God's

HEALTH SQUAD

A Faith Based Youth Nutrition Program

Bronx Health REACH
Making Health Equality a Reality

Bronx Health REACH is a community coalition working to end racial and ethnic disparities in the South Bronx and throughout New York.

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Making Health Equality a Reality

God's HEALTH SQUAD

January 2009

Dear Youth and Health Ministry Leaders:

This manual has been developed to assist you in bringing accurate, kid-friendly information about nutrition and healthy eating to your youth programs. Included in this guide are lessons, activities and handouts to make healthy eating fun and easy.

We are giving you these resources because we know that eating and exercising habits are formed very early life. In the face of the current childhood obesity epidemic, it is more important than ever to teach healthy eating and exercise habits to our children.

By providing nutrition education in a faith context, we are reinforcing the concepts taught in bible study to achieve the best spiritual and physical health possible. Our children are our future, and it is our responsibility to help them make the best of it.

Enclosed is an eight-session curriculum for you to follow and use as an instructional tool with your youth group members. It is intended to be incorporated into a youth program or bible study as eight half hour segments. The focus is on choosing healthy snacks and drinks at the corner store since research shows that 30% of a child's calories comes from snacks. Please feel free to modify these lessons with your own creativity to suit your youth group

If you find that you need additional materials or support, please contact Bronx Health REACH at (212) 633-0800 ext. 1232.

Sincerely,

Charmaine Ruddock, Project Director
Ruchi Mathur, Program Associate

Remember that this manual is intended for informational purposes only and is not for use as an alternative to appropriate medical care. Since each individual case or need may vary, all individuals should seek the guidance of a health care profession before making health related changes.

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Introduction and Program History

"Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Proverbs 12:6

After successfully developing and implementing an adult nutrition and fitness program, in 2007 the Bronx Health REACH faith-based coalition voiced an interest in creating a similar program for church youth.

As a result, a survey of the REACH faith based organizations was conducted to gauge the interest and willingness of churches to incorporate nutrition education into preexisting youth programs. Interested churches were invited to join a newly formed Youth Nutrition Education Committee which would develop a faith based youth nutrition education program.

After evaluating various curricula, the committee chose to base the program on Snack Smart, an after school nutrition program developed by the Food Trust in Philadelphia, PA. In a joint effort between committee members, Loyce Godfrey, REACH project consultant, and REACH staff, the Snack Smart curriculum was adapted to suit a faith based audience.

The program was then piloted at Loyal Baptist Church beginning in October 2007. The youth group at Loyal Baptist Church was instrumental in the further development of the program. They came up with the name "God's Health Squad," and asked thoughtful questions which made it necessary to modify the original lesson plans to clarify concepts.

We are truly thankful to the Loyal Baptist Youth Program for helping us to develop a program for church youth everywhere. We hope that this manual and curriculum guide will help other church youth directors to teach their children about the importance of eating healthy and treating your body right.

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God's Health Squad Program Description

Vision

To provide youth with the knowledge and tools to develop healthy eating habits and empower them to be a force in their homes and communities for healthy lifestyle change.

Program Description

God's Health Squad is an 8-session faith-based nutrition program for children ages 8-13. Each session is planned to be 30 minutes long and can be adapted and incorporated as part of the church's regular youth group program.

Objectives:

- Youth will learn about how food impacts their health.
- Youth will learn how to choose healthy snacks and drinks by reading nutrition labels.
- Youth will learn about eating balanced meals by including all the food groups.
- Youth will be empowered to talk to their family and friends about eating healthier and to local bodega owner about carrying healthier foods.

Weekly Themes

Why Eat Healthy?

Choosing Healthy Snacks

Choosing Healthy Drinks

Saying no to Junk Food Advertising

Why is Breakfast Important?

Bringing the Message Home and to the Community

Session 1: Why Eat Healthy?

Lesson Plan

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.
1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Objectives:
- Youth will learn how food affects how they feel every day and their health in the long run.
- Youth will be empowered and excited about learning how to eat healthier.
- Youth knowledge, specific interests in nutrition and health will be assessed.

Tools/Handouts:
- Letter to Parents
- Informed Consent Form
- God's Health Squad Test
- Honor God With Your Temple Handout
- God's Health Squad Mission Handout

Background:
- Childhood obesity is at an all time high, and children of color are among the hardest hit. Obesity in childhood can lead to obesity in adulthood and cause health problems such as diabetes and heart disease. Research shows that this can be best prevented by making health food and exercise choices starting at an early age.

Lesson Outline

1. Greet participants and parents
    a. Ask each participant to sign in on the "Participant Contact Information" sheet.
    b. Ask each parent to read and sign informed consent form and give them welcome letter to take home.

    Don't Forget: Collect informed consent forms from parents

2. Introductions - Hand out name tag with markers – one for each child. Ask each child to write their name and draw a picture of their favorite fruit or vegetable and then go around and share with the group.

    Note: If the youth already know each other and the facilitator, name tags are not necessary.

3. God's Health Squad Test – Ask youth to take 10 minutes to complete test individually. Help younger children as necessary.

4. "Honor God with Your Temple" Handout
   Ask for volunteer to read the "Scripture of the Day"
   Discussion: Ask youth the following questions:
   a. What do you think this scripture means?
   b. Why do you think it is important to eat healthy?
   c. What do you think God wants you to do?
   d. How can you apply this to your everyday life?

5. Overview of Program
   a. Why are we learning about nutrition and healthy eating?
   b. What is God's Health Squad all about?
   c. "God's Health Squad Mission" Handout
   d. Discuss importance of attendance and completing assignments

6. Closing Prayer: Prayer for Power – ask volunteer to read the prayer.

Points to Note:

- Children have a lot of nutrition misinformation. Make sure to note any myths, beliefs or perceptions they might have about foods and healthy eating so that you can incorporate this into future lessons.

