

# Healthy Lifestyles Initiative in Early Childhood



*Created with support from Children's Mercy Weighing In, Child Care Aware® of Kansas, The Family Conservancy, Healthy Way to Grow, and the William G. McGowan Charitable Fund.*



# Early Childhood and Healthy Lifestyles Initiative



Welcome to the [Healthy Lifestyles Initiative \(HLI\) in Early Childhood Toolkit!](#) This toolkit is meant to guide early care and education providers on using the **12345 Fit-Tastic! message** and HLI resources to engage families in learning about healthy habits and creating environments that support health.

This toolkit is helpful for early care and education programs that are working on health and wellness policies or for programs looking to provide child and family education about health topics. The toolkit will guide you through **12345 Fit-Tastic!** educational and marketing materials that can support your efforts.

The toolkit will give you ideas of how the **12345 Fit-Tastic!** message can fit into family education, family nights, classroom curriculum or communication about wellness policies. You can see sample wellness policy ideas for each of the **12345 Fit-Tastic!** healthy habits.

## What is the Healthy Lifestyles Initiative (HLI)?

Children's Mercy and partners from across Kansas City participated in *Collaborate for Healthy Weight*, a nationwide initiative led by the National Initiative for Children's Healthcare Quality (NICHQ) in 2011-2012. This initiative reinforced that communities that had a coordinated community messaging effort were seeing changes in important health behaviors.



This led the Kansas City partners to create the **Healthy Lifestyles Initiative (HLI)** and the **12345 Fit-Tastic!** message. Children's Mercy's Weighing In program provides the staff support for the HLI and we ask partners from all over the community to join in this effort. Since 2012, more than 300 partners have joined the HLI movement from across Missouri and Kansas!

**What is 12345 Fit-Tastic!?** **12345 Fit-Tastic!** is a healthy lifestyle message that our Kansas City community chose in 2012, when the HLI was first starting. The **12345 Fit-Tastic!** message is a clear call to action, a quick way to remember what is important, and a reminder that a healthy lifestyle is dependent on multiple factors. **The 12345 Fit-Tastic!** message includes five evidence-based behaviors that we can teach kids, and that we can practice ourselves, to be healthy every day. We ask our HLI partners to share this consistent message (**12345 Fit-Tastic!**), when they educate children, families or staff about healthy habits.

The message includes 5 behaviors to engage in each day:

- 1 hour or more of physical activity
- 2 hours maximum of screen time
- 3 servings of low or nonfat milk or yogurt
- 4 servings of water not sugary drinks
- 5 servings or more of fruits & vegetables

At the center of this work are partnerships. Through HLI partners, families are beginning to see this consistent message repeated in different locations- at their schools, doctors' offices, early care providers and community centers. As people recognize the message and remember it, they then begin to act on it. We invite you to join the movement by using this toolkit to learn more about 12345 Fit-Tastic! and the HLI.

# Healthy Lifestyles Initiative in Early Childhood

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### Sample Fit-Tastic! Materials

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Overview and Assessment (Fit-Tastic! Quiz)	
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## Joining the Healthy Lifestyles Initiative

**Join the Healthy Lifestyles Initiative (HLI) to learn strategies for making healthy changes. Get resources for promoting health in your early care and education setting.**

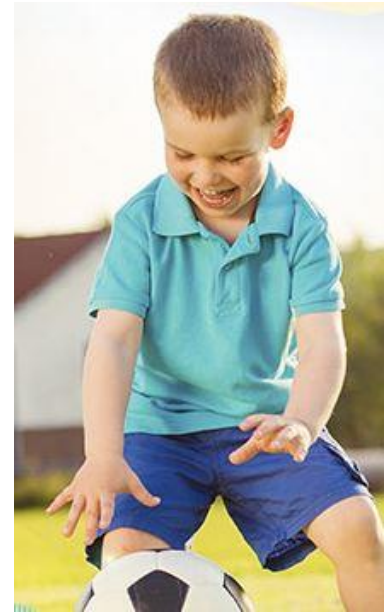
**What is the Healthy Lifestyles Initiative (HLI)?** The HLI is a movement to work together to share a consistent message about health (12345 Fit-Tastic!) and use strategies that make it easier for kids and families to be healthy. This work can be done in partnership with your community.

