

for children ages 3–4½

## concept

Teach children the importance of eating heart healthy foods and participating in daily physical activities.

# Heart Healthy

## goals

1. Children will become aware of heart healthy foods and physical activity.
2. Children will learn the location and function of their heart.

## objectives

1. Children will relate the importance of heart healthy foods and daily physical activity.
2. Children will identify the location and function of their heart.

## activities

**1** Have the children sit in a circle on the floor. Ask, "Do you know where your heart is?"

Give each child a chance to answer. Continue by saying, "Show me where it is."

Place your hand over your heart and have the children follow. Assist the children with placing their hands over their heart, if necessary. Then congratulate the children by saying, "Very good. Now we all know where our heart is."

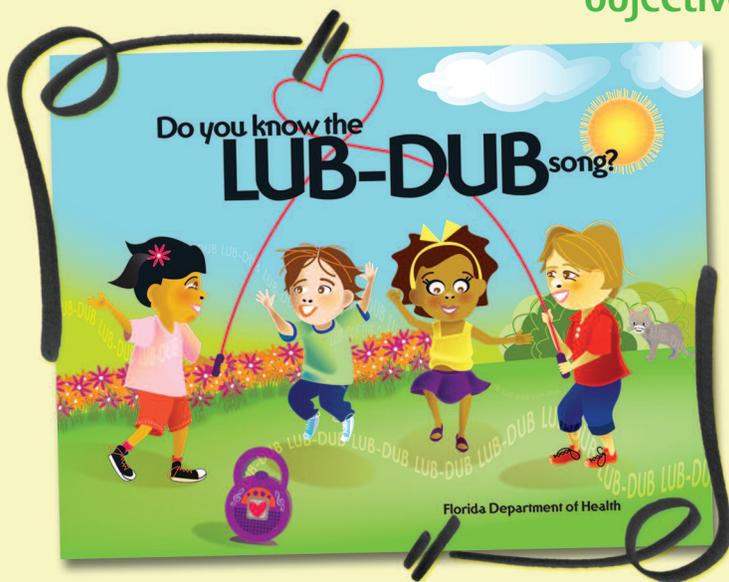
**2** Say, "Can you feel your heart beat? It feels like thump, thump, thump."

Allow children enough time to answer. Enthusiastically read *Do you know the LUB DUB song?*

**3** Say, "Hold your right arm up and ball your hand into a fist. Now squeeze your hand tight into a ball like this. Your heart is only a little bit bigger than this."

Demonstrate this and continue by saying, "Now show me your big, strong muscles."

Bring your fist towards your shoulder and flex your arm muscle. Say, "Did you know that your heart is a muscle too?"



### MATERIALS NEEDED

- *Do you know the LUB DUB song?* by Tera Anderson
- Bicycle pump
- Heart template for 3 to 4½ year olds (make copies and cut out a paper heart for each child or use template to trace paper hearts on light colored construction paper)
- Non-toxic crayons
- Scissors for the teacher
- Tape
- Pictures of various healthy and unhealthy foods (use pictures from magazines, the internet, or other lessons)
- Variety of fruits and vegetables (for snacks)

## Heart Healthy

**4** Have the children feel their heart beat again. Say, "See, our hearts are beating slowly now."

Continue, "Our heart likes it when we move and exercise." Have the children stand up. Say, "Let's all march in place for one minute."

After one minute, say, "Stop marching. Place your hand on your heart again. Is it beating faster?"

Give the children a chance to respond. Continue with, "Now let's jump up and down ten times."

Jump up and down with the children. Continue by saying, "Now place your hand on your heart again. Is it beating even faster?"

Give the children a chance to respond. Have the children sit back down in a circle. Say, "Sometimes our heart beats slowly and other times it beats faster. As we rest and nap, our heart beats slowly, but when we move and play, our heart beats faster. This helps our heart get a good, strong workout."

You may choose to have children feel their heart beats during various activities throughout the day such as nap time, outside play time, circle time, etc. to help them understand the concept of our heart rates changing depending on the activity we are doing.

**5** Ask, "Does anyone know what our heart does for us?"

Give each child a chance to answer. Continue, "Our heart is a pump. It pumps blood all throughout our body."

If possible, show children a bicycle pump. Let each child feel the air rushing out of the hose. Then say, "This is what our heart does with the blood in our body. It pumps it just like this bicycle pump. Some pumps pump water, some pump air, and some pump gasoline. Our heart is a very special pump that pumps blood all through our body to keep us alive. Our heart is very important."