- If the group isn't too talkative offer your own ideas and ask them what they think. For some it may take time to feel comfortable to speak up. Make sure to include all in the discussion – both the talkative ones and the ones that are more shy. Call on the shy ones and see what they are thinking.

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Dear Parent/Guardian,

On behalf of Jehovah Shammah, I would like to inform you of a new and exciting youth nutrition program called God's Health Squad that we are incorporating into our youth bible study. It will begin on _____ and will run for 8 sessions. The purpose is to teach young people about basic nutrition, how to choose healthier snacks and drinks at their local bodega and to encourage them to be leaders of change in their communities.

Youth will have the opportunity to learn snacking concepts that will help them make better choices when shopping at bodegas, help promote healthy snacks in the South Bronx community by putting up promotional signage in nearby bodegas, and receive prizes along the way.

Parents can help support the initiative by reinforcing the concepts children learn during the program at home.

For instance, parents can:

- Read nutrition labels with their children at home or at the store
- Encourage them to choose healthier snacks
- Attend the celebration ceremony at the end of the program

Additionally, Bronx Health REACH will be surveying your child to see if their nutritional knowledge, attitudes and eating habits change because of this program. By signing and returning the attached Survey Consent Form with your child, you give us the permission to do so.

Sincerely,

Jehovah Shammah Youth Director

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Survey Consent Form

I hereby grant Bronx Health REACH and its representatives, employees, and agents the right to survey my child about his/her nutritional knowledge, attitudes and eating habits to evaluate the Youth Nutrition Program Pilot taking place at Jehovah Shammah. I understand that I will not receive any compensation for participating in this survey and that the name of my child will not be identified in the results.

Child's Name (Print): _____Date:_____

Parent/Guardian Name (Print): _____

Parent/Guardian (Signature): _____

Address:_____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

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God's Health Squad Pre-test

Name: _____

1. Do you usually by a snack at a corner store on your way to school or after school?
   a. YES, name of store: _____
   b. NO

2. Which of these snacks are healthy? Check as many as you want.

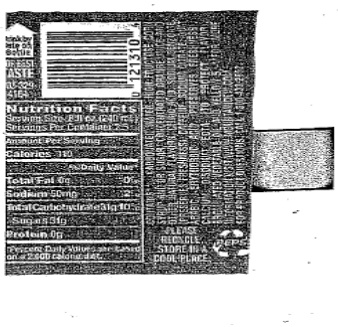
_____ Banana	_____ Orange	_____ Ice cream
_____ Cupcakes	_____ Pretzels	_____ Potato Chips
_____ Unsalted Peanuts	_____ Cookies	_____ Fruit Salad

3. Which of these drinks are healthy? Check as many as you want.

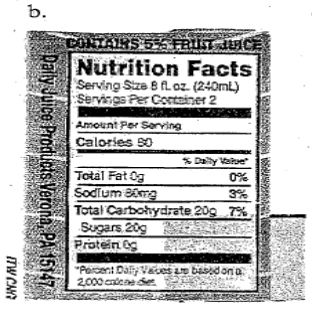
_____ Orange Juice	_____ Fruitopia	_____Water
_____ Ice Tea	_____ Low-fat milk	_____ Powerade
_____ Lemonade	_____ Sunny Delight	_____ Apple Juice

4. Using the labels below, circle the snack that is the healthiest.

a.



b.



c.

5. A snack ***should*** have **LESS THAN** _____ grams of fat per serving.

6. I think it is important to read the labels at the corner store:

   a. Never b. Sometimes

   b. Often c Always

7. I think it is important to choose healthy snacks at the corner store:

   a. Never b. Sometimes

   b. Often c Always

8. Commercials on TV and signs in stores affect what I choose to eat:

   a. True b. False

9. Yesterday, this is what I bought at the corner store:
   (if you didn't buy anything, write "none")

   a. _____ e. _____

   b. _____ f. _____

   c. _____ g. _____

   d. _____ h. _____

God's Health Squad Test

Name**: ANSWER KEY**

1. Do you usually by a snack at a corner store on your way to school or after school?

   a. YES, name of store: _____
   b. NO

   No right answer – this is simply for your information and for reporting purposes. Count up how many YES and how many NO responses.

2. Which of these snacks are healthy? Check as many as you want.

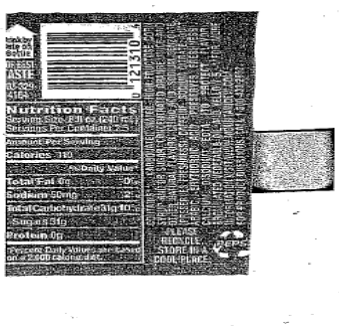
__**x**__ **Banana**	__**x**__ **Orange**	_____ Ice cream
_____ Cupcakes	__**x**__ **Pretzels**	_____ Potato Chips
__**x**__ **Unsalted Peanuts**	_____ Cookies	__**x**__ **Fruit Salad**

3. Which of these drinks are healthy? Check as many as you want.

__**x**__ **Orange Juice**	_____ Fruitopia	__**x**__ **Water**
_____ Ice Tea	__**x**__ **Low-fat milk**	_____ Powerade
_____ Lemonade	_____ Sunny Delight	__**x**__ **Apple Juice**

4. Using the labels below, circle the snack that is the healthiest.

a.



b.

c.

5. A snack ***should*** have **LESS THAN** __7__ grams of fat per serving.

6. I think it is important to read the labels at the corner store:

   a. Never b. Sometimes

   b. Often c Always

No right answer – count how many kids chose each answer.

7. I think it is important to choose healthy snacks at the corner store:

   a. Never b. Sometimes

   b. Often c Always

No right answer – count how many kids chose each answer.

8. Commercials on TV and signs in stores affect what I choose to eat:

   a. True b. False

No right answer – count how many kids chose each answer.

9. Yesterday, this is what I bought at the corner store:
   (if you didn't buy anything, write "none")

   a. _____ e. _____

   b. _____ f. _____

   c. _____ g. _____

   d. _____ h. _____

Honor God by Taking Care of Your Temple!

