinner. Post photos or the children's drawings of the healthy foods that can be "eaten" at each station, for example:
 - Breakfast: Children cup their hands to make a "bowl," pour cereal into bowl, pour milk into bowl, hold spoon, and eat.
 - Morning Snack: Children pretend to peel a banana and eat.
 - Lunch: Children pretend to make a sandwich using one hand as "bread," put on healthy sandwich ingredients, top with the other slice of bread (hand), and eat.
 - Afternoon Snack: Children pretend to dip carrots into hummus. Pick up carrots, dip, eat, and repeat!
 - Dinner: Children pretend to fill a healthy plate containing a protein, a grain, a vegetable, and a fruit.
3. Ask the children to begin at "home base." Practice the actions and the counting with children as a group while they stand in line for their turns. The first child will move to the first station where he will prepare a healthy breakfast. As he works, the child and the children who are waiting count the steps: One, make a bowl; two, pour cereal in the bowl; three, pour in some milk; four, hold a spoon and eat.
4. The child next moves to the morning snack station. There, the child counts the steps one through four as he peels, peels, peels, and eats a banana.
5. Child continues through each station, counting the four steps in each.
6. When he completes the dinner station, he runs to home base to wait for the rest of the children to finish the course.

Expand It!

Encourage the children to roll, jump, turn and jump, or gallop as they move through the obstacle course.

How Does the Garden Grow?

Support the children’s understanding of how different plants grow.

How to Do It

1. Invite the children to join you in a circle. Teach them the following rhyme.

Does it grow in the ground? (crouch down)
Does it grow on a tree? (stand up and reach out with arms)
Does it grow on a stalk? (arms reach up high)
Oh! Let me see!
Does it grow on a bush? (crouch down with round arms)
Does it grow on a vine? (stand, reach out with wavy arms)
Does it grow up a wall? (bring hands down, then “grow” up with arms high)
How does it get really tall?
When I eat all these things (sway to rhythm of rhyme, head side to side)
So healthy and good
I also will grow
And grow like I should!

2. Name a fruit or vegetable, such as a grape. Ask the children, “How do you think it grows?” Listen to their responses, giving each child a turn to guess.
3. Tell the children how the fruit or vegetable grows: in or on the ground, a tree, a stalk, a bush, or a vine. “A grape grows on a vine!”



Water Everywhere

Support children’s understanding of the water cycle and the importance of drinking enough water.

How to Do It

1. Invite the children to stand with you in a circle. Tell them, “Water is everywhere around us!” Ask the children to tell you the places they have seen water—lakes, rivers, a swimming pool, the ocean. Accept all responses.
2. With the children, pretend to swim through water, making big arm motions and pretending to come up for air.
3. Crouch down with the children; then, tell them that when the sun shines, it turns the water into vapor that goes up into the clouds. Slowly rise up to the sky and reach up, up, up!
4. Tell them that the rain falls down, down, down from the clouds. Slowly trickle back down to the floor like raindrops falling from a cloud.
5. Tell the children that the water flows back into the rivers, lakes, and oceans. Pretend to swim through water again.
6. Tell the children that plants and animals need to drink water. Encourage the children to show how animals or plants drink water.
7. Tell the children that people need water, too, to stay healthy. Ask the children to pretend to drink water.
8. Ask them where they can get good, clean water to drink:
 - from the water faucet (Pretend to turn on a faucet.)
 - from a water fountain (Pretend to drink from a fountain.)
 - from a bottle (Pretend to fill a water bottle and drink from it.)
9. Say, “I’m thirsty from all this talk about water. Let’s get some real water now!” Take the children to the water fountain or fill a pitcher with water and pour into cups for all.

Even very young children can have a basic understanding of the water cycle:

- Rainwater falls down, down, down from clouds.
- The water falls on plants and animals and people, who drink it up.
- The water collects in big lakes, flowing rivers, and deep oceans.
- The sun shines brightly and turns the water back into a vapor.
- The water vapor goes up, up, up into the air where it collects as clouds.

WHERE FOOD
COMES FROM

Pumpkin Patch

Use this imaginative activity to support children’s learning about how pumpkins grow and how they are used.

How to Do It

1. Gather the children together and ask them if they know what a pumpkin is. Listen as the children describe pumpkins. If possible, provide a real pumpkin for the children to examine.
2. Tell the children, “Today, we are all going to be pumpkins. Spread out around the room on the floor to make a pumpkin patch!”
3. Ask, “How would you become a little seed in the patch?” Crouch down and roll into a ball like a seed.
4. Explain, “We pumpkins grow from the seeds, starting small and then growing bigger and bigger on our vines. Show me how you grow to a small pumpkin.”
5. Say, “Now show me how you grow bigger and rounder.” Encourage the children to pretend to be pumpkins growing larger.
6. Say, “Now let’s jump up and pretend to be the people who are coming to pick the pumpkins! We are walking through the patch. Which pumpkin do we want to bring home? Look around to choose one. When you find one, pick it up and carry it. Skip around and have some fun! Skip around while carrying your pumpkin!”
7. Ask, “When you take your pumpkin home, what will you use it for?” Listen as the children tell you how they will use their pumpkins: pumpkin pie, dried pumpkin seeds, or a special carving for a holiday.

