

concept

Introduce children to lowfat and fat-free milk and dairy products and encourage family support for these healthier dairy choices.

Children who are lactose intolerant may not be able to drink milk. Other lowfat dairy items such as cheese or yogurt (if tolerated) can be emphasized. More rarely, if a child has a milk allergy, he or she may not tolerate any products that contain milk protein, including packaged foods. Child care staff should maintain medical documentation of any food intolerances or allergies the children may have.

Mooove to Lowfat Dairy



goals

1. Children learn where milk comes from and how to select healthier choices.
2. Children are made aware of the importance of drinking milk and/or eating dairy products every day.
3. Children will be introduced to lowfat and fat-free milk and dairy products to replace the whole or 2% dairy they may consume.

objectives

1. Children will identify where milk comes from.
2. Children will indicate the importance of drinking milk and/or eating dairy products every day.
3. Children will be introduced to lowfat and fat-free milk as healthier choices.

activities

1 Before starting a discussion about lowfat dairy, make copies of the *Cow Finger Puppets* (provided) and cut them out so that every child can have a puppet. Then tape the two ends together so that it will slip over the children's fingers—you may want to use your pinky finger as a guide for how big to make these. Have the children sit in a circle or group on the floor and give each child a finger puppet and say, "Hold up your hand with the cow finger puppet on it when you know an answer to one of my questions!"

2 Continue, "Today we are going to learn about where dairy and milk come from and why it's important that we eat and drink them."

Explain to the children that "dairy foods" are made out of milk. Arrange various empty dairy containers where each child can see them as they are discussed. Hold up one container at a time and ask the children if they have ever tried this particular product. Continue doing this until all of the containers have been discussed.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Cow Finger Puppets (included)
- Tape
- Various containers of empty dairy products (milk gallon, yogurt, cheese, and cottage cheese)
- Picture of cows (included)
- MyPlate poster (see *MyPlate* lesson plan)
- Picture of teeth (included)
- Picture of bones (included)
- 2" x 48" narrow strips of paper (1 for each child)
- *Carlos and Clarice Mooove to Lowfat Milk!* by Reeves, Stickney, and Bowden
- Reduced fat (2%), lowfat (1%), and fat-free (skim) milk—enough of each for the children to taste
- 4-ounce disposable cups (3 per child)
- Milk-Tasting Chart (included)
- Color the Cows coloring sheet (included)
- Non-toxic crayons

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3 Then ask the children, "Do you know where milk and dairy foods come from?"

If the children say those products come from a store, a farm, or their parents, show them the included cows picture and tell them, "That's right, but it all starts with this. Do you know the name of this animal?"

Remind the children to hold up their cow puppets when they know an answer and then say, "That's right! A farmer gets milk from a cow and then sells it to a store where your mommy or daddy buys it for you to drink."

"What sound does a cow make?"

Once they answer correctly, say, "You are so smart! Great work!"

4 Show the children a copy of the MyPlate poster and ask, "Do you remember the dairy group from MyPlate?"

Give each child a chance to answer. Say, "Milk isn't the only item in the dairy group—other dairy foods like yogurt and cheese belong to this group too."

Point to the dairy group on the picture. Say, "Milk and other dairy products make us grow strong. Milk is very healthy for us!"

5 Hold up the picture of teeth (included) and then ask, "What is this picture of?"

Encourage the children to remember to hold up their finger puppet before answering. When the children reply correctly, say, "That's right! Can you open your mouths and show me all of your teeth?"

Continue and say, "You all have such lovely teeth! We need to drink lots of milk to make our teeth strong so we can chew our food."

6 Next, hold up the picture of bones (included) and say, "This is a picture of some bones. Can you say the word, 'bone,' for me?"

After they respond, say, "Good job! We need to drink lots of milk to keep our bones strong so they don't break! The healthier our bones are, the more we can run and play! Milk helps us grow by making our bones healthy! Let's measure your heights so that we can see how tall you are!"

Have the children put their finger puppets away so they can take them home later.

7 Hang narrow strips of paper (2 inches wide by 48 inches long) vertically on the walls—one for each child. For accurate measurements, make sure that the strips are taped flat against the walls and touch the floor. Have each child stand up against a strip of paper, measure their height and then mark it with the date. Make sure to write each child's name on their strip.