**Why should I join?** By joining the HLI, you'll gain access to tools and resources to help you reach your goals.

Once you join, you can use our website to download family education materials, posters, event guides, and activities for your program to use.

**How do I join?** Join our network of more than 300 partners!

1. Go to [www.fittastic.org](http://www.fittastic.org)
2. Hover over the "Partners" tab at the top right and Click "[SIGN UP](#)" to create your online account.
3. Enter your contact information and hit "SUBMIT"
4. Look for an email from Fit-Tastic! org (within a day or so). We'll grant you access to download all the **12345 Fit-Tastic!** handouts, materials and activities for FREE!



As a partner, you can download **12345 Fit-Tastic!** handouts and materials, you'll receive email updates and newsletters from us, and you'll be added to the HLI partner network.

**Contact us!** We are here to support YOU in creating a plan, connecting you to other partners in the community or helping you track the changes you want to see. Email us at [weighingin@cmh.edu](mailto:weighingin@cmh.edu) for questions, help or to share your successes and challenges with us.

**CHOOSE HEALTHY HABITS FOR A HEALTHY FUTURE!**  
Learn more at [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org)



# The Healthy Lifestyles Initiative: We ALL Have a Role



## The Community

- Local doctors, hospitals, health departments, parents, and other professionals share expertise with child care programs.
- Schools, child care programs, doctors, recreation centers, and libraries promote 12345 Fit-Tastic! consistent messaging and create healthy environments for children and families.



## Early Childhood Program

- Implement a wellness policy in line with 12345 Fit-Tastic! messages.
- Share 12345 Fit-Tastic! message and materials with families.
- Role model 12345 Fit-Tastic! behaviors.
- Create an environment that is supportive of 12345 Fit-Tastic! behaviors.

## The Classroom

- Increase opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating during the program day.
- Educate children of the importance of physical activity and healthy eating. Make it fun with 12345 Fit-Tastic!
- Role Model 12345 Fit-Tastic! behaviors.



## The Family

- Create a home environment that is supportive of 12345 Fit-Tastic! behaviors.
- Become involved in Child Care wellness initiatives that promote physical activity and healthy eating.
- Role model 12345 Fit-Tastic! behaviors.



Adapted from 5-2-1-0 Let's Go ChildCare Toolkit



## Healthy Lifestyles Initiative Getting Started Checklist:

### First Steps:

- Read “Early Childhood and Healthy Lifestyles Initiative” on page 1.
- Visit [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org) and sign up as a partner (see page 3). Look at the 12345 Fit-Tastic! materials available to you under the “Fit-Tastic Resources” tab.
- Hang 12345 Fit-Tastic! posters where children and families can be reminded of healthy habits. Make a list of places to share the 12345 Fit-Tastic! message and materials (think of places where kids and families will see the information such as a bulletin board or in an existing newsletter, weekly or monthly communication). See pages 9-12 for list of Fit-Tastic! materials.
- Let families and staff know about your partnership with the Healthy Lifestyles Initiative by sharing the family letter on page 7.
- Find a champion (one or two teachers, a parent if possible) to help share the 12345 Fit-Tastic! message and help with other ideas for creating a healthy environment.



### Next Steps:

- Make notes on existing calendars to promote one 12345 Fit-tastic! message each month (ex: in Sept. promote the #1 message, in Oct. promote #2 message, etc.). Write down ideas for each month how you might display that message, share information with families or incorporate the message into activities, events or policies! See pages 17-20 for sample ideas.
- Encourage all adults to role model 12345 Fit-Tastic! healthy habits. See handout on page 13.
- Integrate the 12345 Fit-Tastic! message into your existing daily activities. See page 21 for ideas.
- Communicate with families about how your policies and practices support health. See family policy letters on pages 27-31.

