



Young Athletes™ Nutrition Activities

The following activities are designed to help teach and reinforce healthy eating habits and the nutrition information found in the Young Athletes™ Nutrition Guide. Ideas for additional activities and interactive, educational games can be found online at www.choosemyplate.gov and other young athlete friendly websites.

Color MyPlate

Materials Needed:

- Copy of MyPlate and accompanying food galleries
- Printable MyPlate coloring sheet
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils

Instructions:

1. Review MyPlate and describe how each color on MyPlate represents a food group.
 - a. Fruits = Red
 - b. Vegetables = Green
 - c. Grains = Orange
 - d. Protein = Purple
 - e. Dairy = Blue
2. Review the recommended servings for each food group and help your young athletes write down the number of recommended servings on the MyPlate coloring page.
3. Have your young athletes think about his or her favorite foods or beverages from each food group.
4. Using crayons, markers, or colored pencils, have your young athlete draw his or her favorite foods from each food group in the appropriate food group section of the MyPlate coloring page.

Food Collage

Materials Needed:

- Copy of MyPlate and accompanying food galleries
- Printable MyPlate coloring sheet
- Grocery store advertisements, cooking or home magazines, food item print outs, etc.
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- Glue
- Scissors

Instructions:

1. Review MyPlate and describe how each section represents a food group. Review the recommended number of servings for each food group.
2. Have your young athlete choose images of food from grocery store advertisements, cooking or home magazines, food item print outs, or another source. Help your young

athlete cut the images out and glue them in the appropriate section of the MyPlate coloring sheet.

3. Take the activity a step further by helping your young athlete create a different plate for breakfast, lunch, and dinner with an option from each food group represented on each plate.

Colors of Food

Materials:

- Four or more poster boards
- Grocery store advertisements, cooking or home magazines, food item print outs, etc.
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- Glue
- Scissors

Instructions:

1. Label each poster board by the color of the food that will be put on it, such as Green Foods, Red Foods, Purple Foods, Blue Foods, etc.
2. Help your young athlete cut out pictures of food from grocery store advertisements, cooking or home magazines, food item print outs, etc.
3. Help your child glue each picture of food on the appropriate poster board and label the food item, such as tomato, grapes, etc.

Adapted from www.atozteacherstuff.com

“Everyday” and “Sometimes” Food Chart

Materials:

- One or two poster boards
- Grocery store advertisements, cooking or home magazines, food item print outs, etc.
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- Glue
- Scissors

Instructions:

1. Label each poster board (or side of one poster board) with either “Everyday” Foods or “Sometimes” Foods
2. Help your young athlete cut out pictures of food from grocery store advertisements, cooking or home magazines, food item print outs, etc.
3. Help your child glue each picture of food on the appropriate poster board for “everyday” (healthy) foods or “sometimes” (unhealthy) foods.
4. Make it more personal by going through the food found in your kitchen and categorizing each item as “everyday” or “sometimes” foods. Use this activity to help encourage your young athlete to make healthy choices when picking foods for snacks and meals.

Sugar Detective

Materials:

- Paper
- Pens, pencils, crayons, markers, or colored pencils

Instructions:

1. Have your young athlete think of five of his or her favorite sweet treats. Help him or her write them down on a sheet of paper.
2. Look for those foods in your kitchen, online, or in the grocery store and using the Nutrition Facts Label, write down how much sugar is in each item.
3. Look for a healthier alternative or review healthier options with your young athlete for some of his or her favorite sweet treats such as
 - a. **Desserts and sweets.** Instead try fruit-based desserts.
 - b. **Cereals.** Look for whole-grain cereals, such as oatmeal, that don't have added sugar — or salt. Add nuts, fruit or cinnamon if you want to jazz it up.
 - c. **Yogurts.** An 8-ounce serving has about 12 grams of natural sugar. This is included in the total sugar listed on the Nutrition Facts Label. Many flavored yogurts also have a significant amount of added sugar. Avoid those and instead opt for plain yogurt and add your own sweetness by blending in frozen berries or other fruits.
 - d. **Beverages.** Stick to water and unflavored milk (most of the time). Limit juices, sports drinks and other flavored beverages.

Activity adapted from www.heart.org. Alternative food information from <http://www.mayoclinic.org>.