Scripture of the Day:
Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.
1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Prayer for Power to Take Care of My Body

Dear God,

Thank You, O Lord, for the gift of this precious body and the care that was given to its design. Help me to honor You by committing to treating my body right. It takes work, Lord, but with Your strength I know I can succeed.

It's hard some days to get motivated. But Lord of my body, today I choose to follow you and to do what is hard. I ask You to bless my efforts. Empower me when I am weak, inspire me when I lose sight of the goal, and help me as I begin down the road to better health.

Amen

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God's Health Squad Mission:

To get people to live healthier lives by eating healthier foods like fruits and low-fat snacks and exercising.

What's so great about eating healthy?

- A Healthy Snack can give you **energy**, and helps you grow **stronger**!
- Snacking on things like fruit is good for you, like **bananas**, **oranges**, and **grapes** – these don't have fat and the sugar is ALL NATURAL!

But what happens when I want to go to the store and there is nothing healthy to eat?

- You can choose a healthy snack by looking at the NUTRITION FACTS!
  - Choose **Snacks** with **less than 7 grams of fat**
  - Choose **Drinks** that are **Water, 100% Juice or low fat milk**

Whats the deal with Unhealthy Snacks?

- Unhealthy Snacks make you **fat**,
- **Slow** you down and,
- Make your **stomach hurt**

Session 2: Choose Healthy Snacks

Lesson Plan

"And be not conformed to this world but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

Romans 12:2

Objectives:

- Youth will learn about the importance of healthy snacking.
- Youth will learn to read nutrition fact labels.
- Youth will learn to identify and choose healthy snacks that are available in the neighborhood bodega.

Tools/ Handouts

- "God's Health Squad is Destined for Greatness" handout
- A variety of snacks and drinks available in the Bodega
    - Healthy Snacks: Pretzels, raisins, low-fat popcorn, etc.
    - Unhealthy Snacks: Candy, Potato Chips, Cookies, etc.
- "Can you choose Healthy Snacks at the Bodega?" handout
- Label Reading handout

Background:

- Snacking has become a way of life for American adults and children.
  Snacks can be good for children .if they make the right choices.
- Most snack foods are high in fat, sugar, calories and sodium, and over time over consumption of these can lead to obesity and serious health problems.
- Through working with bodega owners and schools, we have found that many kids are buy snacks from the bodega daily - and the snacks they choose are usually not the healthiest.
- Children can choose healthier items by looking at the nutrition labels and choosing items that have 7 grams of fat or less and by choosing water, 100% juice or low-fat milk.

Point to note:

- Adjust the snacks offered based on what is available in the neighborhood and the preferences - ethnic or otherwise - of the children.

Lesson Outline

1. Welcome and Warm Up- Ask participants to say their name and tell the group one thing they learned last session.

2. Scripture of the Day – ask volunteer to read
   Discussion Points:
   - What do you think this means? How do you feel about that?
   - How do you think it applies to you are your life?
   - What is this have to do with eating healthy? - Make sure the group understand that you shouldn't eat healthy just to look good, but it's about feeling good, honoring your temple, and not getting health problems when you grow up.

3. Mock Bodega Activity
   - Circulate the packages of healthy and unhealthy snacks and ask the youth to note on their handout, which they think are healthy and which aren't.

   Discussion Points:
   - How did you know whether an item was healthy or not?
   - How did you choose?
   - Are these the kinds of snacks you find in the bodegas? Do you think these are healthy choices?
   - If you think it is unhealthy, why? And if it's healthy, why is it healthy?

4. "Read it before you eat it" Handout
   - The way to know if a snack is healthy or not is by turning over the bag and looking at the nutrition facts label.
   - Go over the handout and then ask participants to practice reading the labels of the snacks from the mock bodega activity

5. Prayer for Power - ask volunteer to read

For Next week:

- Next week we are going to be talking about healthy drinks. To prepare for this, tell the participants to practice reading labels at the corner store and try choosing a healthy drink. Save the bottle and bring it with you in the next session.

Points to Note:

- Depending on the age of the children, the discussion around the destined for greatness handout can go deeper to *cover* body image and self esteem issues. Gauge the maturity level of the group and proceed accordingly.
- An alternative to the mock bodega activity is taking a field trip to a nearby bodega and reading labels of the snacks offered there

God's Health Squad is Destined for Greatness

Scripture of the Day:

My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. (Psalm 139:1)

God didn't make any mistakes when He made you. God knows exactly how you're made and He's committed to helping you become all He has in mind.

Food for Thought

Genes play a role, but God plays the lead.

God's Health Squad's Prayer for Power

Dear God,

As You know, some days I wish I looked different than I do, and wonder if something got mixed up when You were choosing traits from my parents to give to me.
How good it is to be reminded, Lord, that I am a 'designer original', that You had me – exactly this me – in mind long before I came to exist!

So today I present myself to You – all that I am, genetically and physically – with a grateful heart. Help me to be a good steward of my body.

Because You designed it, I want to celebrate, nurture, respect it and eat my fruits and vegetables. By Your power at work in me, I praise You for every molecule, gene and blemish.

Amen

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Name: _____

Can you Choose Healthy Snacks at the Bodega?