**6** Have the children move to a table for an art activity. Prior to this activity, make enough copies (one paper heart per child) of the *Heart* template for 3 to 4½ year olds or make enough paper hearts for each child using a light colored construction paper.

Give each child a paper heart and allow them to color and draw on it. You may wish to write each child's name on the back of the decorated heart. Help the children place their paper heart on their chest with tape to mark the spot where their hearts are located.

Ask, "Why do you love your heart?"

Give each child a chance to answer.

**7** Say, "To keep our hearts healthy and happy, we have to eat healthy foods and be physically active."

Show the children pictures of a variety of foods. Ask, "Which foods do you think make our hearts happy?"

Allow each child to answer. Continue by saying, "Our heart doesn't like food that has a lot of sugar or fat, like soda or potato chips (show examples of unhealthy heart foods). These foods should only be eaten once in a while."

**8** Have the children wash their hands and move to a snack table. Place a tray of prepared fruits and vegetables (apple slices, strawberries, carrot sticks, broccoli, etc.) on the table in front of you. Say, "These are some of the snacks that make our hearts happy and healthy. They make our hearts strong."

Have the children select foods from the tray as a snack. Say, "Our hearts and our bodies like when we eat different kinds of healthy foods."

**Remember to make copies of the parent letter with the take-home activity sheet printed on the reverse side to send home with each child. The community fact sheet is also included for you to copy and display at your center or distribute as appropriate.**

## concept

Teach children the importance of eating heart healthy foods and participating in daily physical activities.

# Heart Healthy

## goals

1. Children will become aware of heart healthy foods and physical activity.
2. Children will learn the location and function of their heart.

## objectives

1. Children will identify heart healthy foods.
2. Children will demonstrate different types of physical activity that they can do to help a heart grow stronger.
3. Children will identify the location of their heart and its function.

## activities

- 1 Have the children sit in a circle on the floor. Ask, "Do you know where your heart is?"

Give each child a chance to answer. Continue by saying, "Show me where it is."

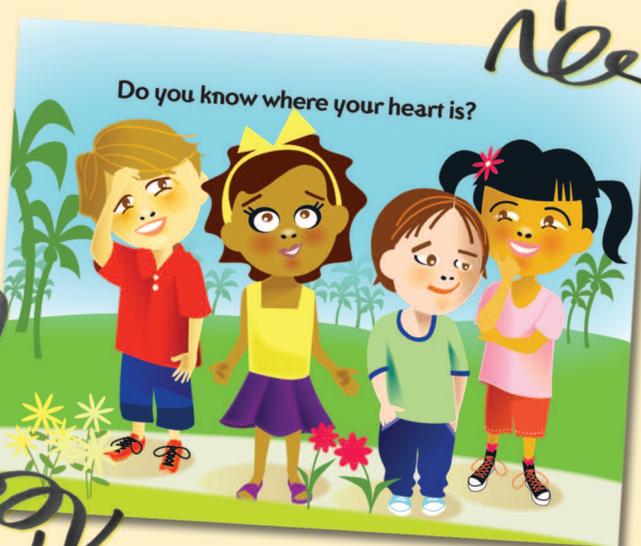
Place your hand over your heart and have the children follow. Assist the children with placing their hands over their heart, if necessary. Then congratulate the children by saying, "Very good. Now we all know where our heart is."

- 2 Say, "Can you feel your heart beat? It feels like thump, thump, thump." Allow children enough time to answer. Enthusiastically read the book *Do you know the LUB DUB song?*

Hand out one cardboard tube per pair of children. Have children ask their partner for permission to listen to their heart beat using the cardboard tubes. Explain the heart beat is on the left side of their chest.

Ask the children, "Which side is your left?"

Allow time for the children to answer and correct them if needed. Once the children have found the correct side, say, "Now, put one end of your cardboard tube on your partner's chest and the other end to your ear and listen to your partner's heart beat." >>>>



Do you know where your heart is?

### MATERIALS NEEDED

- *Do you know the LUB DUB song?* by Tera Anderson
- Cardboard tube per pair of children (paper towel or toilet paper roll)
- Bicycle pump
- Pictures of various healthy and unhealthy foods (use pictures from magazines, the internet, or other lessons)
- Heart template for 4½ to 5 year olds (make copies and cut out a paper heart for each child or use template to trace paper hearts on construction paper)
- Non-toxic glue sticks
- Pictures of various physical activities
- Variety of fruits and vegetables (for snacks)

## Heart Healthy

>>> Allow each child to have a turn listening to their partner's heartbeat.

