



# Fuel Their Minds



## Ideas for Better Eating and Active Play with Children

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### The Role of Character Education in Schools

One of the greatest challenges parents, teachers, and administrators face is how to help students grow to become moral people with values we cherish as members of a civilized society. Instilling values is an obligation of not only families, but schools and communities as well. Schools can offer educational programs that reinforce values to help students develop good dispositions and flourish intellectually, personally, and socially. California Education Code Section 233.5(a) calls upon educators to impress upon students the values and principles of character specifically.

#### What are Principles of Character?

The International Center for Leadership in Education has identified 12 principles of exceptional character that lay an important foundation for how students should behave individually and with others. These principles lead students toward higher-level functioning and positive relationship building, which help promote a civil society.



<b>Adaptability</b>	The ability and willingness to change.
<b>Compassion</b>	Kindness. The desire to help others in distress and offer help whenever possible.
<b>Contemplation</b>	Thinking things through with proper care before taking action.
<b>Courage</b>	Bravery. The willingness to put one's beliefs into practice. To face difficulty or danger and express your beliefs even if you are afraid.
<b>Honesty</b>	Truthfulness, sincerity. The act or condition of never deceiving, stealing, or taking advantage of the trust of others.
<b>Initiative</b>	Eagerness to do something. To take responsible action on your own, without prompting from others.
<b>Loyalty</b>	Faithfulness, dependability. To show others that you are dependable when you have a commitment to them.
<b>Optimism</b>	Positive beliefs. To strive to be positive in your beliefs about yourself, others, and the future.
<b>Perseverance</b>	Hard work. The quality of trying hard and continuously in spite of obstacles and difficulties.
<b>Respect</b>	Regard, value, admire, and appreciate. To show regard for yourself, others, and the world around you.
<b>Responsibility</b>	Accountability. To demonstrate that you consider yourself to be accountable for your actions and that you follow through on your commitments.
<b>Trustworthiness</b>	Reliability. To be dependable, deserving of trust and confidence.

#### What is "Character Education"?

Character education is the teaching of values students should use every day to make decisions. Character education programs promote these values, not for reward or reputation, but because it's the right thing to do. The California Department of Education advocates for the incorporation of character education in standards-based educational systems.

#### What are the benefits of Character Education?

Research shows that students in schools with character education programs become more attentive, motivated to learn, and more caring and respectful toward peers. When schools provide a safe and supportive environment through this approach, students learn better!

#### How do I implement an effective Character Education program?

Character education should be embedded in the core curriculum and your school's daily culture. It requires a consistent and comprehensive approach, from Principal to yard staff, that promotes personal and social values in all phases of school life. Discuss these principles with your students daily to build this culture! With younger students, character education promotes a basic understanding of making smart, ethical decisions and praising good behaviors through storytelling, art, music, social games, and role-play. With older youth, it can help them practice in more complex situations through role play and community service. There are opportunities to infuse principles of character into all of the California curriculum frameworks, especially History-Social Sciences and Reading/Language Arts!

*Adapted from www.cde.ca.gov & www.scu.edu*

## Free Campus & Community Events to participate in this Spring!



### 11th Annual Farm Connection Day! Friday May 3rd, 2019

- Farm Connection Day is a free field trip hosted by Yolo County 4-H and Yolo County Farm Bureau. It provides a hands-on, educational experience about agriculture for all Yolo County students in K-6th grade and is a fun way for students to make the connection between agriculture and their daily lives!
- The event runs from 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM at the Yolo County Fairgrounds.
- **Register your class by April 17th!** Sign up at [www.yolofarmbureau.org](http://www.yolofarmbureau.org).

Adapted from [www.yolofarmbureau.org](http://www.yolofarmbureau.org) &  
[www.rethinkyourdrinkday.com](http://www.rethinkyourdrinkday.com)

### 2nd Annual Rethink Your Drink Day! Wednesday May 8, 2019

- Schools across the state will come together to raise awareness about the health effects of sugary drinks and promote the benefits of drinking water!
- Our goal is to educate students about healthy drink options and how to identify drinks with added sugar.
- We can help your campus implement environmental changes that will improve the access and desirability of healthy beverages.
- The Rethink Your Drink Program is a public health initiative led by the California Department of Public Health and is administered by our Nutrition program. Contact your nutrition educator to receive resources to support this event!

## Be a Healthy Role Model for Your Students! 4 Quick Tips

Classroom and afterschool teachers are two of the most important influencers on students' daily lives. While giving students a quality education, you are also helping them develop healthy nutrition and physical activity habits. This is most apparent through your actions and conversations around food and movement. Below are some healthy role-modeling tips that you can start using in your classroom today!

### 1. Lead by example to show them healthy foods.

Eat vegetables, fruits, and whole grains with meals and snacks in class. Share with your students what you have packed for your own lunch and snack. Ask them to help you identify which food groups your meals and snacks belong to. Let your students see that you choose to eat and enjoy healthy, nutrient-dense foods!



### 2. Reward students with attention, not food!

Reward your students with classroom or campus privileges whenever possible. Choose not to offer sweets and candy as rewards— It teaches them that sweets and candy are acceptable to eat all of the time. Some non-food rewards can include:

- Giving extra time to your scheduled art or music lessons
- Letting students have lunch or breakfast in your classroom
- Letting students make deliveries to the office
- Having students read the morning announcements

### 3. Listen to your students when they mention they are hungry.

If your student says he or she is hungry, let them have a snack from their backpack during class. Eating a healthy snack will help them re-fuel and re-focus!