List all the **HEALTHY** snacks

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

List all the **UNHEALTHY** snacks

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

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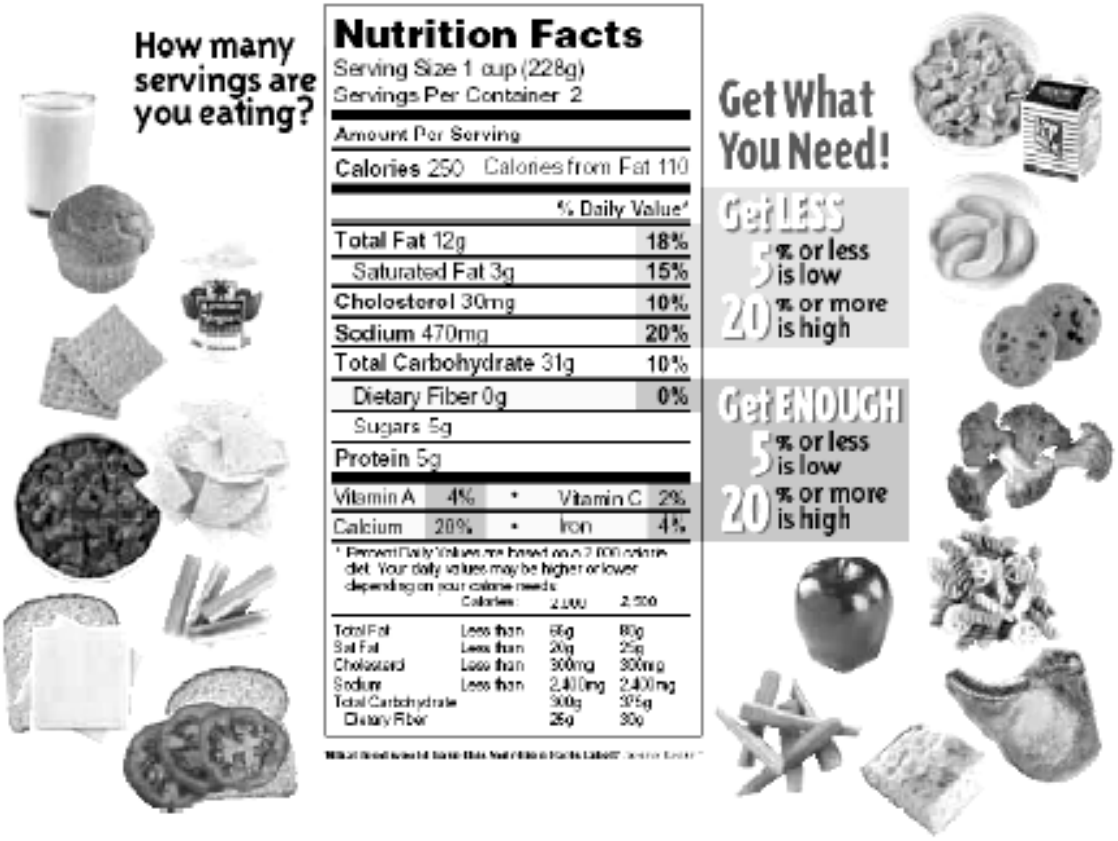
READ IT *before you EAT IT!*



What's the Best Choice for You?

*Use the **5%-20% Guide to Daily Values** to choose foods.*

Session 3: Choose Healthy Drinks

Objectives:

- Youth will learn about the importance of healthy drinking.
- Youth will practice nutrition label reading.
- Youth will be able to identify the healthier choice: low-fat milk instead of whole milk, 100% juice instead of juice drinks, and water instead of sweetened beverages.

Tools/Handouts:

- God's Health Squad Makes Smart Choices handout
- How can I choose drinks wisely? Handout
- Milk Taste test handout
- Skim, 1%, and 2% milk for milk taste test
- Healthy Drinks: 100% juice, water, and low-fat milk
- Unhealthy Drinks: Soda, juice drinks, whole milk, etc.
- Sugary Drinks demo - can be developed using empty bottles of the above drinks and putting the gram amount of sugar per bottle in the empty bottle.

Background:

- Drinks are often forgotten when thinking about healthy eating, but many drinks contain a great deal of sugar, fat and calories.
- The best drink is water and most people do not get enough.
- Other healthy drinks can be identified by looking at the label. Choose drinks that say "100% Juice." Juice contains a lot of vitamins and antioxidants that your body needs to keep it healthy, but it also contains a lot of sugar. Juice should not be a replacement for whole fruits.
- Milk provides a lot of important vitamins like calcium and vitamin D that make your bones and teeth strong. But some kinds of milk have a lot of fat. Choose skim or 1 % milk to get all the good stuff without the extra fat and calories.

Lesson Outline:

1. Welcome and Warm Up - Ask participants to say their name and one thing they learned last week.

2. Scripture of the Day - ask volunteer to read first half of handout
   Discussion Points:
   - What do you think this scripture means?
   - It can apply to a lot of different things in life, like what?
   - How does it apply to food, drinks and healthy eating?

3. A Drink is just a drink, why does it matter?
   Discussion Points:
   - Unhealthy drinks, like unhealthy foods can have a lot of fat, sugar and calories in them and this can add up over time to harm your body.
   - Why knows someone who has diabetes, or heart disease, or some other sickness? Overtime unhealthy eating and drinking can lead to these problems. Protect yourself by making healthy behavior choices starting now!

4. Milk Taste Test Activity
   - Give each child a taste of the same kind of milk
     - Ask them to record their likes/ dislikes and guess on handout
   - Then give tastes of others and ask them to comment.
   - Discussion Points:
     - Could anyone tell the difference between the different milks?
     - Who knows what kind A was? What about 8, C and D?
     - Did anyone guess them all right?
     - Well most people who do this activity can't tell the difference between the different kinds of milk. So you should pick a healthier milk since it has the same good stuff with out the extra fat and calories.

5. Got Sugar in your drink? Distribute bottles of 100% juice, juice drinks, energy drinks, water, sweetened milk and others and ask kids to compare how much sugar the drinks contain. If the youth remember to do their homework and bring in bottles, address those as well. Ask youth to identify the best choices.

6. Prayer for Power - ask volunteer to read

Points to Note:

- Many children are not used to drinking unflavored milk and may not like any of the milk offered. Be prepared for this by showing them a sugary drink demo of how much sugar and fat is in sweetened milk.

For Next Week:

- Next week we are going to be talking about what junk food companies do to get you to want to eat their unhealthy food. When you are watching TV, or are on your way to school, pay attention to all the fast food advertisements that you see. Write down one that really grabs your attention.