**3** Hold your right arm up and ball your hand into a fist. Say, "Squeeze your hand tight into a ball like this. Your heart is only a little bit bigger than this."

Continue by saying, "Now show me your big, strong muscles."

Bring your fist towards your shoulder and flex your arm muscle. Then say, "Did you know that your heart is a muscle too?"

**4** Have the children feel their heart beat again. Say, "See our hearts are beating slowly now."

Continue, "Our heart likes when we move and exercise."

Have the children stand up. Say, "Let's all march in place for one minute."

After one minute, say, "Stop marching. Place your hand on your heart again. Is it beating faster?"

Give the children a chance to respond. Continue, "Now let's jump up and down ten times."

Jump up and down with the children. Continue by saying, "Now place your hand on your heart again. Is it beating even faster?"

Give the children a chance to respond. Have the children sit back down in a circle. Then say, "Sometimes our heart beats slowly and other times it beats faster. As we rest, our heart beats slowly, but when we move and play, our heart beats faster. This helps our heart to get a good, strong workout."

You may choose to have children feel their heart beats during various activities throughout the day such as nap time, outside play time, circle time, etc. to help them understand the concept of our heart rates changing depending on the activity we are doing.

**5** Say, "Touch your wrist just below your thumb."

You should check to make sure each child is touching the correct location. Say, "Do you feel something light pushing against your fingers?"

Allow time for children to answer and help any children who may need assistance. You may choose to allow each child to feel the pulse on your wrist first as an example, and then find their own pulse. Say, "This is your pulse. Everyone say pulse."

After everyone has responded, say, "Your pulse tells you how fast your heart is beating. Remember that your pulse beats faster or slower depending on what you are doing."

**6** Ask, "Does anyone know what our heart does for us?"

Give each child a chance to answer. Continue, "Our heart is a pump. It pumps blood all throughout our body."

If possible, show children a bicycle pump. Let each child feel the air rushing out of the hose. Then say, "This is what our heart does with the blood in our body. It pumps it just like this bicycle pump. Some pumps pump water, some pump air, and some pump gasoline. Our heart is a very special pump that pumps blood all through our body to keep us alive. Our heart is very important."

**7** Say, "To keep our hearts healthy and happy, we have to eat healthy foods and be physically active."

Show the children pictures of a variety of foods. Ask, "Which foods do you think make our hearts happy?"

Allow each child to answer. Continue by saying, "Our heart doesn't like food that has a lot of sugar or fat, like soda or potato chips (show examples of unhealthy heart foods). These foods should only be eaten once in a while."

# Heart Healthy

**8** Have the children move to a table for an art activity. Prior to this activity, make enough copies (one paper heart per child) of the heart template for 4½ to 5 year olds or make enough paper hearts for each child using construction paper.

In the center of the table, have several glue sticks and a variety of colored pictures of foods and physical activities. Instruct the children by saying, "Now find pictures of a few of your favorite heart healthy foods and physical activities in the center of the table and use a glue stick to glue them on your paper heart. Remember to pick things that make your heart happy."

**9** After the art activity, have the children sit back in a circle on the floor. Say, "Sometimes we like the same foods and physical activities and sometimes we don't. Let's share what heart healthy foods and activities we each like."

Have each child share the items that they placed on their paper heart.

**10** Say, "To keep our hearts healthy and happy, we have to eat healthy foods and be physically active."

Show the children a variety of foods. Pictures can be taken from magazines, the internet, or food packages.

Ask, "Which foods do you think makes our heart happy?"

Allow each child to answer. Continue by saying, "Our heart doesn't like food that has a lot of sugar or fat, like soda or potato chips (show examples of unhealthy heart foods). Eat these foods only once in a while."

**11** Have the children wash their hands and move to a snack table. Place a tray of prepared fruits and vegetables (apple slices, strawberries, carrot sticks, broccoli, etc.) on the table in front of you. Say, "These are some of the snacks that make our hearts happy and healthy. They make our heart strong."

Have the children select foods from the tray for a snack. Say, "Our hearts and our bodies like different kinds of healthy foods."

## additional activities for either age group

### Heart Rate Relay Race

Reinforce the idea that our heart beats at different rates depending on the type of activity we are doing by having the children participate in a relay race.

