



Healthy Families

Spring 2025

healthykids
a journey to healthy habits

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Lincoln

A healthier tomorrow starts today!

ELEMENTARY

January: Simple Swaps



What better way to start the New Year than remembering how important it is to eat healthy and nutrient dense foods! During our January lesson students were taught the difference between good “whole” calories and bad “empty” calories. The lesson, titled Simple Swaps helped the students understand the concept of empty calories that do not benefit our bodies versus nutrient dense calories that are healthy. We ended the lesson with the Simple Swap card game where students were able to eliminate and identify an empty calorie food with the healthiest swap between four cards.

Try it at home! Ask your child to look in the pantry or fridge and find a food that might be high in empty calories. Then, work together to come up with a healthier swap, perhaps switching soda for water with fruit slices or trading chips for air-popped popcorn. Encourage your child to explain why their swap is a better choice!

February: Food Labels



By looking at nutrition facts on food labels, we can discover exactly what a food or drink is made of. In February, students learned more about foods by locating different information on food labels including calories, percentage of total fats, sugars, vitamins and the ingredients. Did you know the first ingredient listed on the nutrition label has more of that ingredient than any other ingredient? During our “Food Label Baseball” game, students quickly learned that if sugar is the first ingredient listed, it’s a pretender!

Try it at home! The next time you go grocery shopping, challenge your child to pick out two similar foods and compare their labels. Which one has less added sugar? Which one has more whole ingredients? Talk about why some foods might look healthy on the front of the package but tell a different story on the label. Remember, it’s what’s on the back or side of the box that counts!

March: Exercise

Exercise is so important for our bodies! It helps build muscle, maintain healthy weight, decrease risk of disease and improves things like mood, sleep and focus. The recommended amount of exercise daily is 60 minutes or more. Students used their time to get even closer to reaching their daily exercise goals! The “Rivers and Mountains” game is full of colored squares, exercises and Healthy Kids review questions. If you were lucky, landing on high knees took you up the mountain. Watch out for those planks that take you back down the river.

Try it at home! Set up your own movement-based game with your child! Write different exercises on slips of paper, like jumping jacks, frog jumps or lunges and place them in a jar. Take turns drawing a slip and complete the exercise together. You can even make it a challenge. Can you do 10 squats before the timer runs out? Making exercise fun helps create lifelong healthy habits!



April: Kickstart

As weather permits, we are excited about visiting schools with the KickStart vehicle to have fun while staying active. Through interactive features like jumping rope, dribbling balls, running through obstacles, balancing and using quick feet, can be active together. The Kickstart car always proves to be a blast for the students.

Try it at home! Create your own mini obstacle course in the backyard or living room using household items. Use pillows for jumping over, a tape line for balance walking, or cones (or cups) for weaving in and out. Time each other to see who can complete the course the fastest or challenge your child to come up with new movements to add. Staying active can be fun for the whole family!



KINDERGARTEN

January: Sugary Drinks



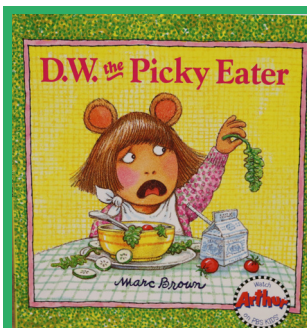
Orie, the Healthy Hero of the Month talked about sugary drinks. During our January lesson, kindergartners learned that not only are we eating a lot of sugary foods, but drinking them too. We were able to visualize just how much sugar goes into our bodies each time we drink things like soda.

Categorizing drinks with the colors of a stoplight was a lot of fun when we played Go, Slow, WOAHH drinks. GO drinks like water and low-fat milk meant stand on your tiptoes and touch the sky. Slow drinks like juices meant hands on your hips. WOAHH STOP drinks like soda and Kool-Aid meant crouch down and touch your toes. They even got to color and match their own drink stop light to take home.

Try it at home! The next time your child asks for a drink, make it a game! Ask them to decide if it's a GO, Slow, or WOAHH drink based on what they learned in class. If they choose a WOAHH drink, challenge them to come up with a GO or Slow alternative, maybe water with a fun straw or milk in a special cup. Encouraging these small choices early helps build lifelong healthy habits!



February: Trying New Foods



February was all about trying new things. When asked why trying new foods is so important the main response from the students was "because you don't know until you try it" and "it helps you stay healthy". Good job! This is correct because sometimes we try

a new food and love it. Other times we might not like it right away. That doesn't mean we should give up on our taste buds. We read *DW the Picky Eater*, and the students got to try their very own sugar snap pea. We talked about the look, feel, sound (SNAP) and taste. After becoming the Kings and Queens of trying new things, students designed their own crowns to wear for being a part of the one bite club!



Try it at home! Start a One Bite Club at home! Encourage your child to take one small bite of a new food. Talk about the color, texture and taste together. Even if they don't like it, praise them for trying! Let them draw a star or sticker on a chart each time they try something new.

