

HEALTHY KANSAS KIDS

A publication of the Kansas Department of Health Services, the Kansas Health Foundation and the University of Kansas

KANSAS Child

Winter 2009

Volume 8, Issue 1

A young child is lying on their back in a snowy field. The child is wearing a red jacket over a white shirt, green pants, and blue boots. They are wearing a dark hooded jacket underneath. The child's eyes are closed, and they appear to be resting or sleeping. The snow is bright white and covers the entire ground.

Soda: The Candy We Drink

The Big Problem With Obesity

Remembering Nature in the Winter Months

Welcome

KANSASChild

A publication of the
Kansas Association of
Child Care Resource
and Referral Agencies

Leadell Ediger
Executive Director

Debbie Combs
Public Awareness Director

Barkin' Dog Graphics
Publication Design

On the Cover
*Carter, son of Dan and Julie Hess of
Salina, makes an angel in the snow.*

The Kansas Association of Child Care
Resource and Referral Agencies,
1508A East Iron, Salina, Kansas 67401
publishes Kansas Child quarterly.
This publication is made possible
through the financial support of the
members of KACCRRRA and
sponsorships from our corporate,
private and foundation partners.

Kansas Child is intended to provide
a forum for the discussion of child care
and early education issues and ideas.

We hope to provoke thoughtful
discussions within the field and to help
those outside the field gain a better
understanding of priorities and
concerns. The views expressed by the
authors are not necessarily those
of KACCRRRA or their sponsors.

Copyright© 2009 by KACCRRRA,
unless otherwise noted.

No permission is required to excerpt
or make copies of articles provided
that they are distributed at no cost.

For other uses, send written
permission requests to: KACCRRRA,
1508A East Iron, Salina, KS 67401

Rates for Kansas Child: Distributed
at no cost to KACCRRRA members.

Single copies are available to non-
members at a cost of \$5 each, prepaid.



Happy 2009! Did you start off the New Year with a resolution? If so, you have lots of company, nearly half of U.S. adults make a resolution to change in the New Year according to National Public Radio. You can probably guess the most frequent resolutions: stop smoking, lose weight/eat healthier, and/or start exercising more.

For years, I made those same kinds of resolutions and guess what, I couldn't stick with it. I had lots of excuses, being too busy was most often my excuse! This past summer, I started the practice of walking to my sister's house every evening instead of the usual evening phone call. My two dogs accompany me on this 2-mile round trip every evening. I have found it to be the best stress release plan and slow weight loss program available. Plus

having the benefit of talking a short time with my sister – a twofer!

You can't pick up a newspaper, listen to the radio or watch television without hearing about the obesity epidemic in the United States. More startling news is the number of children estimated to be classified as obese. According to the National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys (1976-1980 and 2003-2006), obesity has increased: for children aged 2-5 prevalence increased from 5.0% to 12.4%; for those aged 6-11 years, prevalence increased from 6.5% to 17.0%. Additional information indicates that obese children are more likely to become obese adults.

This is not an issue that any one organization or agency can change alone. We must all try to stop this serious health crisis for young children! I think about the good work that the Child and Adult Food Program does to help reimburse for the cost of food so that you can provide more nutritious meals to children. I think about the good work that Child Care Licensing does to support good nutrition and physical activity for children. Working together, we can all resolve to lessen the serious health issues that we will need to face in the future.

This issue of KANSAS Child focuses on Healthy Choices, not only for you, but for the children in your own family or those children you care for daily in your business. Since 2007, KACCRRRA has had a grant from the United Methodist Health Ministry Fund to work on physical activity and nutrition in early childhood settings. The Infant Toddler Specialists at each of the R&Rs across the state have been offering special professional development events including:

- Let's Move Learn and Have Fun
- Healthy Habits Grow Healthy Children
- Food, Fun and Fitness: It's Berry, Berry Good
- Pick A Better Snack: Go for the Whole Grains
- Active Play Area Design
- Healthy Kansas Kids & Active Families
- Discovering Nature with Young Children
- Discovering Water with Young Children

Another wonderful event to put on your calendar is the Natural Outdoor Play Environments Workshop on March 6, 2009 from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm in Hesston, Kansas. Rusty Keeler, author of *Natural Playscapes* will inspire us all to create beautiful outdoor play spaces for children. He will cover elements of designing natural outdoor play spaces for young children; who to contact about local natural resources and materials; drafting ideal playscapes for your child care program, school, community, or back yard and how to advocate for natural playscapes. If you'd like to register or receive more information, contact Cathy Gray at cathy@kaccrra.org. I promise you, you don't want to miss this event!

All of these events will give you new tools to help you, your family members, along with the children in your care become healthier in the New Year. Vow to expand your knowledge in 2009
Everyone here at KACCRRRA wishes you a healthy new year!

Leadell Ediger

Leadell Ediger
Executive Director, KACCRRRA

Healthy Kansas Kids

By **Cathy Gray**

Healthy Kansas Kids Director

Included in the EXCEL service, Healthy Kansas Kids is designed to improve best practices for physical activity and nutrition in the early childhood setting. Healthy Kansas Kids is funded through a grant from United Methodist Health Ministries Fund and is available statewide.

GOALS:

- To develop child care environments that promote physical activity
- To provide training to child care providers regarding nutrition and physical activity
- To increase good nutrition practices in child care environments
- To promote healthy, active lifestyles in young families
- To ensure infants and toddlers receive a healthy, active start in life
- To create a model for improving wellness in Kansas child care programs

BENEFITS:

- Providers learn creative ways to engage children in physical activity, both inside and outside.

- Families receive access to take-home resources and materials.
- Children eat more healthy foods and have more opportunities for physical activity.

RESOURCES:

- Physical Activity Guidelines for Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers: <http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/template.cfm?template=toddlers.html>
- Nutrition information for infants and toddlers: <http://www.keepkidshealthy.com/nutrition/>
- The power of physical activity: <http://www.metrokc.gov/health/childcare/physical.htm>
- Activity Ideas: <http://www.readyforlife.org/nutrition/activityideas.lasso>

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION:

- Healthy Kansas Kids participants have provided compelling data that shows Healthy Kansas Kids works.

For more information, contact Cathy Gray, Healthy Kansas Kids Director toll free at 877-678-2548 or cathy@kaccrra.org or contact your local R&R and ask for the Infant/Toddler Specialist. ■

Self Care Workshop Highlights

By **Cathy Gray**

Healthy Kansas Kids Director

Resource and Referral agencies across Kansas enrolled a new group of participants in the Healthy Kansas Kids EXCEL program in July 2008. All participants receive a variety of services designed to help them make program improvements related to nutrition and physical activity in child care settings.