A. Measure the childrens' heights every month or two for a year, so they can see their growth over a period of time.

B. If you do not have the space to do this activity, use one large chart and measure each child's height in a different color.

C. After all the childrens' heights have been measured, have them gather back in a circle on the floor.

D. Enthusiastically read, *Carlos and Clarice Mooove to Lowfat Milk!* Encourage the children to do the physical activities from the book, for example, "move side to side, move to the other side, move forward, move backwards, touch your toes, and reach up high!"

8 After reading the book, say, "We have learned there are different types of foods and Carlos and Clarice taught us there are different types of milk too. Some foods are healthier than others, like apples are healthier than French fries. Some types of milk are healthier than others too. The healthiest types of milk to drink are fat-free and lowfat."

Mooove to Lowfat Dairy

9 Ask the children to move to their seats at the tables. Set up a blind milk-tasting station with reduced fat (2%), lowfat (1%), and fat-free (skim) milk. The goal of this activity is to demonstrate to children that there is not a significant difference between the taste of reduced fat, lowfat, and fat-free (skim) milk and encourage them to mooove to lowfat or fat-free milk.

A. Have three 4-ounce disposable cups for each child. Be sure the kids don't know which milk is in which cup (you may want to color code them for yourself).

B. Make sure to have copies of the *Milk-Tasting Chart* with the *Color the Cows* sheet copied on the back (both are included) and then pass a copy out to each child (put crayons on all the tables).

C. Say, "Let's have a milk-tasting party!" Today we are going to taste three types of milk. Ask the children to color *Color the Cows* until you call their names to come to the milk-tasting station. You can decide whether to call the children up by tables, groups, or individually.

D. Have the children taste the fat-free (skim) milk first. Once all the children have tasted the first milk hold up a *Milk-Tasting Chart* and ask, "Please flip your *Color the Cows* over to the other side. Did you like the milk that we just tried?"

Allow time for the children to respond and say, "If you liked this type of milk, take a crayon and color in the first happy face on the top."

Point to the happy face on the top left as you say this. Continue by saying, "If you didn't care for this type of milk, color in the other face on the top."

Say, "It's OK if you didn't care for this type of milk today, maybe you will another day."

E. After the children have marked their responses (assist if necessary) have them flip over their charts and continue coloring. Remind them that when you call their names they need to return to the milk-tasting station to try the lowfat (1%) milk.

F. In the same way as above, continue this activity with the lowfat (1%) and reduced fat (2%) milks.

10 After the milk-tasting activity is complete, ask, "What did you all think of the three types of milk? Did you think they all tasted the same? Or did you like one better than the other?"

Encourage the children to respond. "Did you know that you tasted fat-free, lowfat, and reduced-fat milk? They all taste a lot alike, huh? Remember, we learned that the healthiest types of milk are fat-free and lowfat. Now we can all mooove to lowfat milk!"

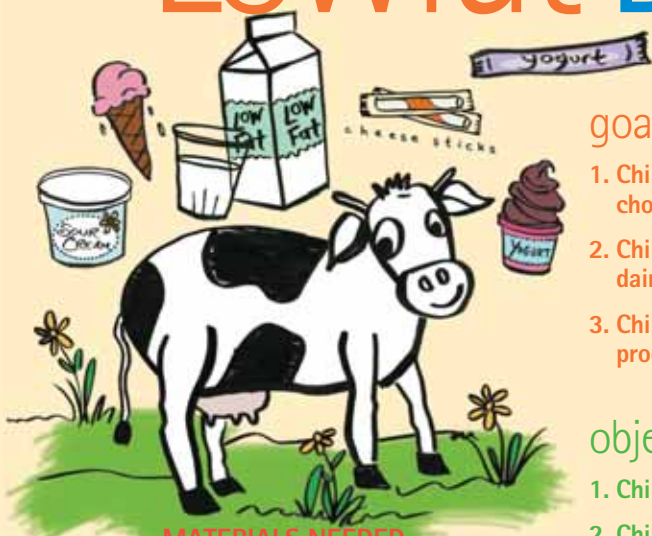
Remember to make copies of the parent letter with the take-home activity sheet printed on the reverse side to send home with each child. The community fact sheet is also included for you to copy and display at your center or distribute as appropriate.