Expand It!

Toast pumpkin seeds to share with the children.

The Fruit Tree Story

Support children's understanding that some yummy fruits grow on trees.

How to Do It

1. Ask the children to name some fruits that grow on trees. If they are not sure, suggest a few: apples, pears, peaches, plums, or any fruits that grow in your area. If possible, show the children pictures of these trees, or offer the real fruit for them to examine.
2. Tell them, "We are going to pretend to go apple picking!" (Or name any fruit that is available in your area.)
3. Ask the children to stand up and spread out. Say, "We climb and climb up the big, big tree." Encourage the children to pretend to climb up a tree using big arm and leg motions.
4. Ask, "We're at the top—what do we see? Pretend to look around. Say, "Apples for you and you!" Everyone jump for joy!
5. Pretend to gather all the apples on the tree, reaching way up high and bend low to put the apples in your basket.
6. Say, "Okay, now we're finished! Let's climb down!" Pretend to climb back down the tree, using big arm and leg motions.
7. Invite the children to sit down and count their apples with you. "Let's count our apples: one, two, three!"

Expand It!

Serve fruits that grow on trees for snacktime or lunch.



WHERE FOOD
COMES FROM

What Does Food Feel Like?

Teaching children about different food textures can help them distinguish among foods and may encourage them to try new foods.

How to Do It

1. Gather examples of different foods to show the children. If you cannot bring in real examples for the children to explore, you can use photos. If you decide to use photos, ask the children what they think the real food might feel like.
2. Ask the children to sit in a circle. Hold up an example or picture of a food (for example, broccoli, pasta, avocado, apple, corn, blueberry, or string cheese). Let the children touch the food if they wish and describe it. If you're using photos, ask the children to tell you what they think the food might feel like. (Some children will have prior experience with a particular food. If so, let them tell you what the food feels like.)
3. Invite the children to act how they think the food feels to touch. For example, show them a picture of broccoli. Ask them to show you with their bodies what broccoli feels like. The children may jump up and down with small, bumpy arm movements. Or, they may stand up straight and tall and hold their arms over their heads. However they choose to interpret broccoli is fine.
4. Continue with other foods and ask the children to show you with their body movements how they think those foods feel to the touch. For pasta, they may make whole-body wave movements. For carrot, they may use stiff arms and legs while moving around. The children can crouch down all together, and then you can come and "pull" them out of the ground.

Expand It!

Gather foods and put them into boxes with small openings. Have the children feel the foods and describe how each one feels (bumpy, smooth, stiff, and so on). Ask them to guess what foods could be in the boxes. If they wish, let the children try the (washed!) foods to find out what the foods taste like.

I Can Be a Role Model

Support a healthy self-image and self-esteem as you teach the children that they can be role models for healthy eating.

How to Do It

1. Ask the children what a healthy lunch might consist of. Listen to their responses. If they offer suggestions for processed foods, encourage them to think about healthier alternatives. Tell them that they can be role models for healthy eating. That means they can show their brothers, sisters, cousins, and friends how to eat healthy foods.
2. Tell them, "For lunch, I like to eat a sandwich and maybe some soup. For dessert, I like to have apples." Pretend to set out a healthy lunch:
I have my sandwich here. (Pretend to hold a sandwich.)
It's a _____ sandwich. (Name a healthy sandwich you like.)
And here is my bowl of soup. (Pretend to set out a bowl of soup and a spoon.)
For dessert I have an apple. (Pretend to hold and admire an apple.)
3. Invite the children to make a lunch with you:
Now let's try making a sandwich like mine! (Mime making a sandwich, filling it with healthy ingredients. Pretend to eat it all up.)
I'm going to eat my vegetable soup. (Pretend to spoon soup and eat it.)
Vegetables give us vitamins and keep us strong.
Can you help me chop my fresh green apple? (Pretend to chop an apple with a simple hand rhythm.)
Apples give us energy and keep us healthy. (Pretend to eat slices.)
4. Encourage the children to volunteer to lead the class in making a healthy pretend lunch. Ask each volunteer to name one healthy food and to lead the class in "making" it.
5. Ask the children to tell you who they might be a role model for in encouraging healthy eating.

Expand It!

Consider sharing a healthy snack at snacktime with a younger class.

Be a good role model for the children. Bring in healthy foods to eat for lunch and snack so they can see you enjoying good nutrition. Talk about the foods you eat, and encourage the children to try healthy foods at home.



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About the Author

Deborah Kayton Michals has designed and directed programs that combine physical activity with literacy, math, nutrition, motor-skill development, and arts curricula for more than 25 years. She has developed programs for The Education Alliance, the Legal Aid Society, the NYC Board of Education, the 92nd Street Y, and Yale University. An accomplished professional dancer, Deborah earned her bachelor's degree in history at Yale University and her master of fine arts degree in dance from New York University as a Goddard Fellow. Deborah lives in Riverside, Connecticut, with her husband, Jonathan, and their three children.



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