- Have the children stand in a line, side by side at one end of the playground or classroom. (This activity can be done inside or outside.)
- In the first round of the relay race, explain to the children that they are going to race to the fence (or other side of the room) and back by moving like a turtle, very slowly. Once all the children have returned to the starting line, have them feel their heart beats. Their hearts should be beating slowly at this point.
- Next, have the children race by hopping like bunny rabbits to the fence and back. Have them feel their heart beats again, which should be beating a little faster this time.
- Finally, have the children race by running fast like cheetahs to the fence and back. This time when they feel their heart beats, they should be beating quickly.

### Healthy Heart Walk

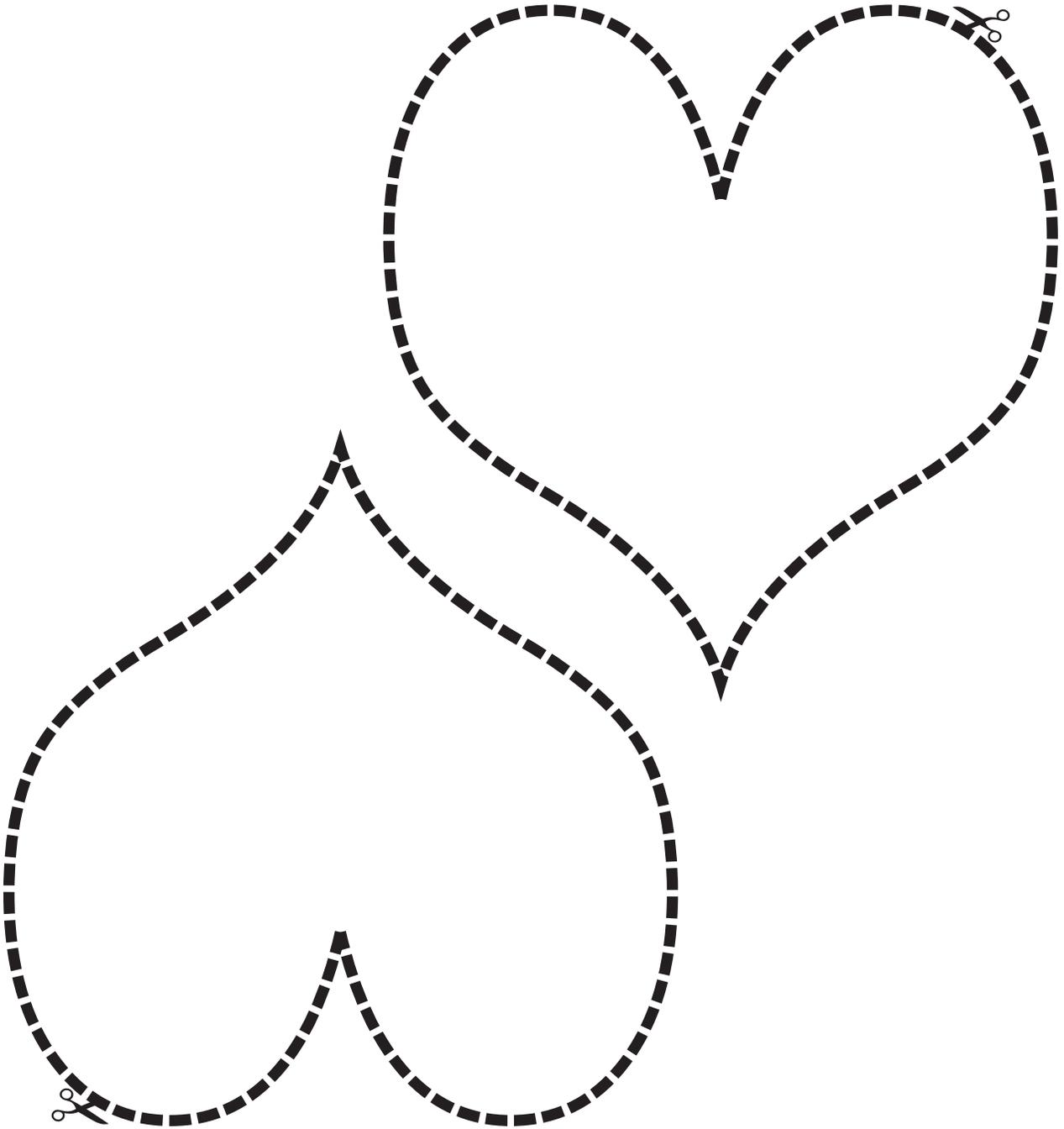
Plan an event to encourage heart health by hosting a "Healthy Heart Walk" at your facility or a nearby park. Invite children's parents and family members to join in the fun! Encourage everyone to wear a red t-shirt for the event, to increase awareness of heart healthy issues. Provide red, juicy apples and water as a heart healthy snack after the walk. You could also provide handouts on the importance of keeping our hearts healthy or offer a short informational session as part of the event. You may even choose to offer prizes to the walk participants in different categories.

