

Perfect Plates

Nutrition Lesson(s) Supported:

- Balanced Meals
- Fruit and Vegetables

Supplies Needed:

- Small Frisbee or paper plate for each child
- Markers (permanent)

Length of Time to Complete:

10 minutes

Audience (grades): K-5

Background:

A balanced meal includes foods from all 5 food groups: whole grains, lean protein, vegetables, fruits, calcium-rich food (or dairy). However, many meals we consume only contain one or two of these food groups. For example, if you have a bowl of macaroni and cheese for dinner, what food groups are you getting? Answer: A lot of grain (not whole grain) and cheese (a source of calcium). How could we make this meal more balanced? Answer: add a vegetable, add a lean protein, and choose a whole grain.

The Macaroni and Cheese Makeover

What does our new Mac and Cheese look like?

1/4 of your bowl is filled with nutrient rich vegetables (broccoli)

1/4 of your bowl contains energy rich-grains (whole wheat macaroni)

1/4 of your bowl contains muscle-building lean protein (chicken or tuna)

1/4 of your bowl contains calcium food (cheese)

Show the students the healthy plate picture below or draw it on the board.

Process:

Depending on the age of the children, have the adult or child divide the plate into portions. Have the children draw the fruits/vegetables, proteins, calcium-rich food, and whole grains that they like for their plate. Have them take it home to remind them of today's lesson.

