

Early Childhood WELLNESS

A Program of Child Care Aware® of Kansas



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February: Healthy Heart

Adopting a healthy lifestyle is the key to preventing heart disease – and the earlier healthy habits are embraced, the better. In addition to avoiding tobacco, experts point to three key areas that should be addressed when building a foundation for a heart healthy future:

1. Good nutrition. Choose foods low in saturated fat, trans fats, cholesterol and sodium, and eat plenty of fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

2. Maintaining a healthy weight. Overweight and obesity are risk factors for many chronic diseases, including heart disease.

Excess body fat can lead to inflammation, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, high triglycerides, and elevated blood sugar.

3. Regular physical activity. Exercise associated with weight loss can help improve cholesterol and triglyceride levels. Adults can benefit from just 30 minutes of increased physical activity daily. Children and adolescents should aim for 60 minutes.

Did You Know...

- ♥ By eating a buttery spread (soft or tub margarine) instead of butter, the average person will save a minimum of 1196 grams of saturated fat per year.
- ♥ Whole grains derived from wheat, rice, corn or oats can reduce the risk of heart disease, help to manage weight, and reduce the risk of certain cancers or diabetes.
- ♥ Walnuts were the first whole food to receive a health claim from the FDA.
- ♥ Don't drink your calories - drinking liquids with sugar can lead to weight gain and can increase triglyceride levels. This is true of ice-cream, as well.

Source: Family at Heart.org

Playing Is Learning!

There's a lot happening during playtime. Little ones are lifting, dropping, looking, pouring, bouncing, hiding, building, knocking down, and more.

Children are busy when they're playing and they are learning. They are learning key scientific concepts, such as what sinks and floats; mathematical concepts, including how to balance blocks to build a tower; and literacy skills, such as trying out new vocabulary or storytelling skills as children "act out" different roles. Play is the true work of childhood.

And when your children play with you, they are also learning—that they are loved and important and that they are fun to be around. These social-emotional skills give them the self-esteem and self-confidence they need to continue building loving and supportive relationships all their lives.

Source: Zero to Three



CAN THERE BE HEALTHY VALENTINE TREATS?

Check out the ideas we found!



Strawberries, blueberries and kiwi on a heart shaped plate.

Source: <http://littlewondersdays.blogspot.com>



"Let's Stick Together" String Cheese



"Peel the Love" Valentine Cuties

Source: Pinterest

"Clip and Save"
Makes it easy to clip out and save this healthy recipe before recycling your newsletter.



NON-COMPETITIVE MUSICAL HEARTS

An great indoor activity to get the heart pumping!



Materials:

- ♥ Heart Shapes
- ♥ Music (optional)

Place hearts in a circle pattern. Make sure you have at least 1 heart per child. Play music and instruct kids to walk around the hearts. When the music stops do an action. Then repeat. Unlike tradition musical chairs, no one is out and they get their heart rate pumping with the actions.

Action Ideas:

- ♥ Hula Dance
- ♥ 5 jumping jacks
- ♥ Hop on one foot 10 times
- ♥ Jump as high as you can 8 times
- ♥ Run in place for 10 seconds
- ♥ March in place for 20 seconds

Source: teachmama.com



Healthy Eats

Chocolate– Banana Grahams

Ingredients:

- 1 square graham cracker, broken into 2 rectangles
- 1/2 teaspoon Nutella
- 2 slices banana, about 2 inches long
- 1/2 teaspoon shredded coconut, toasted if desired, divided

Directions:

Spread each graham cracker piece with 1/4 teaspoon Nutella and top with a slice of banana and a sprinkling of coconut.

Nutrition:

Per serving: 71 calories; 2 g fat (0 g sat, 0 g mono); 0 mg cholesterol; 13 g carbohydrates; 4 g added sugars; 1 g protein; 1 g fiber; 46 mg sodium; 94 mg potassium. Source: *Eating Well*