March: Less Screen Time, More Exercise



Our Healthy Hero, Zoe reminded students in March that two or less hours of screen time is a healthy limit. Although we can still use screen time as a learning tool, sometimes it's best to take a break and get some movement! Together, we read a book *Pterosaur Wants to Play a Game* about a young dinosaur who after finding out about screen time, forgot about the things he loved to do most, like playing with his friends. In the end, just like Pterosaur, kindergartners realized that too much screen time doesn't allow us to spend time doing other things we love. To get some much needed movement we played "Fruit and Veggie Land." This game incorporates lots of exercises like push-ups, jumping jacks, high knees and planks as well as 5-2-1-0 questions where students could be quizzed on Healthy Kids lesson topics.

Try it at home! Set a timer for screen time. When it goes off, take a quick movement break! Dance, jump or go for a short walk together. Making movement fun helps build healthy habits.

April: Ian's Fitness Challenge



We wrap up a FUN year of Healthy Kids lessons with our Healthy Hero Ian's Fitness Challenge! Getting at least 60 minutes of exercise each day is so important to stay strong and healthy. Together, we hopped, jumped, twisted and turned through the exercises. At the end, each student earned their very own Healthy Hero medal for all of their hard work! The students learned so much from their Healthy Hero friends!. To top it off they were sent home with their very own Healthy Hero Activity Book.

Try it at home! Take some time to do an activity from the Healthy Hero Activity Book. Ask your kindergartner to teach you one of the exercises or introduce you to one of their Healthy Hero friends. It's a fun way to keep moving and stay healthy!



Cooking Classes: Tortilla Pizza

Healthy Kids hit the ground running with cooking classes this spring. At the Bridges Schools, we made tortilla pizzas. It's a fun and versatile recipe. You add your favorite pizza toppings and can prepare it as a regular pizza or even as a pizza quesadilla or burrito! We used whole wheat tortillas, peppers, onions, mushrooms, black olives, grilled chicken and turkey pepperoni.

Ingredients List

- 1 package of whole wheat tortillas
- 1 package of mini or regular turkey pepperoni or grilled chicken
- Veggies of your choosing
- Shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 jar Prego Pizza Sauce
- Olive oil

1. Grate mozzarella cheese and prepare veggies.
2. Heat skillet to medium-high heat.
3. Put olive oil on a paper towel and coat one side of the tortilla. Place the greased side on the griddle.
4. Use olive oil to coat the other side of the tortilla.
5. Flip the tortilla once the base is crispy.
6. Place a spoonful of pizza sauce in the center of the tortilla and spread it around, leaving a thin line around the outside to act as the crust.
7. Evenly top the tortilla with cheese. Add any additional toppings such as pepperoni and/or veggies. Cover skillet with lid.
8. Let the tortilla sit an additional 8 minutes or until cheese is melted.
9. Let stand for 2 minutes and enjoy!

Note: If making as a quesadilla, put toppings on one half of the tortilla and fold other half over. Heat until tortilla is crispy on one side, then flip and repeat. If making as a burrito, fill tortilla with toppings and roll into burrito. Then cook in skillet on one side until crispy and then repeat on the other side.



Summer Cooking Programs: Registration Now Open!

Parent & Child Cooking Class **Backyard BBQ**

2nd Floor of Klehm Hall at Eastern Illinois University
Parking: North or South Coleman lot - staff or student parking

11 am to 1 pm
Choose 1 date:
June: 24, 26
July: 8, 10, 22, 24

Ages:
Students entering
K - 5th grade

Fee:
\$15 per child
This fee includes both
adult & child.

Register:
sarahbush.org/calendar

Contact:
Healthy Communities
healthykids@sblhs.org

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Teen Cooking Class

11 am to 1 pm
Mattoon Middle School

- June 17
- July 29
- July 31

\$15 Per Class
Students who have completed
5th - 11th grade

Register Online at:
sarahbush.org/calendar

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**For more information or to register for Summer Cooking Classes,
go to sarahbush.org/calendar**



Races for all Paces

June 7, 2025

The races will begin and end on the track at EIU's O'Brien Field.

Register Now at: www.sarahbush.org/races or scan code.



Proceeds from this family friendly event benefit the SBL Dental program.

SBL Healthy Communities Summer Programs: Registration Now Open



Running and Reading Club | 9 - 11 a.m.
 @ Mattoon Public Library
 Mondays & Wednesdays June 16 - 30, July 7 - 16.
 Register at sarahbush.org/calendar



Safe Sitter | 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
 @ Sarah Bush Lincoln

- June 12
- July 15
- July 17
- July 23
- July 30



Safe sitter is a one-day, nationally certified course designed for children over age 11. It uses fun and interactive techniques to teach about child care safety and techniques, behavior management skills and appropriate responses to emergencies. Registration opens April 1, and is \$30 per participant. Class size is limited. For more information or to register, please call 217-345-6826 and leave a voicemail, or email Josh at jwhite2@sblhs.org.

Got info or photos of your family being healthy? Contact Harley Powley, Healthy Kids Educator, at 217-345-6822 or hpowley@sblhs.org.