*Adapted from 5-2-1-0 Let's Go ChildCare Toolkit*





Dear Families,

We are pleased to announce that we have teamed up with the Healthy Lifestyles Initiative and Children's Mercy Hospital to become a **Fit-Tastic! partner**. Being a partner means that we are joining others in the community who are working to make it easier for children to be healthy and active!

Eating right and being physically active can be a challenge in today's busy world. To address this, the Healthy Lifestyles Initiative focuses on a consistent and simple message.



The **12345 Fit-Tastic!** message is a call to action, a quick, fun way to focus on what is important, and a reminder that a healthy lifestyle is dependent on multiple things. The message includes 5 behaviors we can all engage in each day (designed for ages 2 and up):

- 1 hour or more of physical activity
- 2 hours maximum of screen time
- 3 servings of low or nonfat milk or yogurt
- 4 servings of water not sugary drinks
- 5 servings or more of fruits & vegetables

Our program will be working to incorporate the 12345 Fit-Tastic! healthy habits into our day. We will provide information to families that will highlight the 12345 Fit-Tastic! messages or the health and wellness initiatives that we are doing. We will work to make the healthy choice the easy choice for children while they are in our care!

For more information about the 12345 Fit-Tastic! message and the Healthy Lifestyles Initiative, please visit [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org).

Thank You!



# Fit-Tastic! Messaging Materials within Early Care and Education



The 12345 Fit-Tastic! message is a call to action, a quick, fun way to focus on what is important, and a reminder that a healthy lifestyle is dependent on multiple things. The message includes 5 behaviors we can all engage in each day (designed for ages 2 and up).

## Getting Started Questions:

- ▶ How do you communicate now with families? (formally and informally)
- ▶ How can the 12345 Fit-Tastic! materials help in your family education efforts?

Below you can see the different 12345 Fit-Tastic! messaging and educational materials available to you as an HLI partner. (Sign up as a partner at [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org); see page 3 for instructions. Once signed up, you can access all the materials for FREE.

## MESSAGE CARD (4.5" X 11")

This is the overview of the 12345 Fit-tastic! message. It includes each of the individual messages, 1 hour or more of physical activity, 2 hours maximum of screen time, 3 servings of low or nonfat milk or yogurt, 4 servings of water not sugary drinks, 5 servings or more of fruits and vegetables. It's great for distributing at family nights or making them available in resource areas. It is available with English on one side and Spanish on the other.



## MESSAGE POSTERS (11" X 17")

These posters are great for classrooms, bulletin boards, hallways, lunchrooms, and play areas. They can be strategically placed where it's most helpful to see a reminder of the 12345 Fit-Tastic! healthy habits like near the water fountain/water area, near play areas or near the eating/food preparation areas.) There are 6 variations, one for each individual message and an overall poster that matches the message card.



# ASSESSMENT

The Fit-Tastic! Healthy Lifestyles Assessment (or Fit-Tastic! Quiz) handout includes tips on how to improve healthy habits on the front and healthy lifestyles questions on the back. These 5 lifestyle questions can be incorporated into family-teacher conferences, family goal-setting or family assessments that you already do.