PLEASE NOTE: Another food component is needed for a reimbursable snack.

Remember to make copies of the parent letter with the take-home activity sheet printed on the reverse side to send home with each child. The community fact sheet is also included for you to copy and display at your center or distribute as appropriate.

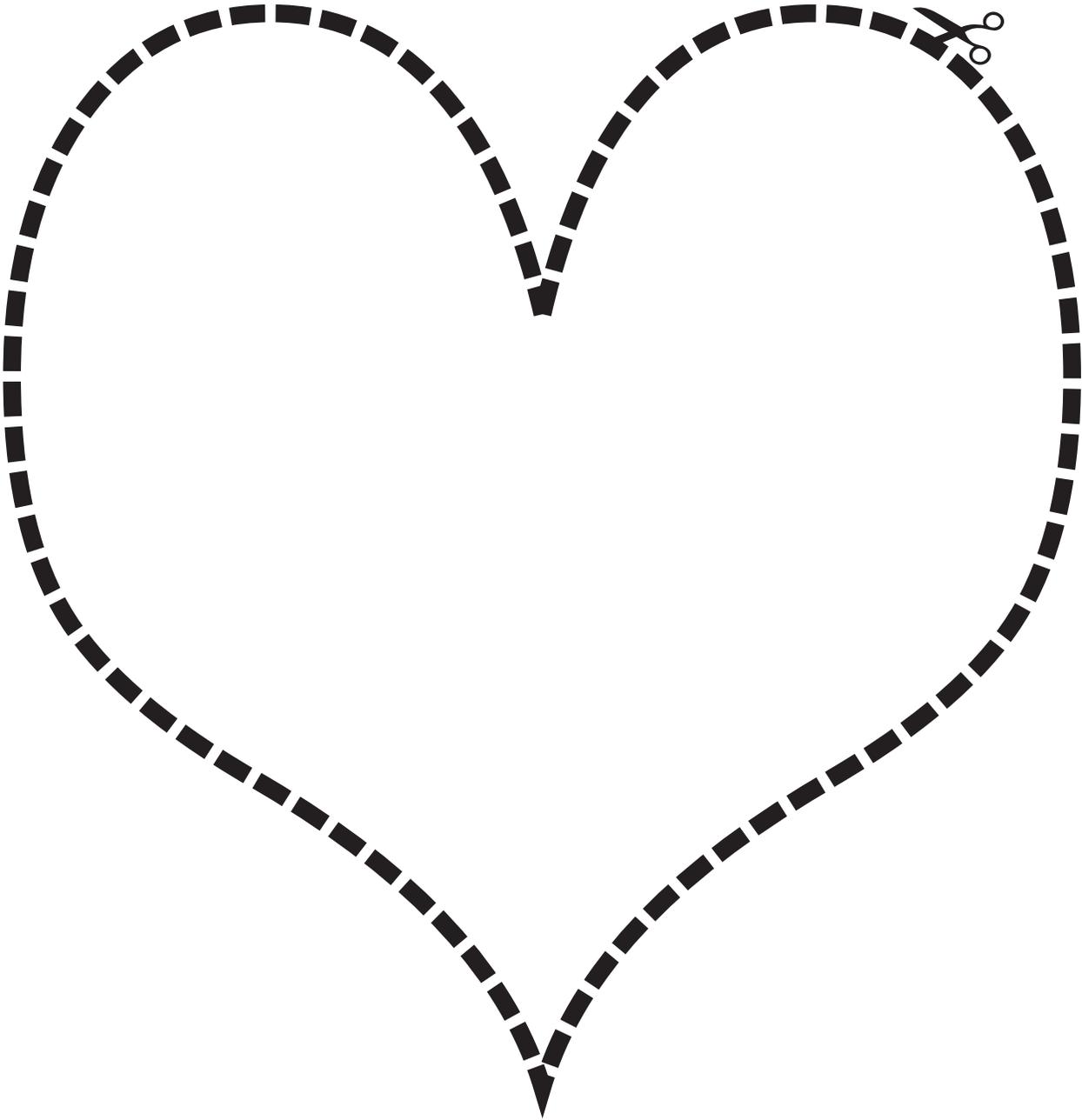
# Heart Template for Children Ages 3–4½

Make enough copies and cut out hearts so each child receives their own copy.