One component, the Self Care Workshop, is an annual event designed to help child care providers learn how to take better care of themselves and understand how they can be a healthy role model to the children in their care.

This year's Self Care Workshop took place on Saturday, September 20th, at the Rolling Hills Zoo near Salina. Prior to their arrival, participants were asked to evaluate their current lifestyle choices related to nutrition, physical activity, and stress management. Participants arrived in Salina Friday evening to enjoy a healthy dinner, social time with fellow program participants, and a great night's sleep. Saturday's events kicked off bright and early with a delicious breakfast at Rolling Hills, followed by a day-long workshop that emphasized the importance of proper hydration, whole grains, low-fat dairy, fruits and vegetables, breakfast, healthy snacks, sleep, regular physical activity and stress management.

Attendees gave rave reviews about the relaxation exercise, the NPLB (No Provider Left on his/her Behind) Walk, and the bag full of goodies to help them stay healthy and encouraged. Participants left knowing that their personal wellness matters! ■

Inside

My Pyramid.....4
Eat Right. Exercise. Have Fun.

10 Super Foods
You Should Eat5



The Big Problem
With Obesity6

Delicious & Nutritious8

Sunrise Solutions9



Soda: The Candy
We Drink 10

Sip All Day,
Get Decay..... 11

Loving Support..... 11

Hibernation is for Bears! 12

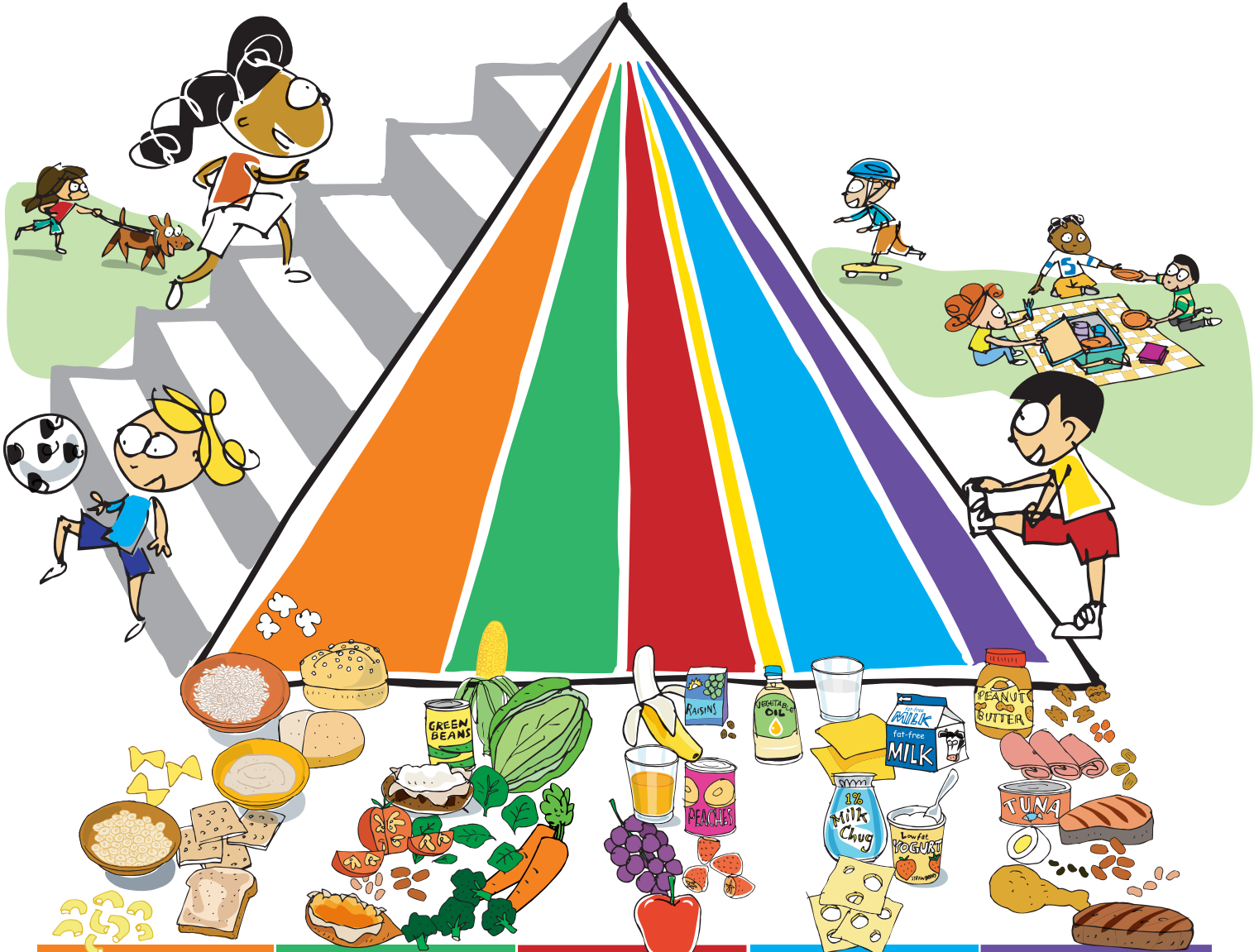
Active Start 13

Natural Playscapes 14

Remembering Nature
in the Winter Months..... 15

MyPyramid For Kids

Eat Right. Exercise. Have Fun. MyPyramid.gov



Grains
Make half your grains whole

Start smart with breakfast. Look for whole-grain cereals.

Just because bread is brown doesn't mean it's whole-grain. Search the ingredients list to make sure the first word is "whole" (like "whole wheat").

Vegetables
Vary your veggies

Color your plate with all kinds of great-tasting veggies.

What's green and orange and tastes good? Veggies! Go dark green with broccoli and spinach, or try orange ones like carrots and sweet potatoes.



Fruits
Focus on fruits


Fruits are nature's treats – sweet and delicious.

Go easy on juice and make sure it's 100%.

Milk
Get your calcium-rich foods

Move to the milk group to get your calcium. Calcium builds strong bones.


Look at the carton or container to make sure your milk, yogurt, or cheese is lowfat or fat-free.



Meat & Beans
Go lean with protein

Eat lean or lowfat meat, chicken, turkey, and fish. Ask for it baked, broiled, or grilled – not fried.