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- *Color the Cows* coloring sheet (included)
- Non-toxic crayons

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B. If you do not have the space to do this activity, use one large chart and measure each child's height in a different color.

C. After all the childrens' heights have been measured, have them gather back in a circle on the floor.

D. Enthusiastically read, Carlos and Clarice Mooove to Lowfat Milk! Encourage the children to do the physical activities from the book, for example, "move to the side, move to the other side, move forward, move backwards, touch your toes, and reach up high!"

Mooove to Lowfat Dairy

8 After reading the book, say, “We have learned there are different types of foods and Carlos and Clarice taught us there are different types of milk too. Some foods are healthier than others, like apples are healthier than French fries. Some types of milk are healthier than others too. The four types of milk are fat-free, lowfat, reduced fat, and whole. The healthiest types of milk to drink are fat-free and lowfat.”

9 Ask the children to move to their seats at the tables. Set up a blind milk-tasting station with reduced fat (2%), lowfat (1%), and fat-free (skim) milk. The goal of this activity is to demonstrate to children that there is not a significant difference between the taste of reduced fat, lowfat, and fat-free milk and encourage them to mooove to lowfat or fat-free milk.

A. Have three 4-ounce disposable cups for each child. Be sure the kids don’t know which milk is in which cup (you may want to color code them for yourself).

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Allow time for the children to respond and say, “If you liked this type of milk, take a crayon and color in the first happy face on the top.”

Point to the happy face on the top left as you say this and continue, “If you didn’t care for this type of milk, color in the other face on the top.”

Say, “It’s OK if you didn’t care for this type of milk today, maybe you will another day.”

E. After the children have marked their responses (assist if necessary) have them flip over their charts and continue coloring. Remind them that when you call their names they need to return to the milk-tasting station to try the lowfat (1%) milk.

F. In the same way as above, continue this activity with the lowfat (1%) and reduced fat (2%) milks.

10 After the milk-tasting activity is complete, ask, “What did you all think of the three types of milk? Did you think they all tasted the same? Or did you like one better than the other?”

Encourage the children to respond. “Did you know that you tasted fat-free, lowfat, and reduced fat milk? They all taste a lot alike, huh? Remember, we learned that the healthiest types of milk are fat-free and lowfat. Now we can all mooove to lowfat milk!”

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.

additional activities for either age group

Yoga

MATERIALS NEEDED

- *The Kid's Yoga Deck: 50 Poses and Games*® (see references)

Prior to this activity, become familiar with the set of yoga stretching exercises (see references) that works the body from head to toe. Explain to the children that drinking lowfat or fat-free milk makes bones strong for lots of movement, exercises, and stretches.

Have the children move to an area where they will have room to stretch. Say, "Something we can do together to keep our bodies healthy is to do exercises here and at home."

As you perform the activities with the children, make sure to name each body part for example: head, neck, shoulders, arms, wrists, fingers, waist, legs, knees, ankles, feet, and toes. While stretching, ask "Are you enjoying yourselves? Does it feel good to stretch? What stretch do you like best?"

Every day that the yoga stretches are done, introduce a different stretch and body part for the children to learn.

Cow Milking Station

MATERIALS NEEDED

- 2 plastic or metal chairs (any size)
- Picture of cows (included)
- Duct tape
- Disposable, latex-free gloves (at least 2)
- Non-toxic white paint
- 2 small buckets
- 1 safety pin

Prior to this activity, set up a cow milking station:

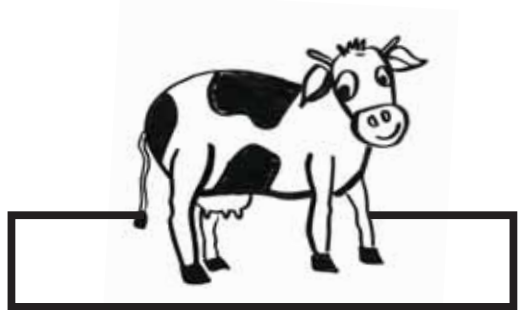
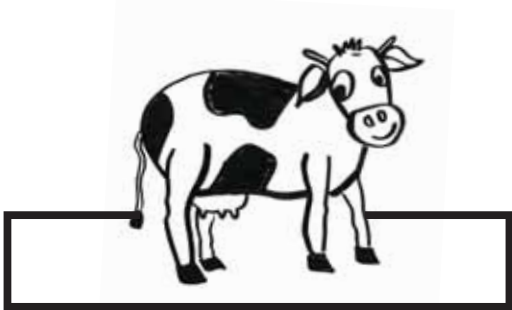
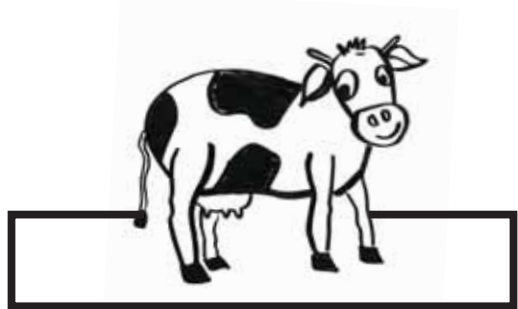
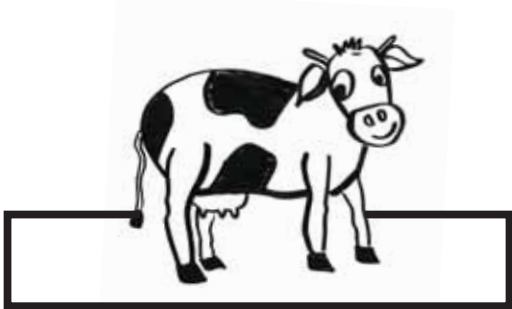
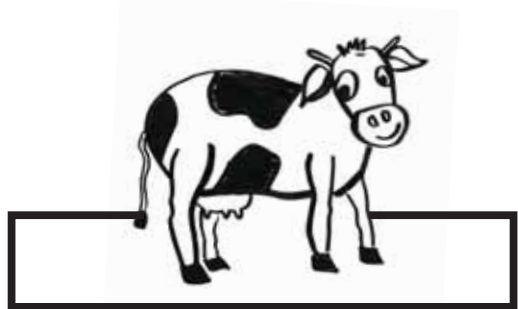
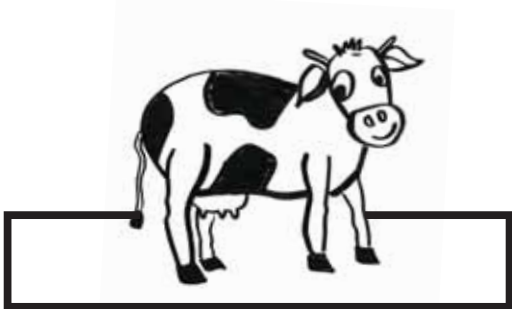
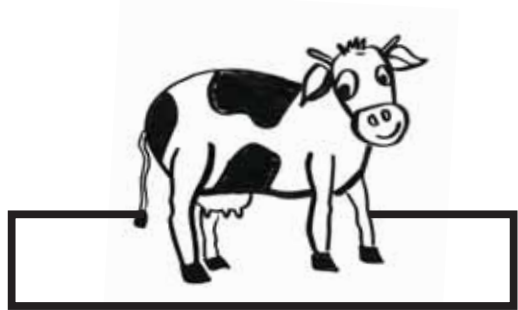
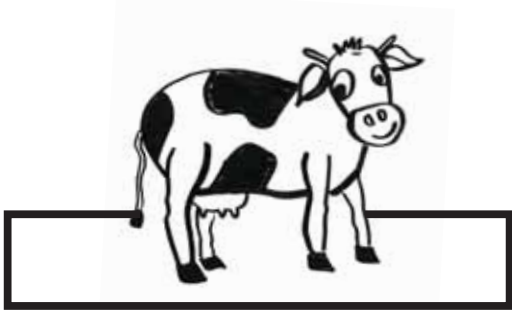
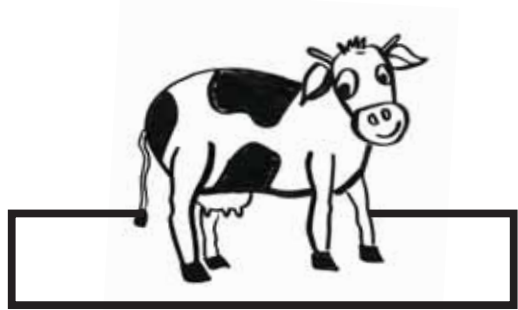
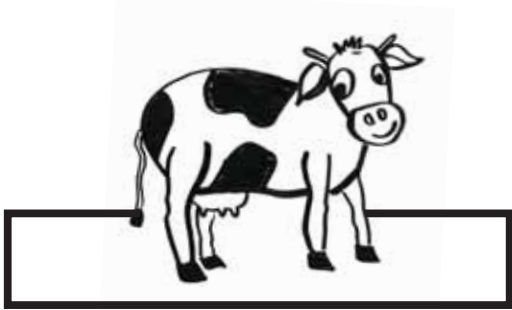
- Bring two chairs outside; set them up so that they are next to each other and facing away from you. Place them about 4 feet apart—these will be the cow bodies. Make two copies of the cows picture (included) and tape one to the back of each chair. This will help the children connect the idea of a cow with the chair.
- Next, fill two disposable latex-free gloves with a mixture of watered down white paint and leave enough room in the glove to tie them closed at the top—these are the cow udders.
- Using duct tape, attach an "udder" to the bottom back of each chair so that they are hanging below. Place a small bucket under each glove.