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God's Health Squad Makes Smart Choices!

Scripture of the Day:

> *And be not conformed to this world but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*
>
> Romans 12:2

God knows how hard it is for you to make the right choices. That is why He did not ask you to do it alone. With His help, you'll find the strength to do what's right.

Food for Thought
Eat right to be God's light.

God's Health Squad's Prayer for Power

Dear God,

It is easy for me to follow the choices of those around me even when I know they are wrong. You have showed me that with knowledge and your help I can always do what's right.

My body is a gift from You and I want to treat it with respect. Help me to have the strength to be Your light and guide others to make good, healthy choices as well.

Thank you for giving me my body so that I can follow Your will. It is beautiful and perfect, and I am going to keep it that way by choosing low-fat foods and drinks. I will praise you by keeping my body healthy.

Amen

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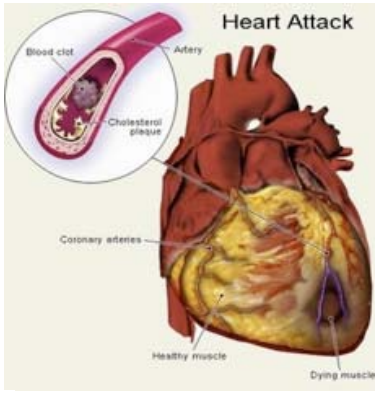
How can I Choose Drinks Wisely?



Good Drinks Have:

-lots of **nutrients**

-**little or no fat** and **sugar**

Fat and sugar can harm your body. Saturated fat can clog your arteries and make your heart weaker over time.

Choose these:

- **100% Juice**
- **Water**
- **1% or skim milk**

Bad Drinks:

-Soda

-Whole and 2% milk

Milk has lots of vitamins, minerals, and calcium that keep your body strong!

Why Choose Low fat Milk?

Drinking **one cup of whole milk** has as much saturated **fat** as a

A Snickers Bar!

5 Strips of Bacon!

A Burger!

While these are ok as a treat once in a while,
over time whole milk and other foods high in saturated fat can cause **heart disease** and **diabetes**.

Milk Taste Test

A	B
☐ Liked! ☐ Didn't Like Guess:	☐ Liked! ☐ Didn't Like Guess:
C	**D**
☐ Liked! ☐ Didn't Like Guess:	☐ Liked! ☐ Didn't Like Guess:

Milk Taste Test

A	B
☐ Liked! ☐ Didn't Like Guess:	☐ Liked! ☐ Didn't Like Guess:
C	**D**
☐ Liked! ☐ Didn't Like Guess:	☐ Liked! ☐ Didn't Like Guess:

Milk Taste Test

A	B
☐ Liked! ☐ Didn't Like Guess:	☐ Liked! ☐ Didn't Like Guess:
C	**D**
☐ Liked! ☐ Didn't Like Guess:	☐ Liked! ☐ Didn't Like Guess:

Milk Taste Test

A	B
☐ Liked! ☐ Didn't Like Guess:	☐ Liked! ☐ Didn't Like Guess:
C	**D**
☐ Liked! ☐ Didn't Like Guess:	☐ Liked! ☐ Didn't Like Guess:

Session 4: Say “No” to Junk Food Advertising

Lesson Plan

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "Noll to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled upright and godly lives in this present age. (Titus 2:11-12)

Objectives:

- Youth will learn the many marketing techniques that fast food companies use to get kids to eat junk food.
- Youth will learn about what they can do to be educated consumers.
- Youth will learn how to spread this message as God's Health Squad.

Tools/Handouts:

- “Does this look familiar?” Handout
- Food Advertising Strategies handout
- Food Marketing and Childhood Obesity handout from CCFC

Background:

- Since 1980, there has been a dramatic increase in obesity among American children. Children of color are the hardest hit: 40% of African American and Hispanic American children ages 6-19 are overweight or at risk for being overweight.
- Overweight children are at a higher risk for Type 2 diabetes, hypertension, asthma, depression and low- self esteem.
- Marketing by food companies plays a major role in the childhood obesity epidemic. Junk food is everywhere. Most of the commercials on TV during children's shows are for junk food. Fast food restaurants spend $3 billion dollars a year on television ads aimed at children. Fast food companies even use popular TV and movie characters and toys to promote their product.
- In an environment full of junk food, it is very important to educate youth about the tactics used by the fast food companies. This will make youth more aware of their surroundings and empower them to say no to the many cues telling them to eat unhealthy junk food.

Lesson Outline:

1. Welcome and Warm Up - Ask participants to say their name and tell the group one thing they learned last meeting.

2. Scripture of the Day – ask for a volunteer to read scripture
   Discussion Points:
   - What does this scripture mean to you?
   - How do you think it applies to healthy eating?
   - Unhealthy food is on TV, on the radio, on toys, on the internet, EVERYWHERE!
   - How do you think it affects what you eat?

3. Food Advertisement Activity

   Discussion Points:
   - When was the last time you saw junk food advertised on TV? What about an ad for fruits or vegetables?
   - This activity will allow youth to see how effective ads are.
   - Using the "Does this Look Familiar: Handout, point to different fast food restaurants and ask youth to name or sing slogan.
     - McDonald's – "I'm lovin' it!"
     - Subway – "Eat fresh"
     - Taco Bell – "Think outside the bun"
     - KFC – "Finger lickin' good"
     - Burger King – "Wake up with the king"
     - White Castle – "What you Crave"
     - Quiznos – "Mmmm Toasty!"
     - Pizza Hut - Gather round the good stuff
   - Without even realizing it we have all heard these slogans and many people are able to identify them. This shows how effective the ads are.
   - Where else do you see fast food ads? TV, online, streets, etc.
   - How does it make you feel? It makes you want to eat the food in the pictures right? But the food companies use paint to make the food look as good as it does - it never looks that good in real life. And do you know how much fat and calories there are in each bite?
   - God wants you to be healthy and treat your temple right. Junk food and fast food make you sick over time. So pay attention to the fast food companies that are trying to trick you into buying unhealthy food and remember to say no to temptation!