Keep Kids at the Table (Mini Mealtime Games)

I Spy

- Start with a parent or caregiver. Ex: "I spy with my little eye something that is orange and crunchy."
- Have your young athlete take a bite of the answer rather than answering with a word.
- The first person to take a bite, chew, and swallow goes next.

Lucky Vegetables

- Have your young athlete and siblings roll a die and eat that number of bites of a vegetable.
- The winner is the first person to finish his or her vegetables.

Goober Goat

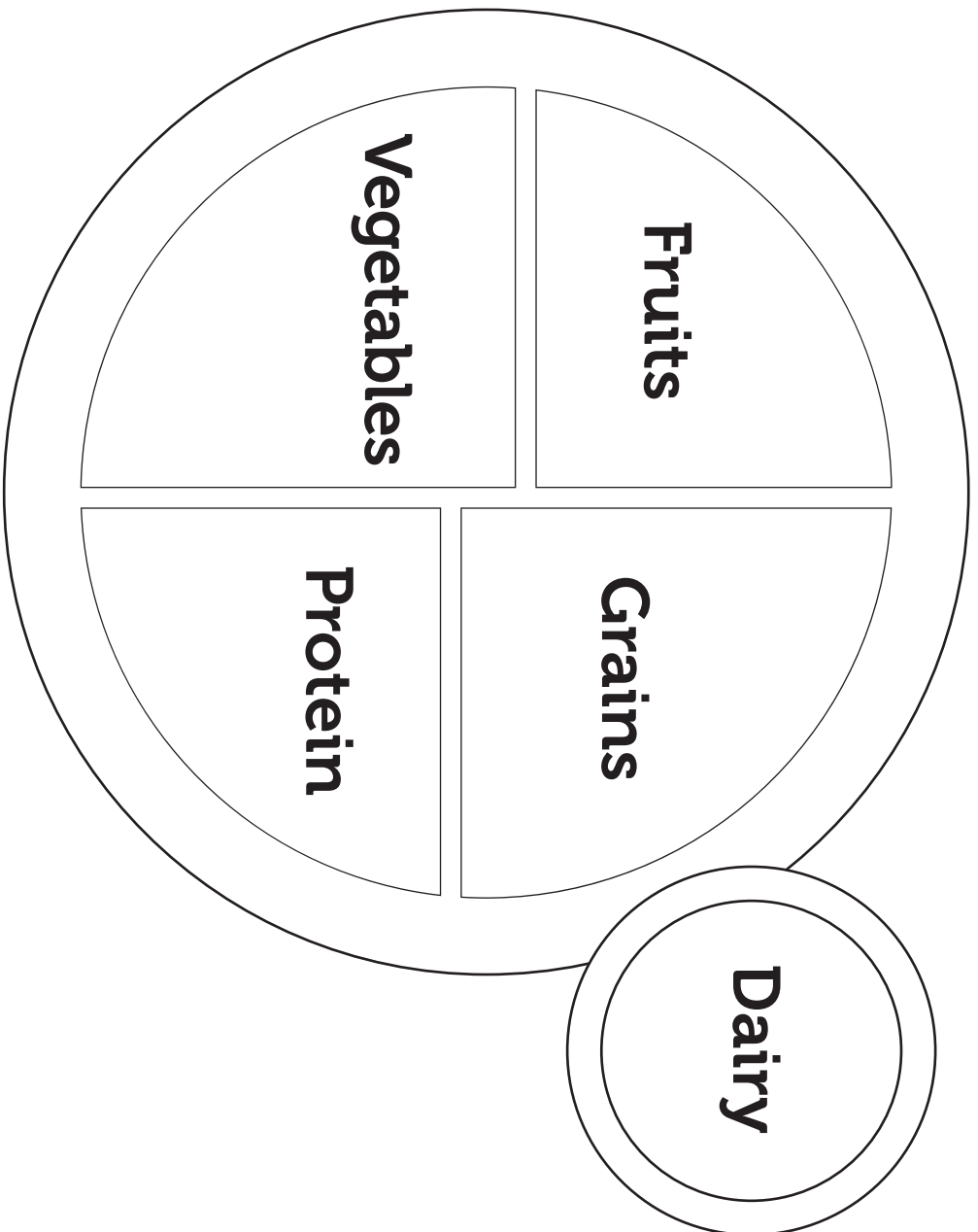
- Have your young athlete start with a farm-related word. Each person playing comes up with a new word linked to the last. Ex: "Corn" may be followed by "bread", "oven", or "refrigerator". See how far from the farm you can get.