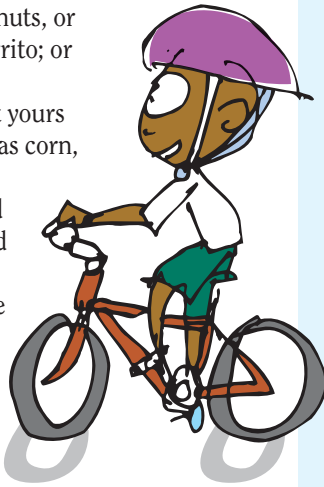
It's nutty, but true. Nuts, seeds, peas, and beans are all great sources of protein, too.

 **Oils** Oils are not a food group, but you need some for good health. Get your oils from fish, nuts, and liquid oils such as corn oil, soybean oil, and canola oil.

Tips for Families

Eat Right

1. Make half your grains whole. Choose whole-grain foods, such as whole-wheat bread, oatmeal, brown rice, and lowfat popcorn, more often.
2. Vary your veggies. Go dark green and orange with your vegetables—eat spinach, broccoli, carrots, and sweet potatoes.
3. Focus on fruits. Eat them at meals, and at snack time, too. Choose fresh, frozen, canned, or dried, and go easy on the fruit juice.
4. Get your calcium-rich foods. To build strong bones serve lowfat and fat-free milk and other milk products several times a day.
5. Go lean with protein. Eat lean or lowfat meat, chicken, turkey, and fish. Also, change your tune with more dry beans and peas. Add chick peas, nuts, or seeds to a salad; pinto beans to a burrito; or kidney beans to soup.
6. Change your oil. We all need oil. Get yours from fish, nuts, and liquid oils such as corn, soybean, canola, and olive oil.
7. Don't sugarcoat it. Choose foods and beverages that do not have sugar and caloric sweeteners as one of the first ingredients. Added sugars contribute calories with few, if any, nutrients.



Exercise

1. Set a good example. Be active and get your family to join you. Have fun together. Play with the kids or pets. Go for a walk, tumble in the leaves, or play catch.
2. Take the President's Challenge as a family. Track your individual physical activities together and earn awards for active lifestyles at www.presidentschallenge.org.
3. Establish a routine. Set aside time each day as activity time—walk, jog, skate, cycle, or swim. Adults need at least 30 minutes of physical activity most days of the week; children 60 minutes everyday or most days.
4. Have an activity party. Make the next birthday party centered on physical activity. Try backyard Olympics, or relay races. Have a bowling or skating party.
5. Set up a home gym. Use household items, such as canned foods, as weights. Stairs can substitute for stair machines.
6. Move it! Instead of sitting through TV commercials, get up and move. When you talk on the phone, lift weights or walk around. Remember to limit TV watching and computer time.
7. Give activity gifts. Give gifts that encourage physical activity—active games or sporting equipment.

Have Fun!

www.kaccrra.org

10 Super Foods You Should Eat

1 Cantaloupe

A quarter supplies almost as much Vitamin A and C as most people need in an entire day.

2 Sweet Potatoes

A nutritional all-star - one of the best vegetables you can eat. They're loaded with carotenoids, vitamin C, potassium, and fiber. Mix in unsweetened applesauce or crushed pineapple for extra moisture and sweetness.

3 Fat-free (skim) or low-fat milk (1%, not 2%)

Excellent source of calcium, vitamins, and protein with little or no artery-clogging fat and cholesterol. (Soy milk can have just as many nutrients - if the company adds them.)

4 Bran Cereal

A half-cup serving of bran cereal provides more than a third of the fiber you need for an entire day - to reduce the risk of constipation, diverticulosis, and heart disease.

5 Oranges

Great tasting and rich in vitamin C, folic acid, and fiber.

6 Broccoli

Lots of vitamin C, carotenoids, and folic acid.

7 Whole-grain bread

It's higher in fiber and about a dozen vitamins and minerals than enriched white bread or "wheat" bread.

8 Watermelon

Excellent source of vitamin C and carotenoids - and it tastes great! Perfect for a snack, dessert, or picnics.

9 Beans

Inexpensive, low in fat, and rich in protein, iron, folic acid, and fiber. Choose garbanzo, pinto, black, Navy, kidney, or lentils. Eat them as a side dish, snack, or in a tortilla with salsa.

10 Spinach or kale

Loaded with vitamin C, carotenoids, calcium and fiber. Very good steamed.

Family and Consumer Sciences Hotline, March 2005



The Big Problem With **O B E S I T Y**

(Hint: It Ain't the Food)

By Dr. William Dietz

Director of CDC's Division of Nutrition,
Physical Activity, and Obesity

Obesity is a grave health problem in this country. It is an issue that has been hotly debated for the past several years. It has prompted action on many fronts, not the least of which has been legislative and food manufacturing and marketing. The latest update by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), released in a recent issue of *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (MMWR), finds that the "proportion of U.S. adults who self report they are obese increased nearly 2% between 2005 and 2007" and is sure to throw more fuel on an already incendiary topic.

According to Dr. William Dietz, director of CDC's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity, "The epidemic of adult obesity continues to rise in the U.S. indicating we need to step up our efforts at the national, state and local levels." He goes on to say that, "We need to encourage people to eat more fruits and vegetables, engage in more physical activity and reduce the consumption of high calorie foods and sugar sweetened beverages in order to maintain a healthy weight."

And this is news because...? Haven't we heard this before, perhaps so much so that it now appears to be falling on deaf ears? This approach, like the much vaunted "new" Food Pyramid, didn't work before, so what makes the CDC, and others in line with this line of thinking, believe that it will work this time?

From the tone of the rhetoric this news

release has spurred, we believe (once again) that most folks haven't got a clue as to what is going on. As we've said in past editions of *HartBeat* and other writings, such as our white paper *Understanding Obesity: Beyond Teaching, Tinkering & Blaming*, that obesity may be largely a by-product of our society's non-cultural perspective on eating.

Since the experience of food is largely determined by behavioral and cultural factors, shouldn't our understanding of obesity's causes also pay great attention to how we eat?

What If It Is Not the Food?

Most consumers will mention food as a primary cause of obesity, because, well, it's obvious, isn't it? The root problem, of course, is that we simply consume far, far too many calories for our own good. And, due to the modern age of food production, it is simply too easy and too convenient to get food in the modern West. Our urge to eat can be satisfied literally within an instant.

Yet, when it comes to personal weight assessment, consumers lack objectivity in identifying obesity. According to our report, *Obesity in America: Understanding Weight Management from a Consumer Perspective*, most overweight consumers do not seem overly interested in doing anything about it. Certainly, they are very concerned about the "problem of obesity." But they are also very concerned about global warming, the price of gasoline and declining housing values.