**CHOOSE HEALTHY HABITS FOR A HEALTHY FUTURE!**

HEALTHY HABIT	BENEFITS	TIPS
<b>1 HOUR OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY</b>	Be active 60 minutes or more each day. Staying active can help you keep your energy up and reach or stay at a healthy weight.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You don't have to get 60 minutes in all at once. Break it up into shorter chunks throughout the day.</li> <li>Anything that makes you breathe harder and your heart beat faster is a good activity.</li> <li>Plan active family time like going to the park.</li> <li>Be active with a friend.</li> </ul>
<b>2 HOURS OF SCREEN TIME</b>	Less time spent watching TV, playing video games or texting means more time being active. Keep screen time to less than two hours a day.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start by cutting out 15 minutes a day each week to get down to less than 2 hours.</li> <li>Come up with fun activities to do as a family instead of screen time.</li> <li>Start a family game night or go to a nearby park or playground.</li> <li>Make screen time a reward, not a daily routine.</li> </ul>
<b>3 SERVINGS OF MILK OR YOGURT</b>	Drinking milk helps make bones and teeth strong. Some low or no-fat milk or yogurt to have with meals. Include three servings each day.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some milk to drink at each meal.</li> <li>Keep milk ice cold. Kids are more likely to drink it.</li> <li>Use nonfat fruit flavored yogurt as dip for fruit.</li> <li>Make your own smoothies by blending your favorite frozen fruit with yogurt and nonfat milk.</li> <li>Layer fruit and yogurt in a tall glass to make your own parfait! Top with a sprinkle of whole grain cereal.</li> </ul>
<b>4 SERVINGS OF WATER</b>	Water is best to keep your body running well and for when you are thirsty. Drink at least four glasses of water a day.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fill reusable water bottles to bring in the car or to the go.</li> <li>Drink a cup when you brush your teeth in the morning.</li> <li>Keep a pitcher of water in the fridge.</li> <li>Put in a slice of orange, lemon or lime to add flavor.</li> </ul>
<b>5 SERVINGS OF FRUITS &amp; VEGETABLES</b>	Fresh, frozen or canned fruits and vegetables are full of important vitamins, minerals, water and fiber that help keep your body healthy! Be sure to include five or more servings each day.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep fruits and vegetables in sight in the refrigerator or on the counter.</li> <li>Plan your meals to include fruits and vegetables. Use them to top your meals.</li> <li>Wash and cut fruits and vegetables ahead of time for a quick grab.</li> <li>Keep canned, frozen, and dried fruit on hand.</li> </ul>

CHOOSE HEALTHY HABITS FOR A HEALTHY FUTURE!  
Learn more at [www.fittastic.org](http://www.fittastic.org)



**FIT-TASTIC! HEALTHY LIFESTYLES QUIZ: CHECK IT OUT!**

- Physical activity:** On a typical day, how many minutes do you (does your child) spend in active play/exercise (excluding walking or swimming)?  
 Less than 15 min  15 min  30 min  45 min  60 min (1 hour)  90 min (1.5 hours) or more  
 None  N/A
- Screen time:** On a typical day, how many hours are you (is your child) in front of a screen (TV, computer, video game, cell phone)?  
 1 hour or less  1.5 hours  2 hours  2.5 hours  3 hours  3.5 hours  
 4 hours  4.5 hours  5 or more hours  None  N/A
- Milk and yogurt:** On a typical day, how many times do you (does your child) drink milk (check one)?  
 Once/day or less (1 cup or less)  Twice/day (2 cups)  Three times/day (3 cups)  
 Many times/day (4 cups or more)  None  N/A

**4. Water and beverages:** On a typical day, how many times do you (does your child) drink plain water (check one)?  
 Once/day or less (1 cup or less)  Twice/day (2 cups)  Three times/day (3 cups)  
 Many times/day (4 cups or more)  None  N/A

**5. Fruits and vegetables:** On a typical day, how many times do you (does your child) usually eat fruits or vegetables?  
 1 or less  2  3  4 or more  None  N/A

CHOOSE HEALTHY HABITS FOR A HEALTHY FUTURE!  
Learn more at [www.fittastic.org](http://www.fittastic.org)

MY GOAL: \_\_\_\_\_

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# PLAN- EDUCATIONAL HANDOUTS

These 5 handouts provide educational content on each individual message to help families and children with behavior change. Each handout offers benefits, tip and facts about the specific 12345 Fit-Tastic! habit. Each handout offers a place to write down any goals that are made. These are great for family-focused education and are available in English and Spanish.