Divide the children into two teams and have them line up at least 12 feet away from the chairs. Say, "These are our pretend cows and we are going to milk them. Each cow has an udder (point to the udders) with pretend milk inside. Let's have a race to see which team can finish milking their cow the fastest! When I say 'go' I want the first person in each line to move quickly to their cow and gently squeeze the little parts of the udders (point to the glove fingers) one time. After you have done this, run back and tag the next person in your line so they can milk the cow too!"

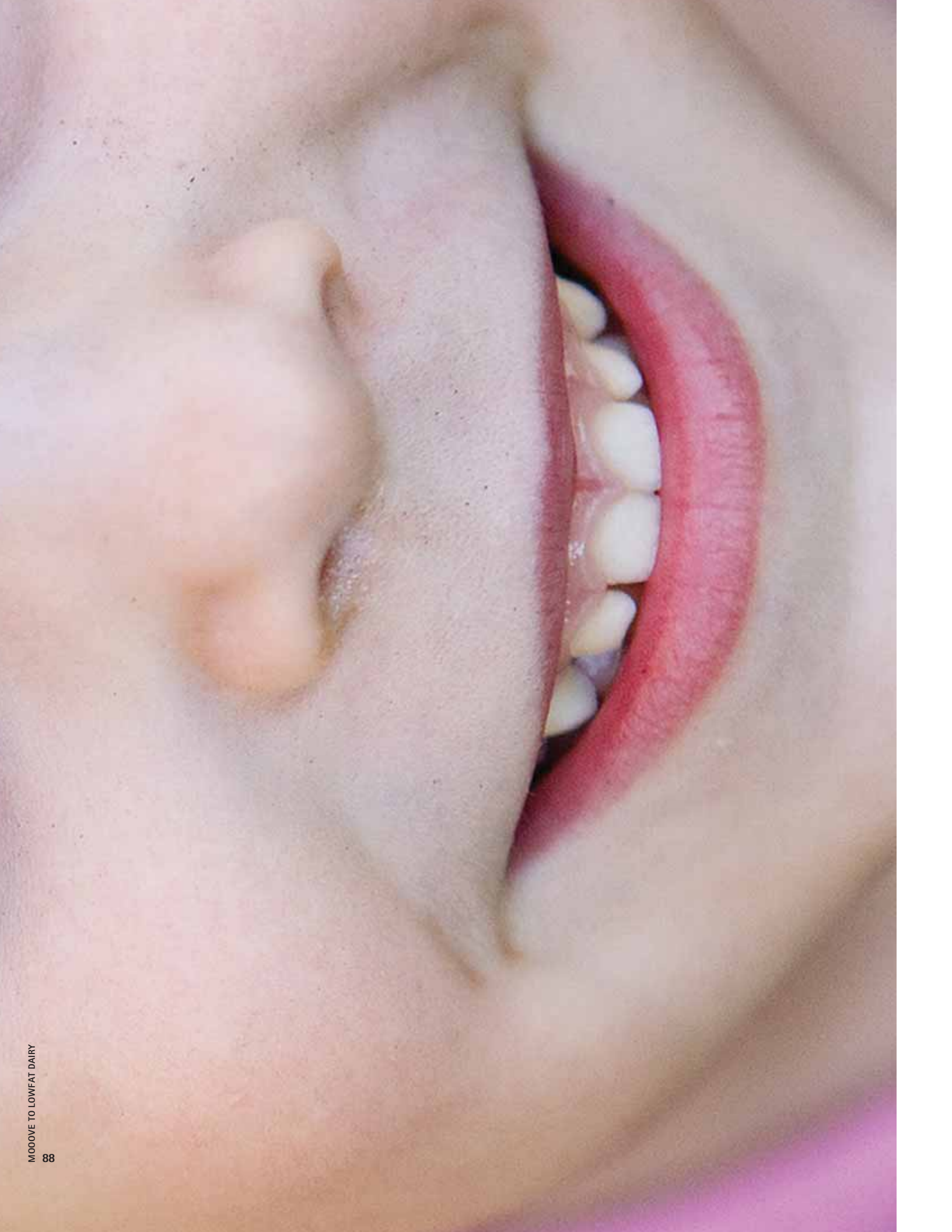
Make sure all the children understand the game before proceeding. Then go to each "udder" and carefully poke a hole in each fingertip with the safety pin. As soon as you are done with this, say, "Go!"