Counting Moo

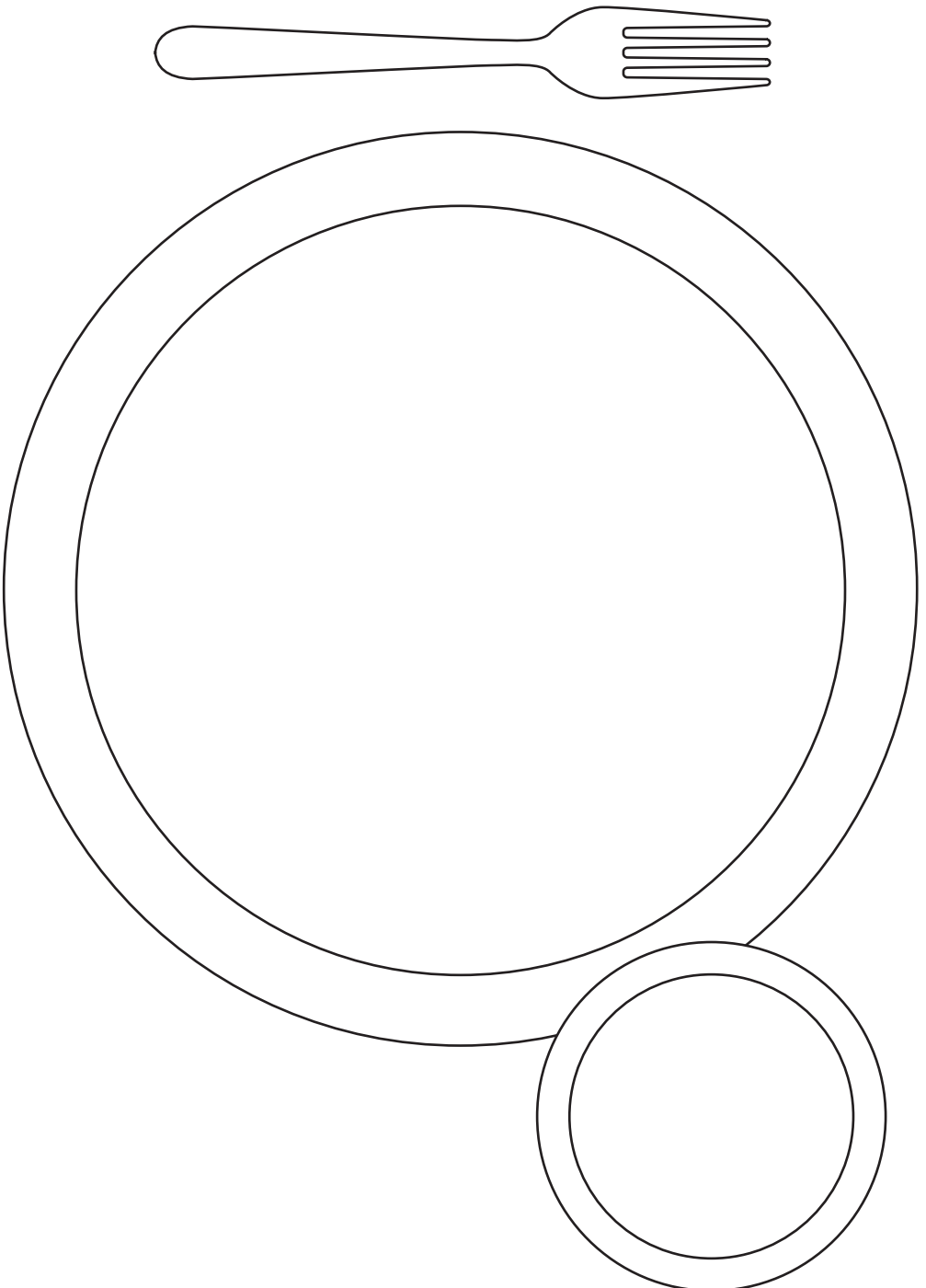
- Young athletes and siblings count off around the table, replacing even numbers with "moo".

- When someone says the incorrect word or number, he or she must take a drink of his or her milk.

Adapted from Games to Get Your Kids Eating Healthy www.hubpages.com
& www.familyfun.go.com.



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