

Together Counts™ Activity Sheet Home to School Summer 2016

Learning from Others

Your child has been learning about how children around the world stay well through an investigation of the foods other children eat and the games they play. Now it's time to continue this exploration at home. This summer, use the activities below to incorporate other cultures' wellness habits into your own routines. Then set goals to help your child—and your family—achieve an active, healthy lifestyle!

At Home Activity 1: Celebrating Culture

In school, your child shared a meal that your family frequently eats and looked into where the meal originated. Now let's take this one step further! After discussing your family heritage with your child, plan a meal that celebrates your unique background. The websites below are an easy starting point:

World Cuisine Recipes: allrecipes.com/recipes/86/world-cuisine

What's Cooking - USDA Mixing Bowl: whatscooking.fns.usda.gov

As you plan out your special meal together, set a goal to make the dinner as balanced as possible by trying to include each of the following food groups: Grains, Vegetables, Fruits, Dairy, Protein and Oils. Involve your child in each step of the decision-making process: from searching for recipes, preparing the grocery list, shopping for ingredients, prepping the food and cooking. When the last bite has been taken, discuss how the meal turned out before you clean up. How was this meal symbolic of your culture? Was it balanced? Was it tasty? Would you like to make it again? Could any changes be made to make it better?

At Home Activity 2: Eating Around the World

Making decisions about how and what you eat can affect all sides of your Wellness Triangle. *What* you eat can impact your physical wellness, while *how* you eat can affect your social and emotional wellness. With your family, read about three ways that people around the world use food to strengthen their Wellness Triangle. Family goals are included in each explanation, so select one to work towards with your child!

1. Flavor!

Spices like cinnamon, oregano, paprika and garlic come from all corners of the globe and are used in different ways and different combinations around the world. Trying new seasonings is a perfect way to give a flavor and color makeover to vegetables, grains, protein and even fruit! Plus, many spices have proven health benefits.

Goal: With your child, choose a new spice from the grocery store. Research where it comes from and how it is commonly used. Then incorporate it into at least three different meals!

2. Embrace Simplicity

Costa Rica has a motto called *Pura Vida*, which literally translates to "pure life." The slogan is used to describe Costa Ricans' appreciation of life's smaller, simple treasures. Costa Ricans apply this slogan to all aspects of their lives.

Goal: Embrace *Pura Vida* when it comes to meal-planning, and take time to enjoy the unique flavors of whole foods. Meals don't have to be fancy to be delicious. In-season fruit, for example, can make the perfect dessert and there's no prep needed! As you strive for a balanced diet, avoid over-complicating the menu and incorporate at least one food, left as-is, into every meal.

3. Eat Around the Table

How you eat is almost as important as *what* you eat. European countries like Italy, Spain and Portugal are known for long family dinners where everyone shares a meal together around one table. Families that eat together are more likely to eat balanced, well-portioned meals. Plus, eating together encourages family discussions and helps promote social and emotional wellness.

Goal: While it may not be feasible to have the family eat together at every meal, set a realistic goal at the beginning of each week that specifies how many times you can make this happen. Try to increase this number every week until eating together becomes the norm.

At Home Activity 3: Moving Around the World

Making decisions about how and when you move is another fundamental part of your family's overall wellness. It can be easy to overlook physical activity when our days become busy. To avoid this, read with your child about the following three global ways to incorporate physical activity into each day. Then select one and write a challenging yet feasible goal in the space provided. Try your best to achieve your goal this summer in order to strengthen all three sides of your family's Wellness Triangle!

1. Morning Exercises

Many Asian countries prioritize morning exercise, especially in schools. Schools either begin with a set of morning exercises or take a mid-morning break to perform them on a daily basis. It's a great way to get your body moving and your blood flowing as the day is just beginning.

Use this as an example this summer and incorporate morning physical activity into your family's daily routine. Whether it's a bike ride, a walk or a swim, you'll beat the heat and start the day on the right foot!

Goal: This summer, we will do the following activities for morning exercise:

_____. We will do this _____ mornings every week.

2. Get more steps!

In cities around the world, one well-known ingredient to wellness is the amount of walking that their residents do every day. Many Parisians, for example, rarely use transportation other than own feet! It's an easy concept: the more steps in your day, the more physically active you've been.

It doesn't have to be hard: Take the stairs, park farther away from the entrance or go for a walk after dinner. Every step counts! If possible, have your child count their steps with a pedometer to track your progress.

Goal: This summer, we will do the following activities to increase the steps we take every day:

Every day, we will try to get _____ steps.

3. Have a dance party

From Salsa and Merengue to K-pop and Bollywood musicals, there are songs from every country that will get you on your feet. This summer, allow music to do just that! Dancing with your family is a great way to strengthen your physical, social and emotional wellness. So put on those tunes and start moving!

Goal: This summer, we will try to dance ____ days every week. Each of these days, we will dance for ____ minutes.

The _____ family completed the following Together Counts™ activities:

_____ Celebrating Culture _____ Eating Around the World _____ Moving Around the World