Consumers acknowledge these are big problems, problems just too big for them to get their own arms around. They are seen

as social problems, not their own problems. Consumers have redefined their own personal situations and have separated these from the larger socially defined problems, like obesity. From their points of view it is something someone else (like the government) should fix. So, in the context of the consumer's everyday reality, a social problem like obesity is not something they consciously think about. Of course, when asked, they will have opinions on the subject, much the same way they talk about stuff around the water cooler. "Obesity...oh, yes, that is such a problem in this country."

Questions about how obesity, the health problem, affects individuals' day-to-day lives, however, remain largely unanswered. It is also not true that people lack basic nutrition information or that they somehow cannot seem to grasp the relationship between calories taken in and calories burned. And policies aimed at educating the overweight and near overweight about how to





reasonably leads to the following observations:

- Scientists and government types may inadvertently be causing the obesity problem through their promotion of scientific perspectives on eating and weight loss
 - Food marketers offering up portion control options as well as 100-count calorie packs may also be contributing to the problem
 - Compelling and educating consumers to “make better choices” may, ironically, only make matters worse
 - The ultimate solution may be to reframe how we approach, think and talk about eating
- Short of banning snacking altogether in the workplace and public spaces, removing scientific-based nutrition from food packages or affixing a tax on

convenience packaging or convenient meal options, do we really believe there is some magic formula that, once properly applied, is going to cause consumers to eat differently and lose weight in record numbers?

“overcome their problem” are doomed to failure as long as they persistently ignore the fact that people have yet to agree they have a problem.

Ignoring this fact and taking a non-cultural approach to “solving” obesity

The Consumer: The Big Problem with Obesity

To understand consumer behavior with regard to obesity as it occurs in the everyday marketplace, we must first understand that consumer orientations to weight issues are actually part of a much larger category of behavior. What we said in 2006 is just as relevant today and bears repeating:

Our research on individual practice and sentiment tells us the ideal solutions to the obesity dilemma may have little at all to do with individual people and a heck of a lot more to do with the larger culture framework within which we live our lives. Quite simply, and we don’t mean to sound glib here, but “it is not the food, it’s the culture stupid.”

At the most basic, fundamental level, we suggest it is worth taking a step back and reflecting. In one way or another, we have all, as a society, been preoccupied with the problem of obesity for several decades now. We have devoted significant percentages of our vast resources—natural as well as intellectual—to the study of this problem. Moreover, many of us have devoted much of our own lives to solving this problem. Yet, we continue to fail—by all scientific accounts, we appear to be fatter than at any previous point in U.S. history.

And herein lies the most significant and important challenge of all, namely, how to change not individual behavior but the parameters within which such behavior resides—how to change the culture.

For more information go to www.hartman-group.com. ■

Delicious & Nutritious



From Parent Central Express

The monthly e-newsletter of Parent Central

Healthy (and not so healthy) eating habits begin in childhood. Young children who start eating the “right” foods can avoid long-term health problems, such as diabetes, high cholesterol, heart disease, and obesity later in life. So, what are the right foods and how much of them should children eat?

A Balanced Diet

You may have heard of the food pyramid which is a recommended guideline for the types and amounts of food children and adults should have each day as part of a healthy food balance. The food pyramid is divided into six food groups: grains, vegetables, fruits, milk, meat and beans, and oils.

Food groups and examples of foods in each group:

- Grains: bread, cereal, crackers, pasta
- Vegetables: spinach, carrots, green beans, cucumbers
- Fruits: apples, berries, oranges, bananas
- Milk: cheese, milk, yogurt
- Meat & Beans: chicken, beans, peanut butter, eggs
- Oils: butter, oil, some nuts

Once your child is around 2 years or so, he will be eating from most of the food groups. According to Kids Health, a good guideline for what toddlers should eat each day is:

- 3 servings of grains (a serving is 1/2 slice of bread, or a few tablespoons of rice, pasta, or infant cereal)
- 2 servings of dairy (a serving is a cup of milk or yogurt, 1 ½ oz of cheese)
- 2 servings of protein (a serving is 1-2 tbsp

- of meat, one egg)
- 2 servings of fruits (a serving is 2-4 tbsp)
- 3 servings of vegetables (a serving is 2-4 tbsp cooked)

The Nutrient Mix

One of the reasons it’s important to follow the food pyramid is because many foods include key nutrients. Four key nutrients your child should eat are:

- Protein: milk, meat, eggs, and beans;
- Fiber: fruits and vegetables;
- Calcium: milk, cheese, leafy green vegetables, fish and other sources; and
- Iron: iron-fortified cereals, spinach and other leafy green vegetables, and red meat.

Junk Food

Some foods are nutrient-rich and have the necessary vitamins and materials we need to maintain our health. However, “junk foods” such as chips, candy, sweets, and soda are not nutritious. These types of foods (that we all seem to love) are “empty calories.” Some of these in a normal diet are okay, occasionally. However, it is a good idea to try to limit your child’s consumption of these foods.

Offer these healthy alternatives as snacks:

| If a child likes: | Try instead... |
|-------------------|--|
| Soda | Milk or a fruit juice with no sugar added! |
| Chips | Chopped up veggies or celery! |
| Candy | Melon slices, kiwi, tangerines, or other fruits. Nuts or cheese! |



Children are Often Picky Eaters

Even if you have the best ideas in mind, your child still might not want eat all the healthy food choices you serve. In fact, most toddlers are “picky eaters”—they don’t automatically like new food. Here are some strategies for how to deal with picky eaters:

If at first you do not succeed, try, try again: Children don’t always like foods the first time. In fact, some children may need to try a food 10 or 15 times before they will enjoy it.

Pick the right portion: For a new food, a little bite or two is enough.

Do not bribe them: If you tell your child that she can have a cookie if she finishes the broccoli, it will only reinforce the idea that broccoli is bad, and cookies are good.

Offer a choice: Let your child choose from a selection of healthy foods you have available.

Do not force it: If your child does not want to eat the food, do not make him eat it.

Be a good role model: If your child sees you eating different healthy foods, she will model your behavior.

Eating nutritious foods will help your child’s overall development – of course physically, but also emotionally and mentally. Good, healthy foods help children to think better, have more energy and sleep better as well.

Try eating meals as a family, even if it is only once a day. Having your meals together is not only a good way of sharing food, but it is a good way to build relationships with your children. ■

Sunrise Solutions

By Karen Shideler

Health & Fitness Section, Wichita Eagle

The benefits of breakfast make it a meal worth pursuing. Here are some ideas to get you started.