The first team to empty their cow's udder wins. To ensure each child has a chance to play, you may need to repeat this game again.

Cow Finger Puppets














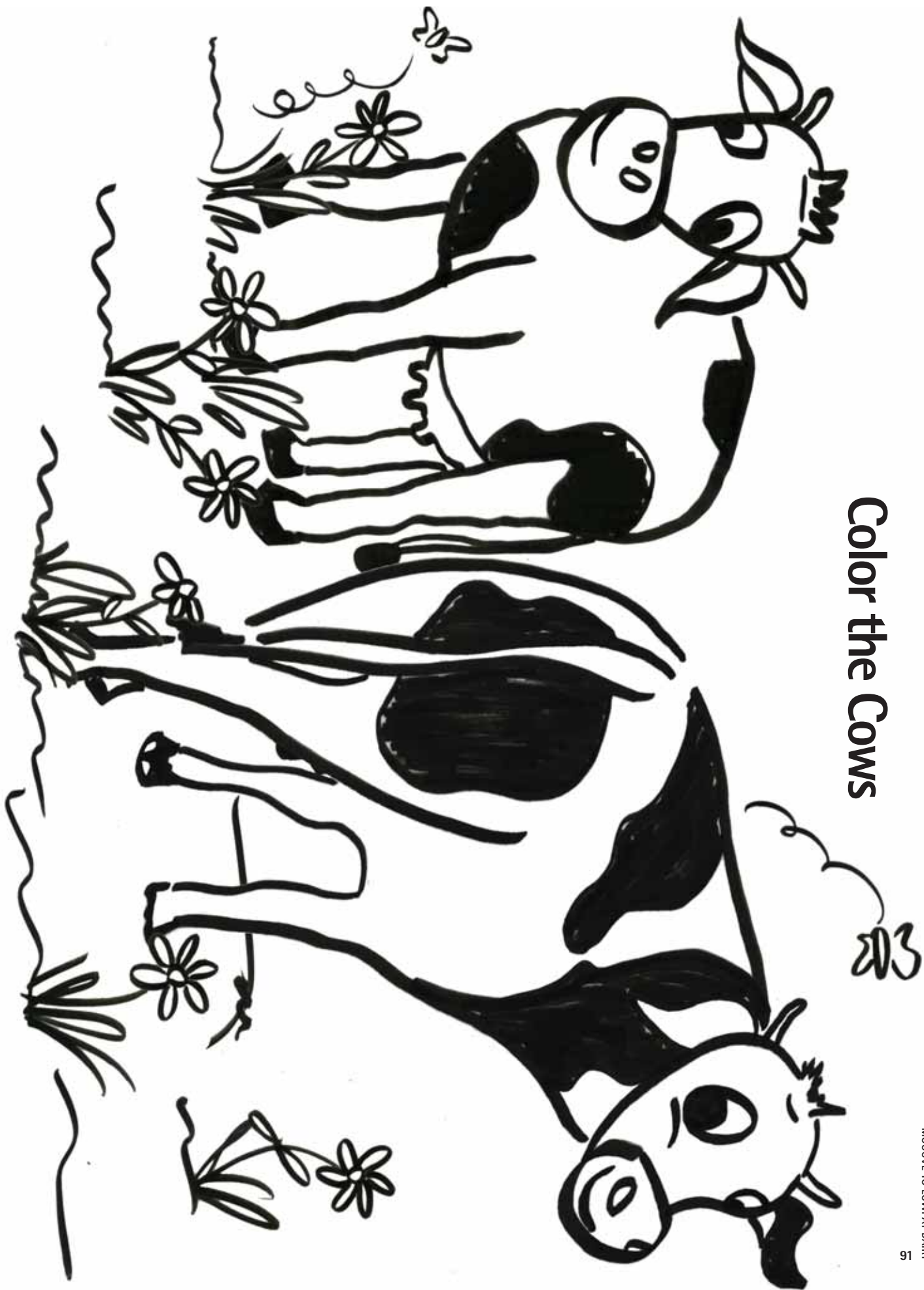




Milk Tasting Chart for: _____ (your name)

Types of milk I tried today.	Milk I liked.	Not today.
 Fat-free		
 Lowfat		
 Reduced Fat		

Color the Cows



Dear Parent:

Your child has been learning about making healthier dairy choices and also where milk and other dairy products come from in our lesson *Mooove to Lowfat Milk!*

Your child has learned that healthy children age two and older should drink lowfat or fat-free milk. Don't worry if your child is lactose intolerant; lactose-reduced milk and lactose-free milk come in lowfat and fat-free varieties too!

Parents are important role models. You can help your child choose and develop positive healthy habits by choosing lowfat and fat-free milk and dairy products for yourself and, beginning at age two, for your child. Help your kids grow strong. Serve fat-free or lowfat milk at meals. Check out the back of this letter for a fun activity your child can do.

Sincerely,



Circle the **dairy** foods you would like to try!



Why choose lowfat or fat-free dairy?

FEWER CALORIES AND GREAT TASTE!

Lowfat and fat-free dairy has less fat and fewer calories than whole or reduced fat dairy, but both have the same amounts of calcium.

CALCIUM Calcium is important for your bones and this is especially true for children. If your body doesn't have enough calcium, it will take it from your bones. This can make bones weak and lead to osteoporosis (a disease where bones become fragile and break). Help your kids grow strong. Serve lowfat or fat-free milk at meals.

LOWFAT DIETS ARE HEALTHIER Lowfat diets, including lowfat or fat-free dairy, may reduce the risk of some cancers and prevent heart disease.

