

## **Tips for using the toolkit with mixed ages and diverse groups**



The lesson content was developed for skill development with 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> graders. The following tips are suggested for each of the lesson components to assist with adapting for varied needs (age, mixed groups). Thanks to the teachers and youth leaders that evaluated the toolkit and provided these suggestions!

### **Teacher Talking and Discussion Points**

- Younger kids (K-2<sup>nd</sup> grade), are less likely to be engaged in discussion. Choose only 3 talking points that make a strong statement about the lesson's focused eating behavior, such as the importance of eating breakfast (Breakfast GO Power) or when they are thirsty, choosing water instead of sugary beverages (Drink Think).

### **Kids' Healthy Eating Activity**

- The kids' activities extend discussion and are intended as preparation to help them think about their habits during goal setting. (Goal setting is found on the worksheet and is identified as the Healthy Habit Challenge). Like with the Teacher Talking Points, younger kids may be less engaged in the discussion.
- Use the suggested materials to create visuals and active involvement. Example – Having kids draw a MyPlate on a paper plate instead of just talking about it will engage them more.
- For mixed age groups, have older kids ask the younger kids the talking points in a quiz-style discussion.

### **Physical Activity: Move Like an Animal**

- Teacher and youth leader evaluations indicate the physical activity is enthusiastically liked by younger kids (under age 11). In a mixed age group, have older kids demonstrate and lead the physical activity for the younger kids.

### **Animal Facts from the Zoo**

- Older kids will love the factoids! For younger kids, choose only one or two key facts to hold interest and enthusiasm.

### **A Worksheet: Fitness Check and Healthy Habit Challenge**

- For either younger kids or when giving an outdoor lesson (especially in windy Kansas) discuss the worksheet items as a group instead of having each person work individually.

- Consider sending the worksheet and parent tips home to further involve the entire family in the healthy learning!
- The Healthy Habit Challenge is a goal setting activity during which kids think about a particular eating habit and set a healthy goal for improvement. If this kind of thought process is new to kids (especially younger kids) keep it simple by suggesting the whole group set an easy to reach goal. For example, if most of the group is not eating breakfast every day, choose a goal to eat breakfast at least one more day during the upcoming week. A Drink Think example would be to have one less sugary drink during the upcoming week.

### **Parent Tips**

- In diverse groups, with non-English speaking families, the parent tips may be more difficult to use. Older kids can take the tips home, read them to their parents and talk about what they learned.
- Use print and electronic media to post excerpts for your families, such as in newsletters, blogs and websites.