4. For Next Week: Think about the ads that you see on TV and what you can do to help others resist the temptation and go towards what is godly.

5. Prayer for Power - ask volunteer to read

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God's HEALTH SQUAD

Does this look familiar?

Can you name their slogans?

SUBWAY

BURGER KING

Pizza Hut

Domino's Pizza

DUNKIN' DONUTS

Food Advertising Strategies

Advertisers have many methods to try and get you to buy their products. Lots of times, what they are selling is a lifestyle, or an image, rather than the product. Here are some tricks of the trade.

Ideal Kids (or families) - always seem perfect. The kids are really hip looking, with the hottest fashions and haircuts, and toys. Ideal families are all attractive and pleasant looking - and everyone seems to get along! Ideal kids and families represent the types of people that kids watching the ad would like themselves or their families to be.

Family Fun - a product is shown as something that brings families together, or helps them have fun together; all it takes is for mum or dad to bring home the "right" food, and a ho-hum dinner turns into a family party.

Excitement - who could ever have imagined that food could be so much fun? One bite of a snack food and you're surfing in California, or soaring on your skateboard!

Star Power - your favorite sports star or celebrity is telling you that their product is the best! Kids listen, not realizing that the star is being paid to promote the product.

Bandwagon - join the crowd! Don't be left out! Everyone is buying the latest snack food: aren't you?

Scale - is when advertisers make a product look bigger or smaller than it actually is.

Put Downs - are when you put down your competition's product to make your own product seem better.

Facts and Figures - are when you use facts and statistics to enhance your product's credibility.

Repetition - advertisers hope that if you see a product, or hear it's name over and over again, you will be more likely to buy it. Sometimes the same commercial will be repeated.

Heart Strings - are ads that draw you into a story and make you feel good, like the McDonalds commercial where the dad and his son are shoveling their driveway and the son treats his poor old dad to lunch at McDonalds when they are done.

Sounds Good - music and other sound effects add to the excitement of commercials, especially commercials aimed at kids. Those little jingles, that you just can't get out of your head, are another type of music used to make you think of a product. Have you ever noticed that the volume of commercials is higher than the sound for the program that follows?

Cartoon Characters- Tony the Tiger sells cereal and the Nestlés Quick Bunny sells chocolate milk. Cartoon like these make kids identify with products.

Weasel Words - by law, advertisers have to tell the truth, but sometimes, they use words that can mislead viewers. Look for words in commercials like: "Part of..." "The taste of real..." "Natural..." "New, better tasting....." "Because we care..." There are hundreds of these deceptive sayings - how many more can you think of?

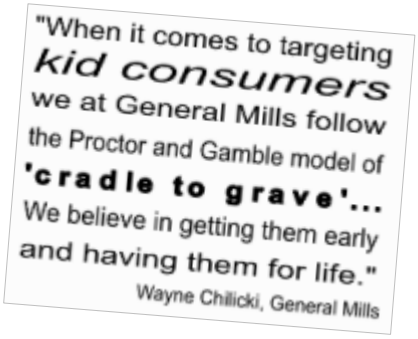
Omission - is where advertisers don't give you the full story about their product. For example, when a Pop Tart claims to be "part" of a healthy breakfast, it doesn't mention that the breakfast might still be healthy whether this product is there or not.

Are You Cool Enough? - this is when advertisers try to convince you that if you don't use their products, you are a nerd. Usually advertisers do this by showing people that look uncool trying a product and then suddenly becoming hip looking and doing cool things.

From the Media Awareness Network
http://www.media-awareness.ca/

FOOD MARKETING & CHILDHOOD OBESITY

A Growing Problem



- One-third of American children and youth are either obese or at risk of becoming obese.[1]
- In the past 30 years, the obesity rate among children ages 2-5 has nearly tripled to 14%, quadrupled for children ages 6-11 to 19%, and tripled for youth ages 12-19 to 17%.[2]
- Obesity is linked to increased risk for Type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, cancer, and hypertension.[3]
- Due to increasing obesity rates, this generation of children may be the first in 200 years with a shorter life expectancy than their parents.[4]

Food Marketing Works

- In 2006, based on a comprehensive review of the research, the Institute of Medicine issued a report finding strong evidence that television advertising influences children's food preferences, purchase requests, and diets. Among its recommendations: Stop using licensed characters to promote junk food.[5]
- Children consume about 167 extra calories for ever hour of TV that they watch.[6] A preschooler's risk for obesity increases by 6% for every hour of TV watched per day.[7]
- One thirty-second commercial can influence the brand preferences of children as young as two.[8]

- In a 2007 study, preschool children reported that food in McDonald's wrappers tasted better than food in plain wrappers, suggesting that branding can even trump sensory input.[9]

It's Everywhere

- Food and beverage advertisers are spending between $10 and $15 billion annually marketing to children.[10]
- About 98% of all televised food ads seen by children are for foods high in sugar, fat, or sodium.[11]
- Eight out of ten food companies that advertise on television also do advertising to children on the web[12] in virtual worlds such as Whyville, and Nicktropolis,[13] and through advergames[14] such as Pringles "Snack Attack."