The image shows five educational handouts, each corresponding to a habit from the assessment. Each handout includes:
 

- Habit Title:** 1 Hour of Physical Activity, 2 Hours of Screen Time, 3 Servings of Milk or Yogurt, 4 Servings of Water, 5 Servings of Fruits & Vegetables.
- Benefits:** Explains why the habit is important for health.
- Tips:** Provides practical advice on how to achieve the habit.
- Facts:** Offers interesting information related to the habit.
- Goal Setting:** A space for the user to write down their personal goal.

# ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Additional activities such as stickers, coloring pages, a word search, a maze and an activity book are great for classrooms, family handouts or activity stations at a family night.



**FIT-TASTIC! TRACKER**

Plan to reward your family for the week and track it! If you have a goal for the week, you can track it. If you have a goal for the week, you can track it. If you have a goal for the week, you can track it.

START

1. Physical Activity  
2. Screen Time  
3. Milk or Yogurt  
4. Water  
5. Fruits & Vegetables

GOAL

**GREAT JOB!**

Children's Mercy

## FIT-TASTIC NEWSLETTERS

The Fit-Tastic! quarterly newsletters include information, recipes and tips for each of the 5 Fit-Tastic! behaviors. Archives can be found online at [FitTastic.org](http://fittastic.org/fit-tastic-newsletters) at <http://fittastic.org/fit-tastic-newsletters>. Send these to families quarterly, or include on a bulletin board, resource table or include with your own newsletters!



## FRUIT AND VEGGIE BROCHURES

Each Fit-Tastic! fruit and vegetable brochure provides healthy recipes; storage and preparation tips; kid-friendly activities; nutrition education; and chronic disease prevention information. Available in English and Spanish. \*Each brochure topic corresponds with a month long national holiday (i.e. April is National Celery Month). You can use these during that month, but you don't have to. They are flexible for anytime during the year that fits with your programming! You can add your logo or print these with the Children's Mercy logo.



\*April

\* July

\*May

\*June

\* October

\*August

*Not pictured here: November (Sweet Potato) and September (Papaya)*

## 12345 FIT-TASTIC! LOGOS AND GRAPHICS

The 12345 Fit-Tastic! logo can be added to your existing newsletter, flyers or handouts where you see it fitting! If you are ordering materials, like water bottles, cups, plates or physical activity equipment (balls, Frisbees, etc.) or even t-shirts, we encourage you to use the 12345 Fit-Tastic! logo to share the message about these healthy behaviors. It's a fun and easy way to make the tools you are using even more effective. Contact us and we can send you graphics and logos that fit your need. These professionally designed graphics are available to you for FREE!



## SPECIALTY ITEMS FOR CHECK OUT

Make your next family night a Fit-Tastic! event and share the message by borrowing the 6 Fit-Tastic! 10 foot feathered flags, the 8-foot retractable banner with the message card on it (English and/or Spanish), or the 3x8 horizontal Fit-Tastic! banner which is great for tying to a table, fence or hanging in a gym/ Get everyone's attention and promote healthy habits at your next event!



Go to [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org) to sign up as a partner and download for 12345 Fit-Tastic! handouts for FREE.

For printed posters, message cards, graphics, or to check out specialty items, contact us at

[weighingin@cmh.edu](mailto:weighingin@cmh.edu)



## “Show Me How”: Be a Fit-Tastic! Role Model

Being a Fit-Tastic! Role Model is as easy as 1,2,3...4,5! The 12345 Fit-Tastic! message is a fun way to remember 5 important health behaviors to practice each day.

**As an adult you are the most important influence on your child. Your actions always speak louder than words!** Help your child develop good health habits by being Fit-Tastic! yourself!



