



Fruit and Veggie Challenge

The *Fruit and Veggie Challenge* is an activity that encourages participants to eat more fruits and veggies each day. This activity could be done on many different levels, either as a challenge for one classroom at a time or as a competition (between classrooms, grades or even entire schools!). Don't forget to include parents, faculty and staff. The steps below would help organize a challenge for the entire school. Steps could be easily modified for fewer participants, such as a classroom-only activity.

Two months ahead

- ◆ Get the endorsement of the principal and administration.
- ◆ Designate a *Fruit and Veggie Challenge* coordinator.
- ◆ Develop a team: teachers, school nurse, foodservice director and staff, parents/PTA, community agencies (Cooperative Extension, local hospitals, health department staff). Include all school departments, especially physical education, the library/media center, music and art teachers.
- ◆ Brainstorm for ideas that focus on fruits and veggies.
- ◆ Schedule the event.
- ◆ Solicit participation from parents and community health organizations, such as the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, YMCA or local hospitals.
- ◆ Arrange for prizes. Many local businesses are willing to donate prizes.
- ◆ Gather recipes, educational resources and other materials.

One month ahead

- ◆ Promote the challenge with posters and flyers distributed to parents, faculty and staff.
- ◆ Work with teachers to encourage students to create slogans.
- ◆ Elicit parent participation by inviting parents for a school lunch that features new fruits and veggies.

The week of the Challenge

- ◆ Provide students and staff with a copy of the *Fruit and Veggie Challenge* chart.
- ◆ Have students perform fruit and veggie-related songs during an assembly.
- ◆ Demonstrate ways to prepare fruits and vegetables that are easy and tasty.
- ◆ Set up a taste-test and/or other fruit and veggie activity in the cafeteria.
- ◆ Decorate the hallways with posters of fruits and vegetables.
- ◆ Guide the students through the *Fruit and Veggie Challenge* chart each day.
- ◆ Remind them to complete the form each night with their family.

After the Challenge

- ◆ Tally the results and recognize students' efforts.
- ◆ Give a certificate to each student/adult who participated. Consider recognizing the student/class/ grade/school that ate the most fruits and veggies or that did the most minutes of physical activity or that tried the most new fruits and veggies.

Fruit and Veggie Challenge

Name _____

Classroom _____

Daily Number of Fruit and Veggie Servings

	Breakfast	Lunch	Snacks	Dinner	Total
Sunday					
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					

- ◆ Aim for 5-9 servings of fruits and veggies every day. That equals 2½ cups of veggies and 1½ cups of fruit.
- ◆ You can eat fresh, frozen, canned or dried fruits and veggies.
- ◆ Pick lots of different colors of fruits and veggies - red, green, yellow, orange, blue, purple and white.
- ◆ Here are some ideas about what counts as a serving of fruits and veggies.



1 medium-sized piece of fruit (e.g. banana, apple, orange, pear)



1 cup raw, leafy veggies (e.g. lettuce, spinach) or salad



1/2 cup cut-up fresh fruit or canned fruit, canned in its own juices



1/2 cup cooked or canned veggies



3/4 cup (6 fluid ounces) 100% fruit juice



3/4 cup (6 fluid ounces) 100% veggie juice



1/4 cup dried fruit (e.g. raisins, dried apricots, prunes)



1/2 cup cooked or canned beans, peas or lentils