# Heart Template for Children Ages 4<sup>1/2</sup>–5

Make enough copies and cut out hearts so each child receives their own copy.

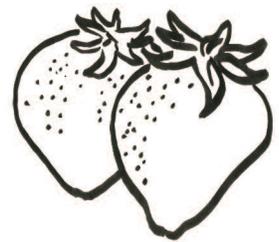


# Dear Parent:

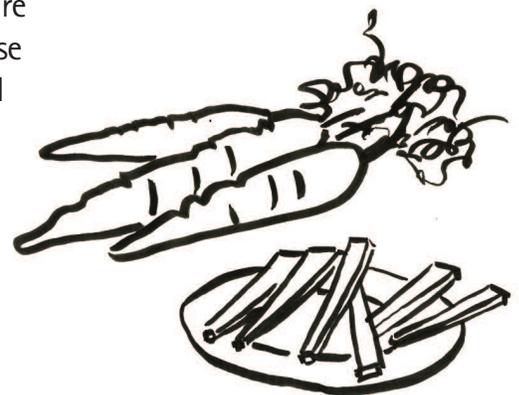
Your child has been learning about identifying and choosing heart healthy foods and physical activities from our lesson, *Heart Healthy*. We have been focusing on ways to keep our hearts happy and healthy. Below are just a few of the things we have been learning:

- Where our heart is located in our body and that our heart is a muscle.
- Our heart pumps blood throughout our body to keep us alive.
- Our heart needs a good, strong workout every day.
- Our heart likes to beat slowly sometimes, when we rest and nap, and faster, when we move and play.
- There are some types of foods that can make our hearts healthy and some types that can make it unhealthy.

We have also talked about our favorite heart healthy foods and activities. We have been trying different kinds of fruits and vegetables, like apple slices, strawberries, carrot sticks, and broccoli that help our hearts become healthy and strong. Children learn from watching you. Eat fruits and veggies and they will too.



Eating healthy foods and participating in physical activities daily are important in making our hearts and bodies healthy. Practicing these habits regularly helps to lower the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, and a wide range of other health problems.



Ask your child why they love their hearts and what foods and physical activities they like that help keep their hearts happy and healthy. Share with your child your favorite heart healthy foods and activities. Check out the back of this letter to see what heart healthy snacks your child would like to eat.

Practicing healthy eating habits and physical activity at home with your child is a great way to teach your child and to promote a healthy lifestyle.



Sincerely,

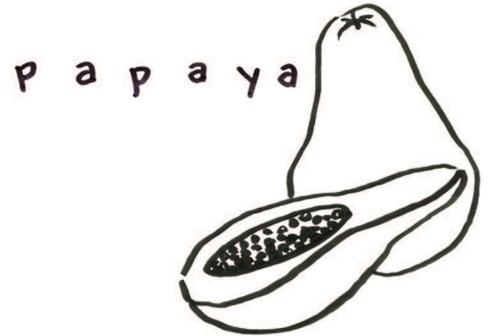
# Choose a Heart Healthy Snack!



Circle a healthy snack you would like to try!

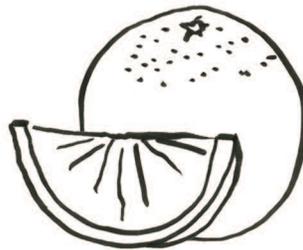
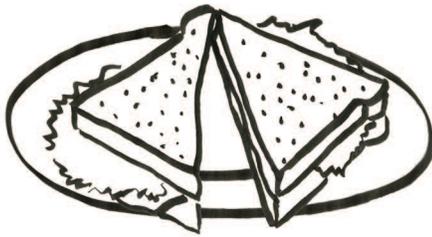