Researchers have found tons of benefits from eating breakfast, and with school starting again, now seems like the perfect time to get into the breakfast habit.

Among the research findings:

- Children who skip breakfast make more errors and are slower to recall facts.
- Children who eat breakfast solve math problems more quickly.
- Children who eat breakfast do better on vocabulary tests.
- Children who eat breakfast are more likely to get the vitamins and other nutrients they need.
- Adolescents who eat breakfast tend to have a lower body mass index, even if they have one or two obese parents.

By the way, the benefits of breakfast apply to grown- ups, too.

Breakfast Guidance

- Pick a cereal with three to five grams of fiber per serving, which is even more important than looking for one low in sugar.
- If you can’t find one the kids like, combine a high- fiber cereal with a kid- friendly one - Honey Nut and regular Cheerios, for example.
- Dinner leftovers don’t have to be dinner again. Heat them for breakfast instead.
- Put together an egg casserole the night before, and slip it into the oven when you get up.
- Make extra pancakes on the weekend to freeze or refrigerate, and use them as wraps for fruit or cheese.
- Make muffins, stirring in some nuts or flaxseed to add omega- 3s or dried cranberries instead of raisins.
- A cereal bar, a bagel with fruit spread, instant oatmeal, dry cereal eaten like a snack mix, fruit or yogurt can work as breakfast- to- go.

5 On-The-Go Ideas

- Peanut butter and banana slices on whole- grain toast
- Cheese wrapped in a whole- grain tortilla; grapes
- Dry cereal stirred into drinkable yogurt; dried fruit
- Pancake rolled around cheese; apple
- Slice of leftover veggie pizza

©2008, The Wichita Eagle (Wichita, Kan.)

Visit the Eagle on the World Wide Web at <http://www.wichitaeagle.com/>

Distributed by McClatchy- Tribune Information Services.

For reprints, email tmsreprints@permissionsgroup.com, call 800- 374- 7985 or 847- 635- 6550, send a fax to 847- 635- 6968, or write to The Permissions Group Inc., 1247 Milwaukee Ave., Suite 303, Glenview, IL 60025, USA.

Soda: The Candy We Drink

By Autumn Conley Bittick
Freelance writer

Millions of Americans are literally drowning themselves daily in what some have called “liquid candy.” We spend over 54 billion dollars a year on carbonated soft drinks – and this amounts to about fifty-four gallons a year per person! A report by the Center for Science in the Public Interest has discovered that soft drink consumption has nearly tripled since 1967. The negative effects of these drinks, whether they be regular pop or diet soda, are devastating to our bodies and our overall well being.

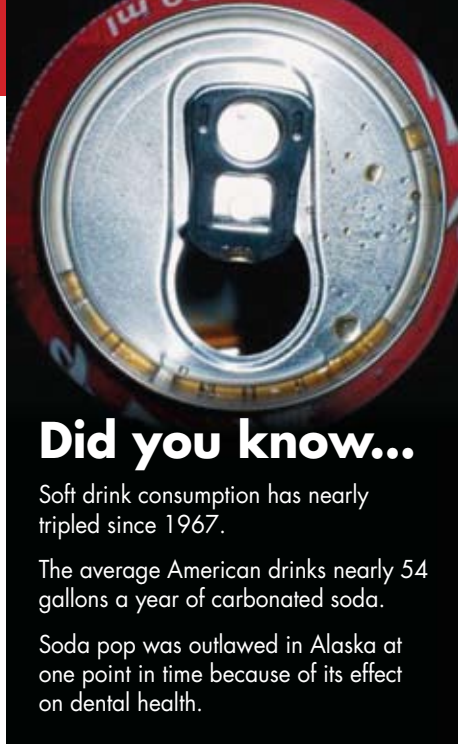
Obesity

Obesity is a common problem in the U.S. and abroad, and it increases the risk of more serious conditions like diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke, cardiovascular disease, and social and psychological problems. Research has shown that obesity rates have actually risen in conjunction with the rising amount of soft drink consumption.

Soda pop adds unnecessary calories of no nutritional value. For anyone who is fighting the battle of the bulge, it is obvious that we need to reduce our calorie intake, particularly of empty (non-nutritional) calories such as those found in soda pop.

Tooth Decay

Most soda pop is nothing but a combination of sugars, acids, and artificial flavors and colors. The combination of these acids, as well as the massive sugar found



Did you know...

Soft drink consumption has nearly tripled since 1967.

The average American drinks nearly 54 gallons a year of carbonated soda.

Soda pop was outlawed in Alaska at one point in time because of its effect on dental health.

in most sodas has a remarkably dismal affect on dental health. Regular soft drinks literally bathe your teeth in refined sugar for long periods of time. This is a major factor in the appearance of cavities and tooth

decay and other periodontal diseases. The amount of sugar in one can of soda is equivalent to ten sugar cubes, and soft drinks now provide the average American with seven heaping teaspoons of sugar daily – all of which must pass over your teeth at some point.

Heart Disease

Research has shown that heart disease is the number one killer in this country. In many adults, a diet high in sugar promotes heart disease. In people who are

resistant to insulin, taking in a high amount of carbohydrates such as those found in the refined sugar in soda pop causes their Triglyceride and insulin levels to rise, and the rising of these levels are contributors to cardiovascular disease.

Weak Bones & Osteoporosis

One of the main ingredients in many popular sodas is caffeine. A major problem with caffeine is that it causes the body to excrete extra calcium in the urine. This is why people who drink soft drinks likely will

have low calcium levels, which can lead to osteoporosis, or weakened and fragile bone structure. Drinking only one 12-ounce can of caffeine-containing soda causes the loss of about 20 milligrams of calcium.

Kidney Stones

Kidney or urinary stones are a very painful disorder, but they are one of the most common disorders of the urinary tract. Specific research linking this condition with soda pop has found that men who have had kidney stones in the past tend to have a recurrence if they are frequent drinkers of soda. For this reason, many health professionals agree that cola-type beverages should be avoided.