THE 2010 DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS The guidelines recommend that healthy people age 2 and older should eat or drink lowfat dairy as a part of a healthy diet.

- **Ages 2–3:** 2 cups of lowfat or fat-free milk or dairy every day.
- **Ages 4–8:** 2½ cups of lowfat or fat-free milk or dairy every day.
- **Ages 9–18:** 3 cups of lowfat or fat-free milk or dairy every day.



Make the switch to lowfat dairy for better health!

Gradually make a change in the type of milk you and your family drinks. Keep switching the type until you reach the lowfat or fat-free level.

Use lowfat or fat-free milk, cheese, and yogurt when cooking and baking.

Offer lightly flavored lowfat or fat-free milk to encourage children to drink more.

Lactose-reduced and lactose-free milk come in lowfat and fat-free varieties too!

Mooove to Lowfat Dairy

references and resources

1. *Frequently Asked Questions*. MooMilk. March 2006. Website: www.moomilk.com/faq
2. *Meet the Milk Group Activity*. Nutrition Explorations. March 2006. Website: www.nutritionexplorations.org/educators/lessons/pyramid-cafe/cafe-activity-meetmilk.asp
3. Reeves, K., Stickney, M., Bowden, D. *Carlos and Clarice Mooove to Lowfat Milk!* Florida Department of Health, 2006.
4. National Dairy Council. Website: www.nationaldairyCouncil.org/NationalDairyCouncil/
5. Department of Health and Human Services and United States Department of Agriculture. *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010*. Website: www.dietaryguidelines.gov
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8. Florida Department of Education: Office of Early Learning, 2008 Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Standards. Website: www.fldoe.org/earlyLearning/pdf/FINALVPKEducationStandards.pdf
9. U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service's Core Nutrition Messages. Website: www.fns.usda.gov/fns/corenutritionmessages/default.htm