- In 2006, more than 80 different media programs were used to promote food to children through brand licensing or toy giveaways. That same year fast food restaurants sold more than 1.2 billion kids meals with toys.[15]
- Coca-Cola paid $20 million for product placement in *American Idol*, which is frequently among the top rated TV shows for children 2-11.[16]
- Burger King has branded games specifically designed for cell phones. In "BK City" players navigate through a Burger King restaurant, interact with the King, and encounter flying Whopper sandwiches.[17]

- Junk food continues to be marketed in schools through vending machines, team sponsorships, incentive programs, fundraising, direct advertising, and sponsored educational materials.[18]

Mixed Messages

- In-school junk food advertising masquerades as education. Ronald McDonald visits schools to promote literacy, character education, and fitness. McDonald's, Coke and Pepsi all have in-school fitness programs.[19]

- Characters appearing on high-sugar and high-calorie foods also appear on healthier foods, sending mixed messages to children. *Dora the Explorer* appears as a chocolate lollipop[20] and on packaging for fruits and vegetables. [21]

- Food and beverage companies are positioning themselves as partners in the fight against childhood obesity, yet corporations such as Coca Cola and Pepsico have consistently lobbied against state and local legislation to curb the marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages in schools.[22]

- In 2007, CCFC launched a campaign to "fire Shrek" from his role as a spokes-character for the Department of Health and Human Services, because at the same time, the film *Shrek III* was promoting M&M's, Snickers, Skittles, McDonald's Happy Meals, Keebler E.L. Fudge Double Stuffed cookies, and more.[23]

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Session 5: Why eat Breakfast?

Lesson Plan

Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. Psalm 37:3

Objectives:

- Youth will learn how to and practice applying their knowledge about label reading, and healthy snacks/ drinks.
- Youth will learn about why breakfast is important.
- Youth will learn about the different food groups and how to choose a healthy breakfast by incorporating at least 3 food groups.

Tools/Handouts:

- "God's Health Squad Eats Breakfast" handout
- MyPyramid Worksheet

Background:

- Breakfast is the healthy start to a day that every child needs. After fasting during the night, children need nutrients to be able to function well in school. However, many children don't eat breakfast, and many who do choose unhealthy options.
- Healthy breakfasts can include cereal with low-fat milk and fruit; yogurt, granola and fruit, eggs and whole wheat toast etc.
- Balanced meals are very important to get all the different nutrients that growing children need. The USDA MyPyramid can help provide guidelines on how to incorporate foods from every food group in to each meal.

Lesson Outline

1. Welcome and Warm up - Ask each child to say their name and favorite breakfast food
2. Breakfast handout
    - Ask volunteer to read scripture of the day
    - Ask for another volunteer to put into his or her own words.
    - Discussion Points:
        - What did you eat for breakfast? If nothing, how did that make you feel? Do you think your breakfast was healthy? If so why do you think so?
        - Why do you think breakfast is so important? Do you where the name comes from (breaking a fast)?

- Refer to handout and ask for volunteers to read different sections

3. **MyPyramid Handout –** Discussion Points:
   - The food guide pyramid is another tool, like the nutrition facts label that can help us make healthy choices.
   - Eating a variety of foods from all the different food groups can help you to get all the nutrients you need to be healthy and strong.
   - How can we apply this idea to breakfast? Try to include as many food groups as possible in each meal.

4. **For Next Week:**
   - Try to make your breakfast healthier this week by incorporating as many food groups as possible, and choosing whole grains instead of white and fruit instead of sugar as sweetening. Keep track of your progress with you're MyPyramid Worksheet.

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God's Health Squad Eats Breakfast!

Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.
Psalm 37:3

Why Eat Breakfast?

- A Nutritional breakfast fuels your body and mind - it gives you the nutritional boost you need to start the day.
- Breakfast will help you do pay attention, learn better and do well in school.
- Breakfast will keep you from getting sick.

What is a Healthy Breakfast?

Here are some examples of nutritious breakfasts:

- Cereal or oatmeal with lowfat milk or yogurt and fruit.
- Pancakes with fresh fruit and a glass of lowfat milk.
- Whole grain bagels or muffins with fruit and a glass of milk.

MyPyramid Worksheet

Name: _____

MyPyramid FOR KIDS

Check how you did yesterday and set a goal to aim for tomorrow

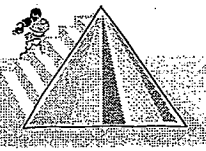
Write In Your Choices From Yesterday	Food and Activity	Tip	Goal (Based On a 1800 Calorie Pattern)	List Each Food Choice In Its Food Group*	Estimate Your Total
Breakfast: Lunch: Snack: Dinner: Physical activity: 	**Grains** 	Make at least half your grains whole grains.	**6 ounce equivalents** (1 ounce equivalent is about 1 slice bread, 1 cup dry cereal, or ½ cup cooked rice, pasta, or cereal)		_____ ounce equivalents
	Vegetables 	Color your plate with all kinds of great tasting veggies.	**2½ cups** (Choose from dark green, orange, starchy, dry beans and peas, or other veggies).		_____ cups
	Fruits 	Make most choices fruit, not juice.	**1½ cups**		_____ cups
	Milk 	Choose fat-free or lowfat most often.	**3 cups** (1 cup yogurt or 1½ ounces cheese = 1 cup milk)		_____ cups
	Meat and Beans 	Choose lean meat and chicken or turkey. Vary your choices--more fish, beans, peas, nuts, and seeds.	**5 ounce equivalents** (1 ounce equivalent is 1 ounce meat, chicken or turkey, or fish, 1 egg, 1 T. peanut butter, ½ ounce nuts, or ¼ cup dry beans)		_____ ounce equivalents
	Physical Activity 	Build more physical activity into your daily routine at home and school.	At least **60 minutes** of moderate to vigorous activity a day or most days.		_____ minutes

How did you do yesterday? ☐ Great ☐ So-So ☐ Not So Great

My food goal for tomorrow is: _____

My activity goal for tomorrow is: _____

* Some foods don't fit into any group. These "extras" may be mainly fat or sugar--limit your intake of these.



Session 6: Be an Agent of Change

Lesson Plan

God is faithful, he will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able.
(1 Corinthians 10:13, NKJV)

Objectives:

- Youth will practice applying their knowledge of label reading, the food pyramid and choosing healthy foods to other meals and settings.
- Youth will brainstorm and practice how to bring the message to their homes, schools, neighborhood bodegas, and communities.