Chemicals & Additives

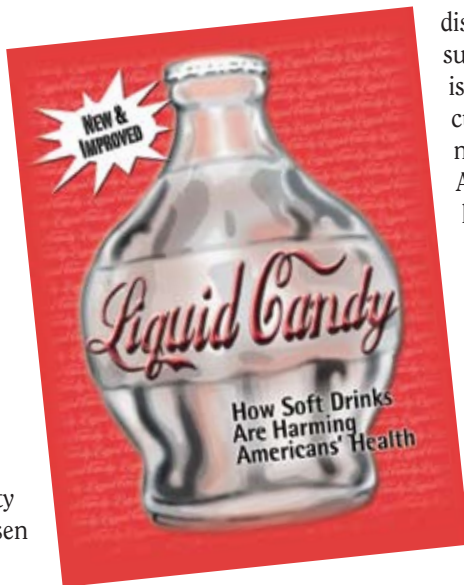
Besides the caffeine and sugars found in soda pop, there are also many allergens and chemicals that can be harmful to the body when ingested chronically. For instance, Yellow 5 dye can cause asthma, hives, and even a runny nose. Cochineal and Carmine, natural red colorings, have even been found to cause life-threatening allergic reactions in some people, and many dyes used in soda and other commercial foods can cause hyperactivity in our children.

Diet sodas sweetened with substances other than sugar are also dangerous in large amounts. Saccharin has been linked in studies to urinary tract or bladder cancer and cancer of other organs. Saccharin has been replaced by Aspartame in many brands, and Aspartame also poses many health risks. Experts in the study of cancer are questioning even the safety of Acesulfame-K, which was approved in 1998 for use in soft drinks.

So, for better overall health and the benefit of your body, STOP THE POP and reach for healthier drinks like purified water and healthy juices. ■

RESOURCES

Brody, Jane. “Health Risks Associated with Stimulants: Articles on Coffee and Caffeine.” *New York Times*, Wednesday, September 13, 1995. Center for Science in the Public Interest. “Milk Down, Soft Drinks Up for Teens”, *Healthy Weight Journal* 1999:14:2;18 Washington, D.C. October 21, 1998 Goff, Dan. “Dentists Want Schools to ‘Stop the Pop’.” *Dental Products Report*. Medic Dental Communications, September, 2001. Jacobson, Michael F., Ph.D. *Liquid Candy: How Soft Drinks are Harming America’s Health*. Center for Science in the Public Interest. Washington, D.C., 2005. University of California. “Hard Facts About Soft Drinks.” *Cooperative Extension Newsletter*. Viola, California, Winter, 2002, Issue 74.





Loving Support

Susy Willard Curry, M.S.

Program Director, Kansas Child Care Training Opportunities

In January 2001, I embarked on one of the most challenging relationships I'd ever forged; a breast feeding relationship with my youngest child, Matthew. My experiences with his two older sisters had been less than successful, but I was committed to trying again. I planned to return to my position as an Early Care and Education Specialist and recognized that in order for the experience to be successful, beyond my maternity leave, I'd need all of the support I could muster. I found a great deal of that support through my son's child care provider.

The support my son's child care provider provided to us was pivotal to the success of our breast feeding relationship. Like my son's child care provider, most child care providers can be great source of support to breast feeding infants and their mothers by:

- Creating a welcoming atmosphere which supports relationships between all infants and their family members,
- Encouraging parent visits during the day, especially for breast feeding mothers,
- Providing a sanitary location for the expression and storage of breast milk,
- Providing a comfortable place for mothers to breast feed their child which allows the mother as much privacy as she desires. Keep in mind that Kansas law (K.S.A. 65-1248) allows a mother to breast feed her child "in any place she has a right to be",
- Following appropriate practices for storage and handling of breast milk, and
- Being knowledgeable of infant nutrition and breast feeding resources available to mothers and child care providers. Information and support for breast feeding can be found through local La Leche League groups, lactation consultants, Child and Adult Care Food Programs, and local Health Department programs such as Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and/or Healthy Start.

Given the research on the health benefits of breast feeding for children, mothers, and society and large numbers of young children in the regular care of child care providers, it is imperative that we in the early care and education field do our best to facilitate the continuation of breast feeding between mothers and their children, beyond the initial weeks of the child's life. ■

Susy Willard Curry, M.S. is the Program Director for Kansas Child Care Training Opportunities and proud mother of three children and three step-children.

Sip All Day Get Decay

From Oral Health Kansas

Parents of children with special health care need (CSHCN) need to know about sippy cups. They were designed to be a stepping stone from baby's bottle to a drinking cup. Now we know about some hidden dangers relating to their improper use.

Sippy cups mean less mess and fewer spills. They come in bright colors, unbreakable plastic, play music and even have weights in the bottom of the cup to prevent them from falling over. These wonderful inventions have some hidden dangers all parents will want to be aware of...sippy cups can lead to serious tooth decay.

The spout of a sippy cup allows juices or milk to flow directly to the front teeth, bathing them in fructose or lactose. This sugar from fruit juice or milk combines with the bacteria in a child's mouth to form acid. This acid is what causes teeth to decay. If a sippy cup is used for milk or ½ cup of 100% juice at meal time, decay is reduced. During mealtime, saliva or spit production is higher. This keeps decay at a minimum by natural rinsing of the mouth and reducing acid levels.



See **DECAY**, page 12

Hibernation is for Bears!

Get Back to the Great Outdoors

**By Elisa Kramer,
Provider Outreach Specialist**

The Family Resource Center
Child Care Resource and Referral

When choosing your child's sippy cup, chose one with No Valve! Cups with valves encourage sucking, which is the same as using a bottle. No spill cups are simply bottles in disguise. The purpose of a sippy cup is a transition from sucking to sipping, as well as the convenience of fewer spills.

The best use of a sippy cup is for fluoridated water. In warm weather, or when the child has had a meal, snack or medicine, it is good to rinse the mouth with water. Just as adults now carry water when outside or riding in a vehicle, children can use a sippy cup with water for their hydration.

When should a child with special health care needs start using a sippy cup? "When I sit up, I can use a sippy cup." Some children with special needs may need assistance to sit up. Another sign that your child is ready for a sippy cup is when he or she starts reaching for things. Choose two handled cups when baby is first starting to use a sippy cup.

When should children stop using a sippy cup? As your child gets older, encourage using a regular cup. Fill the cup with a small amount of water, first. This will reduce the size of a spill and teach them to look into the cup first, before attempting a sip. Never allow a child to walk around the house or yard with a sippy cup, they can fall and cause injury to their mouth, eyes or face. By age two, your child may be ready for a child size open cup.

Remember, excessive juice or soft drink consumption in a sippy cup can lead to tooth decay! It may also be associated with malnutrition or abdominal illnesses. When used properly, sippy cups are a great source for water intake, and a convenient way for children to drink in public places or an automobile without a spill.