b a n a n a



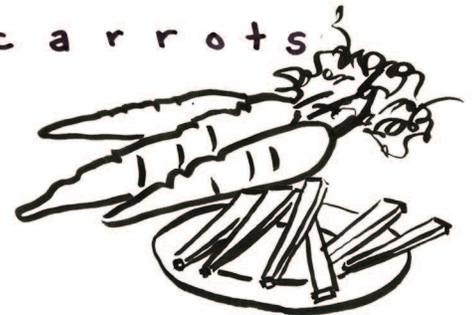
p a p a y a

turkey and lettuce sandwich



o r a n g e

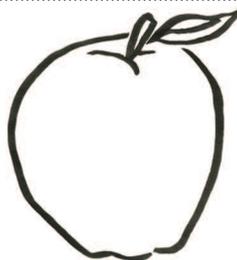
c a r r o t s



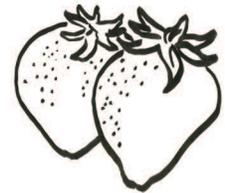
c e l e r y



a n d p e a n u t  
b u t t e r



a p p l e



s t r a w b e r r i e s

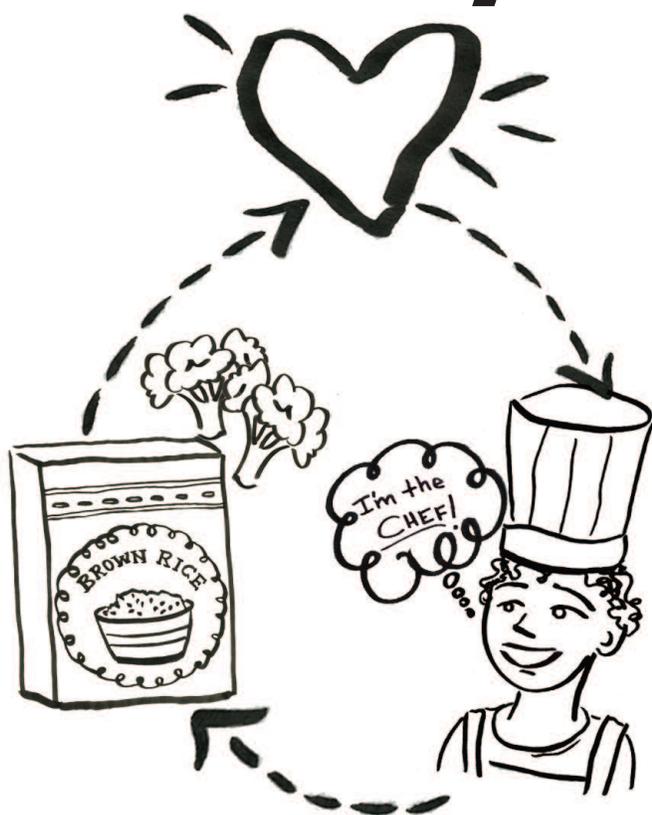


g r a p e s



---

# Help Your Family Develop a Heart Healthy Lifestyle



■ **Breakfast** provides children with the energy they need to listen and learn in school. Have children help you find breakfast foods for the next day.

■ **Offer your child a wide variety of foods**, such as whole grains, fruits and veggies, lowfat dairy products, and beans or lean meats.

■ **Talk to your health care provider** if you are concerned about your child's eating habits or weight.

■ **Cook with less fat**—bake, roast, or poach foods instead of frying.

■ **Limit the amount of added sugar in your child's diet.** Serve more water or low-fat milk instead of sugar-sweetened sodas and fruit-flavored drinks.

■ **Make meals and memories together.** It's a lesson they'll use for life.

■ **Let your kids be "produce pickers."** Help them pick fruits and veggies at the store.

■ **Be a role model for your children.** If they see you being physically active and having fun, they are more likely to be active and stay active throughout their lives.

■ **Encourage your child to be active every day.**

■ **Involve the whole family in activities** like walking, biking, dancing, basketball, swimming, or roller skating.

---

## Find more helpful tips at:

"HELPING YOUR CHILD": U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute of Health handout: [www.win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/child.htm](http://www.win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/child.htm)

Let's Move—Healthy Families. Website: <http://www.letsmove.gov/healthy-families>

WECAN! Ways to Enhance Children's Activity and Nutrition: <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/wecan/>

THE PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL ON PHYSICAL FITNESS: [www.fitness.gov](http://www.fitness.gov)

# Heart Healthy

## references and resources

1. American Heart Association. Website: [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org)
2. Anderson, Tera. *Do you know the LUB DUB song?* Florida Department of Health, Child Care Food Program, 2011.