Tools/Handouts:

- Scripture Handout
- Plate Handout
- School Food Handout

Background:

- The youth have now learned a great deal about nutrition and healthy eating. It is now time, to show them how to apply this knowledge to mobilize change in their communities. In this session we will work together to come up with ways to make change and put together the next steps of how to do this.

Lesson Outline

- **Welcome and Warm up** – Ask participants to say their name and tell the group one thing they learned last week.

- **Discussion**

    - What have we learned so far as a member of God's Health Squad? (how to read labels, how to choose healthy snacks and drinks, how to eat a healthy breakfast, food guide pyramid, etc.)
    - Who remembers why it is good to eat healthier? (to feel better, to keep from getting serious disease, to grow stronger, to do well in school, to honor god etc.
    - Who remembers God's Health Squad's mission?
    - What can we do with this information? How can we get others to be healthier to?
    - **What can you do at home?** Be the Health Squad at home! What types of foods do you eat at home? Do your parents cook or do you get fast food? Share the information you have learned about fast food advertising with your parents.

- If they cook, choose balanced portion sizes by using the plate model. (Use plate handout)
  - Half of your plate should be vegetables, a quarter should be grains, and the other quarter should be lean meats, beans, etc.
  - This is not the way most of us eat, but this is something to work towards. It is going to be hard but it is something that will make all your meals healthier.
- **What can you do at school?** What is the food at school like? If you don't like something about it, you can speak up. Talk to your school wellness council if the meals are healthy or appealing and see how you can get involved to make them better.
- **What can you do in your community?** Talk to your neighborhood bodega owner about what you have learned as part of this program. Encourage them to offer healthier snacks like fresh fruits, baked chips, pretzels, low-fat yogurt, low-fat milk, 100% juice and water.

- **Practice any of these ideas that the youth would like to use to make change.**

Points to Note:

- This session includes a great deal of discussion and many topics. Allow the discussion to follow the interest of the participants and use the handouts as they seem appropriate.

Session 7: Play Practice!

Objectives:
- Youth will summarize what they have learned.
- Youth will present what they have learned by performing the God's Health Squad Play

Tools/Handouts:
- God's Health Squad Script

Background:
- This session will be focused on recalling and reinforcing all that the youth have learned and practice presenting this to their parents, peers and other congregation members.

Lesson Plan

- **Warm Up** – Ask participants to say their name and tell the group one thing they have learned last session and one thing they have done since.

- **Play Practice** – assign roles and practice reading script, adding more emotion and movement each time.
  - 9 Characters: 6 members of Health Squad and 3 Other Kids

- **Invite Church members to celebration –** have participants make invitations to give to their family and friends.

Points to Note:
- Make sure to assign understudies for all roles, since youth may be absent on the performance day.

God's Health Squad Celebration Play Script

Adapted from Snack Squad Curriculum

Carlos: Yo! We're God's Health Squad

Other Kid 1: Hmmmpph!

Sara: And we're here to get people to eat healthier foods

Other Kid 2: Yawn!

Barry: Like fruits and low-fat snacks

Other Kid 3: Whatever!

Angelica: We're also trying to get people to exercise more…

Lil Suave: And stop watching TV or playing video games all the time

Barry: Or for those of us lying on the bed and talking on the phone for too long.

Sara: We're learning about how to read labels and choose healthier snacks at the bodegas.

Other Kid 1: I don't know what y'all are talking about!

Carlos: Wait, Hold up. I think we need to break things down.

Sara: All right – a snack can be something healthy

Barry: Like an apple, or something not-so healthy like cookies. It all depends on what you choose.

Other Kid 2: But what's the difference? A snack is just a snack! It doesn't matter how healthy it is!

Carlos: Nah man. A healthy snack can give you energy, and helps you grow stronger!

Sara: Snacking on things like fruit is good for you, like bananas,

Barry: And oranges and grapes. These don't have a lot of fat and calories.

Angelica: And the sugar in fruits is all natural and good for you!

Other Kid 3: Whatever! You guys swear it's so easy! What happens when I go to the store and there are no fruits? What do I get then?

Carlos: Don't get it twisted! Just cuz you're at a corner store doesn't mean you can't buy a healthy snack.

Sara: Yea, just turn the bag around and look at the Nutrition facts! If the bag says total fat: 7 grams or less, then you know your good.

Barry: With juice, it should be 100% fruit juice.

Other Kid 1: Grams of fat? One hundred percent? I don't know man, that seems like too much trouble!

Carlos: You wanna know what the real trouble is?

Other Kid 1: What?

Carlos: Unhealthy snacks make you fat.

Sara: They slow you down!

Barry: And make your stomach hurt!

Alexis: And that's not cute at ALL!

Other Kid 2: I get it, but I know some of my friends won't. What should I tell them?

Barry: Tell them to just try it once. It won't hurt to try it once you know.

Sara: Yeah, tell them to try it!

Other Kids (all together): Yea, I guess that might work, thanks God's Health Squad!

Session 8: Celebration!

Objectives:

- Youth will present what they have learned.
- Youth will be honored with certificates and prizes for completing the program.

Tools/Handouts:

- God's Health Squad Certificate of Participation
- God's Health Squad Prizes – bags and t-shirts

Lesson Plan

- Welcome Everyone
- Introduce Play
- God's Health Squad Pledge – Being part of God's Health Squad comes with a lot of responsibility, so before you can officially become a member, you must be willing to take on this responsibility. Are you willing to do that?

If so, please recite the Health Squad Pledge after me:

"As a member of God's Health Squad, I pledge to honor god with my temple and carry out the Health Squad mission. I pledge to choose healthy snacks and drinks and get my family and friends on the right track, so we can be healthy just like that!"

- Present Certificates and Prizes
- Explain how the meal is healthy
- Sit down and share a healthy meal

Points to Note:

- The healthy meal may not be appealing to all youth who are used to eating a lot more fried food. Encourage them to try it and remember that exposure is the first step towards making a change.