They are also a nice transition from the bottle to the cup, after "I learn or am helped to sit up." ■

800 SW Jackson, Ste 1120
Topeka, KS 66612

785.235.6039 (p)
info@oralhealthkansas.org
785.233.5564 (f)
www.oralhealthkansas.org

If adults are asked to think about how they played outside in the snow, the answers are generally the same. They would build snow forts, build igloos, participate in snow ball fights, create snowmen and snow angels, find a large hill and go sledding, or see how far the snow came up to their body. No matter what activity they engaged in, they would recall playing outside until the street lights came on or until called in for dinner. For today's children, the answer to this question is much different. Children would have a much easier time telling you about lying on the couch watching their favorite TV show or movie, playing the latest video game, or trying to beat their last score on a computer website.

Even on cold snowy days, the great outdoors is a perfect place to have fun, get fresh air, and increase fitness. I've often heard the argument that it takes time to get everybody ready to play outside on a cold

day or that the cold weather causes illness. Studies have shown that you do not get "colds" from being in cold temperatures but by passing germs from one person to another. The way to reduce the spread of germs is by reminding the children to wash their hands multiple times throughout the day and having adults model the proper hand washing technique. In fact, it's easy to make the argument that fresh air and new surroundings reduces the likelihood that you will get a cold.

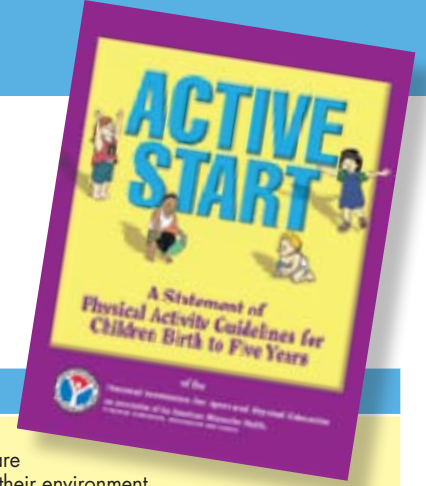
It is true, however, that socks and shoes need to be secured, sunscreen needs to be applied during prime daytime hours in every season, safety reminders need to be addressed, and activities need to be planned and discussed.

Below are suggestions on how to enhance your winter outdoor play:

Get everyone involved. Winter brings an opportunity for everyone to participate in activities together. Adults should create a time where they can share their childhood games with their own children or children in their child care facility. By spending time outside, adults are making a choice to better their health and teaching healthy habits to children.



Active Start: A great resource for healthy fitness



From the National Association for Sport and Physical Education

Spanish translation is available by calling 1-800-213-7193 x. 483.

NASPE position statement: All children birth to age five should engage in daily physical activity that promotes health-related fitness and movement skills.

Purpose of the Guidelines: Specific guidelines for the physical activity of children birth to five years old were developed to support NASPE's position statement and to address the unique characteristics and needs of the developing child. The guidelines reflect the best thinking of motor development, movement, and exercise physiology specialists about the physical activity needs of young children during the first years of life.

Organization of Guidelines: Five guidelines are listed for each of three age categories: infants (birth to 12 months), toddlers (12 to 36 months), and preschoolers (ages 3 to 5 years). The guidelines answer questions about kinds of physical activity, the environment for the physical activity, and the individuals responsible for facilitating the physical activity.

Explanations and discussion of typical activities accompany the listing of the guidelines. Also included is a Frequently Asked Questions section, a glossary of terms, and a comprehensive list of background resources. ■

Guidelines for Infants:

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Guideline 1. | Infants should interact with parents and/or caregivers in daily physical activities that are dedicated to promoting the exploration of their environment. |
| Guideline 2. | Infants should be placed in safe settings that facilitate physical activity and do not restrict movement for prolonged periods of time. |
| Guideline 3. | Infants' physical activity should promote the development of movement skills. |
| Guideline 4. | Infants should have an environment that meets or exceeds recommended safety standards for performing large muscle activities. |
| Guideline 5. | Individuals responsible for the well-being of infants should be aware of the importance of physical activity and facilitate the child's movement skills. |

Guidelines for Toddlers:

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Guideline 1. | Toddlers should accumulate at least 30 minutes daily of structured physical activity. |
| Guideline 2. | Toddlers should engage in at least 60 minutes and up to several hours per day of daily, unstructured physical activity and should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time except when sleeping. |
| Guideline 3. | Toddlers should develop movement skills that are building blocks for more complex movement tasks. |
| Guideline 4. | Toddlers should have indoor and outdoor areas that meet or exceed recommended safety standards for performing large muscle activities. |
| Guideline 5. | Individuals responsible for the well-being of toddlers should be aware of the importance of physical activity and facilitate the child's movement skills. |

Guidelines for Preschoolers:

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Guideline 1. | Preschoolers should accumulate at least 60 minutes daily of structured physical activity. |
| Guideline 2. | Preschoolers should engage in at least 60 minutes and up to several hours of daily, unstructured physical activity and should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time except when sleeping. |
| Guideline 3. | Preschoolers should develop competence in movement skills that are building blocks for more complex movement tasks. |
| Guideline 4. | Preschoolers should have indoor and outdoor areas that meet or exceed recommended safety standards for performing large muscle activities. |
| Guideline 5. | Individuals responsible for the well-being of preschoolers should be aware of the importance of physical activity and facilitate the child's movement skills. |

They also create an awareness of the world and increase quality time spent enriching the relationship with their children. Possible injuries are limited when adults are actively participating and supervising outdoor play.

Dress appropriately. No matter what weather conditions are outside, it is the child care provider's and the parent's responsibility to make sure the children are dressed properly. Child care providers should make a point of notifying parents of their outdoor policies. They can do this by posting information in their facilities, sending letters home, and having informal

conversations with parents. Of course, there will be times that children will not be dressed appropriately, and child care providers may want to ask for donations from families or go to local thrift stores for additional hats, gloves, jackets, socks, and goulashes/boots.

Safety checks. Routine safety checks on playground equipment are recommended on a monthly basis. Adults should:

- look for any tripping hazards
- check metal for rust, corrosion, or chipped paint
- examine plastic play structures for cracks and sharp edges

- make sure all screws and bolts are tightened and secured
- be aware that loose strings on jackets or loose clothing can become stuck in crevices of playground equipment and could cause a strangulation hazard (Tip: take the strings out of the jacket)

I challenge you to enjoy the great outdoors with your children this winter. Help our youth think of creative ways to spend their time outside while getting exercise like we did at their age. I promise you that you will be making memories that will last a lifetime. ■

Natural Playscapes

By Rusty Keeler

Artist, Designer, Author of the book *Natural Playscapes* (Exchange Press: 2008)

The crunch of leaves, the trickle of water, the sound of windchimes in a gentle breeze ... these are but a few of the simple wonders of the new movement in children's outdoor play and learning environments: Natural Playscapes. Instead of a fixed play structure surrounded by a sea of wood chips, natural playscapes use your whole outdoor space as a landscape for children filled with hills, pathways, trees, gardens, sand and water and more — all with a variety of sounds, smells, textures and even tastes!