### 4. Encourage physical activity & make it fun!

- Add a movement or "brain break" when transitioning between lessons. Perform various exercises like stretching, jumping jacks, or dancing to re-energize yourself and your class.
- Take a Nature Walk: Have your students grab a notebook and pencil and take a walk around campus. Encourage them to look for varieties of plants and insects, listen to birds and other noises, and notice what scents are in the area. Have them journal their observations as a writing or science project.

Adapted from [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov) &  
[www.actionforhealthykids.org](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org)

## Updated Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

According to the recently updated 2018 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, school-aged youth (ages 6-17) are at critical periods for developing movement skills, learning healthy habits, and establishing a foundation for lifelong well-being. Consistent physical activity promotes fitness and overall health. Compared to those who are inactive, physically active youth have higher levels of endurance, lower body fat, and stronger muscles and bones. Brain health benefits for active youth include fewer symptoms of depression and improved functions of memory, processing speed, attention, and academic performance!

Whether you're a classroom teacher, after-school tutor, or an administrator, you play an important role in providing age-appropriate physical activity opportunities on campus to help lay the foundation for lifelong physical activity. Since children typically reduce their physical activity as they get older, it is vital for educators to provide a variety of enjoyable opportunities and to encourage students to participate. Check out the helpful guidelines listed below.

### What is the Recommendation?

Students should aim to complete **60 minutes or more every day** of physical activity with moderate or vigorous intensity. These 60 minutes can be split up over the course of the day, during school hours and afterschool programming. It all adds up!

### What type of physical activities should my students be practicing?

There are three types of activities that students should perform with either moderate intensity (equivalent to brisk walking) or vigorous intensity (equivalent to running or jogging). These include aerobic activity, muscle-strengthening activity, and bone-strengthening activity. Any combination of the three types of physical activity count toward meeting the 60-minute goal! Examples of each are shown below.

#### Aerobic Activities:

These activities strengthen the heart and lungs and involve whole-body movement.

**Ex: Brisk walking • Bicycle riding • Active recreation, such as hiking, riding a scooter without a motor, swimming • Playing games that require catching and throwing, such as baseball and softball • House and yard work like sweeping or pushing a lawn mower • Video games that include continuous movement • Running • Active games involving running and chasing, like tag or flag football • Jumping rope • Sports such as soccer, basketball, tennis • Martial arts • Dancing**



#### Muscle-Strengthening Activities:

These activities make muscles do more work than usual daily activities. They can be unstructured and part of play, or they can be structured, such as lifting weights or working with resistance bands.

**Ex: Games like tug of war • Resistance exercises using body weight, resistance bands, weight machines, or hand-held weights • Rope or tree climbing • Climbing on playground equipment • Some forms of yoga**



#### Bone-Strengthening Activities:

These activities produce a force on the bones that promotes bone growth and strength. This force is usually made by impact with the ground.

**Ex: Hopping • Skipping • Jumping rope • Running • Sports that involve jumping or rapid change in direction**



### What else can schools do to help students meet the guidelines?

- Schools can use a variety of effective policies and practices to increase physical activity before, during, and after school.
- Improve physical education (PE): Change instructional practices to incorporate more time for moderate-to-vigorous physical activities and provide teachers with appropriate training.
- Provide classroom physical activity breaks throughout the school day.
- Provide programs, space, or equipment for physical activity before and after school. Contact our nutrition program if you are in need of physical activity curriculum or equipment!
- Expand intramural sports and campus recreation opportunities.
- Build foundational physical activity skills and confidence to increase participation.



Adapted from [www.health.gov](http://www.health.gov)

## Activity Kits Free From the University of California

You can help impact childhood obesity, fitness, and malnutrition. Local, state, and federal initiatives (and funding) urge a coordinated approach to addressing these issues. The University of California has prepared **activity kits** to help you teach nutrition, health, and physical activity concepts to your children, while integrating math, language, and science concepts that address CDE standards.

**These lessons come “ready-made”** with all of the materials to teach a fun and interactive lesson. The curriculum was developed by universities throughout the nation.

**We will bring the materials to you, free of charge.** We can provide trainings and additional resources to increase your confidence in these topics. We can also plan classroom food-themed cooking clubs, special events, and other fun sessions.



Follow us at “[ucalfreshyolo](#)”



**“Like” ‘UC-CalFresh Nutrition Education Program, Yolo County’** on Facebook to receive nutrition and wellness tips for you and your classroom daily!



This material was produced by the University of California CalFresh Nutrition Education Program with funding from USDA SNAP, known in California as CalFresh (formerly food stamps). These institutions are equal opportunity providers and employers. CalFresh provides assistance to low-income households and can help buy nutritious foods for better health. For CalFresh information, call 1-877-847-3663.



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Do you have a question regarding food or nutrition? Ask our Nutrition Educators by emailing [ceyolo@ucdavis.edu](mailto:ceyolo@ucdavis.edu).



## Fuel Their Mind Nutrition Newsletter Enclosed

calFresh Nutrition Education  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

1-877-847-3663

Funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and University of California Cooperative Extension. The SNAP program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious food for a better diet. To find out more, call 1-877-847-3663.

“Our mandate as a land grant institution ties us to the welfare, development, and protection of the state's land, resources, and people. Our mission is to develop and extend the use of research-based knowledge to improve specific practices and technologies.”



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