We all know how good it feels to be in the beauty of nature, and new studies are showing that natural environments are good for children too as they help soothe, inspire, and educate them in so many ways. A natural playscape changes during the seasons and

creates a background for children's playful exploration.

Imagine a young child experiencing spring for the first time. When we create a natural playscape we plant trees, shrubs and flowers that burst into bloom and celebrate the seasons.

Fragrant apple blossoms, luscious lilac blooms, and the pop of the first tulip all create a multi-sensory welcome to the new season.

And the same goes for the trees we plant for autumn color, or summertime shade, or winter wind blocks. With plants, we can create safe playful places to play – and if we plant

them in interesting ways we can create “living rooms” such as sunflower houses or living willow huts.

Do you remember playing in special places in nature as a child? Do you remember the way your special place smelled, sounded, or felt? Now it is our turn as adults to create these kinds of memories for our children today. One of the great things about adding natural areas to your play space is that you can start small and work together with the help of your community. Folks all over are teaming up to create these magical places using the “community-built” model of construction. You begin by getting an enthusiastic playscape committee together that dreams your playscape possibilities and thinks about what local resources you can use for



your project. What are the native plants in your area? Are there places to get logs or boulders? Do you know a plumber that can help you build a safe, trickling water feature? Or maybe a local artist who can help you create a dazzling mosaic mural? How about a friend with a pickup truck to bring in topsoil to build a hill? These are the people and materials that will make your project unique.

Every project starts with an inspired dreamer. Is that person you? Adding nature to your yard is a rewarding experience, and starting small can be simple! Add a vegetable garden. Plant a tree tunnel. Build a hill. Bring in a big load of sand. You'll be amazed at how naturally children take to these types of places as they play and explore the wonderful world of nature. ■

Rusty Keeler is an artist/designer living in rural upstate New York who specializes in building natural playscapes for children. Rusty has worked with communities around the world to create art and nature-filled spaces for children of all ages and abilities. His new full-color book, *NATURAL PLAYSCAPES*, (Exchange Press: 2008) was made to inspire and empower people everywhere to create beautiful natural play spaces for children. For more information visit www.earthplay.net

Remembering Nature in the Winter Months

By Dawn Miles

Family Resource Center CCR&R Coordinator

It's winter time, and spending meaningful time outside can be hard to do. How do you ensure that children stay active and learning throughout these very chilly months? How do you continue to build upon their love of science and nature?

Discovering nature is often considered a spring activity, but it can be fun and educational year round. Following are some great activities taken from the Young Scientist Series, published by Redleaf Press. Although the curriculum is designed for children who are in preschool, it can easily be adapted for younger or older children.

Observe living things in an indoor terrarium. It's best if you construct your terrarium using plants and animals representative of the outdoor environment. Introduce the children to the animals in the terrarium and ask questions such as "Do you have plants or animals at home?" or "What do you think the plants and animals in this terrarium need?" Make sure the children help care for the plants and animals in the terrarium. Children can observe the terrarium all year. You may also want to chart the children's observations over time.

Start seedlings. Set up a plant center at a table that can accommodate a small group, near an empty, sunny, not-too-cool windowsill or table. Display books about growing different kinds of plants around the classroom. Hang posters of different stages of a variety of plants around the classroom. Spend time identifying different parts of the plant—stems, trunks, and branches. Invite children to describe and reflect by drawing their planting experience. Talk about the plant's needs by asking questions such as "What do you think this seed will need to grow?" or "Do you think all

of these growing plants will need the same things?"

Invite guest naturalists. Great guests include gardeners, local extension agents, people who study bugs (entomologists) or plants (botanists), farmers, birdwatchers, or someone from the Audubon Society. Invite your families to suggest someone they know and involve them in the quest for a guest! Before your special guest comes, preface the visit by having a brief conversation with the children about the guest and what they do. During the visit, ask the guest to explain what they do and invite them to share journals, tools, pictures, and stories related to nature. Make sure your guest is prepared for all the questions! After the guest leaves, talk with the children about what they learned. Perhaps they can even make a picture about their experience, and you can send the pictures to your special guest as a thank you.

When thinking about how to engage children in nature, the sky's the limit. Although there are plenty of inside activities to keep children engaged, remember it's still important to go outside whenever weather permits. Children will have a lot of fun playing in the snow, watching squirrels and birds, and simply enjoying all the wonders of winter. Encourage your parents to bring heavy coats, hats, and gloves so that the experience is a pleasurable one for all children.

If you are interested in learning more about how to discover nature with young children, be sure keep an eye on the professional development events offered by your local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency. Classes from the Young Scientist Series which are being delivered throughout the state! ■



JOIN PARENT CENTRAL TODAY!

Don't miss out on this great opportunity for parents!

Parent Central is the online place for resources and information about issues affecting children and families. Get connected and become part of a growing network of concerned parents. Over 20,000 parents have already joined! If you have a child under age 8, you don't want to miss this opportunity.

With Parent Central, you can:

- Receive the monthly e-newsletter, the Parent Central Express
- Stay informed about news and resources in the community from NACCRRRA
- Be a part of a growing network of parents who care about children in this country

Find out more and sign up today at <http://highqualitychildcare.org/kaccrra/join.html>

Sign up and join us today! Together we are helping parents become the best informed advocates for their children.

Register with Parent Central to receive e-mail updates on the issues that matter most to you, America's parents. You'll receive valuable information on a whole range of parenting topics.

Sign Up

<http://highqualitychildcare.org/kaccrra/join.html>

KACCRRRA
A leader in promoting quality early childhood experiences in Kansas

naccrrra

Parent Central

- Parent Central Home
- Tell a Friend About Parent Central
- My Parent Central Profile

Thank you for your interest in quality child care. To subscribe to our email receive alerts or updates from us, please complete the following information

If you are already in our system, just type your email address and click

Email: *

First Name: *

Last Name: *

Password: *

Confirm Password: *

Address: *

Address Line 2:

City: *

State/Province:

Postal Code: *

Country: *

* Required Field

[Privacy Policy](#)

POWERED BY **CONVIO**



KANSAS ASSOCIATION OF CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL AGENCIES
P.O. BOX 2294, SALINA, KANSAS 67402-2294

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 69