**1 HOUR**  
OR MORE OF  
PHYSICAL  
ACTIVITY



**2 HOURS**  
MAXIMUM OF  
SCREEN TIME



**3 SERVINGS**  
OF LOW OR NONFAT  
MILK OR YOGURT



**4 SERVINGS**  
OF WATER  
NOT SUGARY DRINKS



**5 SERVINGS**  
OR MORE OF  
FRUITS &  
VEGETABLES

### Fun ideas to be active and cut down on screen time:

- Walk, run & play with your child instead of sitting on the sidelines.
- Praise your child for being active. Use positive words like, “That was fun walking to the park!” or “It feels so good to stretch tall!”
- Take time for yourself to be active. Go on a walk, do yoga, or meet a friend for zumba. Your child will notice and learn from you that activity is fun and important.
- Practice your own screen time limits! Be conscious of how often you use your phone or other device when you are with children.
- Focus on family during meal times and leave your phone and TV off.
- Get up and move during commercials.

### Easy tips for healthy foods and drinks:

- Keep a pitcher of water in the refrigerator and a bowl of fruit out on the counter or table.
- Take a reusable water bottle with you and order water when you eat out.
- Reward your child with your attention, not food. Choose not to offer sweets as rewards.
- Try new fruits & veggies yourself.
- Offer the same foods for everyone. No need to make different dishes to please children. It's easier to plan meals when everyone eats the same one.
- Go food shopping together & talk about the foods you see. Engage your kids in making the choices.
- Let your child see that you like to munch on raw veggies. Describe the taste, texture & smell.

*Adapted from United State Department of Agriculture:  
[10 Tips: Be a Healthy Role Model for Children](#)*

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Learn more at [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org)

Follow us on









## Make your Family Night Fit-Tastic!

**Join others to share a consistent message that promotes health!**

- Incorporate Fit-Tastic! activities into your existing family night to get kids and their families active and practicing Fit-Tastic! habits (See *Fit-Tastic! Activity Ideas on pages 35-40*).
- Invite staff and community partners to host health promoting activities that line up with the 12345 Fit-Tastic! message at your event.
- Keep giveaways in line with the 12345 Fit-Tastic! message (i.e. replace candy with stickers, bouncy balls, Frisbees, bubbles, etc.).
- When serving meals/snacks at your event keep the 12345 Fit-Tastic! healthy habits in mind! Some simple ideas:
  - Serve plain water or water with slices of fruit at self-serve stations. Use colorful cups and straws for fun!
  - Whenever possible make sure meals include fruits and vegetables, even if on the side. For example, if offering pizza as a main course, top it with veggies and have fruit and vegetable sides. For potlucks, label sign-up sheets with lots of spaces for fruit and veggies.
  - Offer a build-your-own yogurt parfait station with low or nonfat yogurt, fresh berries, and a crunchy, low-sugar cereal topping like Cheerios or Honey Bunches of Oats.



Check out & use Fit-Tastic! flags or banners!



- Provide 12345 Fit-Tastic! message cards or Fit-Tastic! handouts at your tables/event. (See pages 9-12 for list of Fit-Tastic! materials and handouts).
- Incorporate the 12345 Fit-Tastic! logo on your event flyers, materials and posters (contact us for logos or see Fit-Tastic! Event kit for sample flyers).

Go to [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org) to sign up as a partner and download 12345 Fit-Tastic! handouts for FREE. For printed posters or message cards, or to check out flags and banners, contact us at [weighing@cmh.edu](mailto:weighing@cmh.edu).





## Create Your Own Fit-Tastic! Sugar Shock Kit Promoting 4 Servings of Water

The *Fit-Tastic! Sugar Shock Kit* provides a fun and interactive visual representation of how much sugar people are consuming in soda. This kit may be used to help people recognize both sugary and healthy beverages, as well as, an opportunity to educate on the importance of consuming 4 or more servings of water daily, and not sugary drinks. The items needed to make your own *Fit-Tastic! Sugar Shock Kit* are listed below.

### Contents of *Fit-Tastic! Sugar Shock Kit*

#### QuikTrip Cups:

- 1 - 22 oz
- 1 - 32 oz
- 1 - 44 oz
- 1 - 64 oz

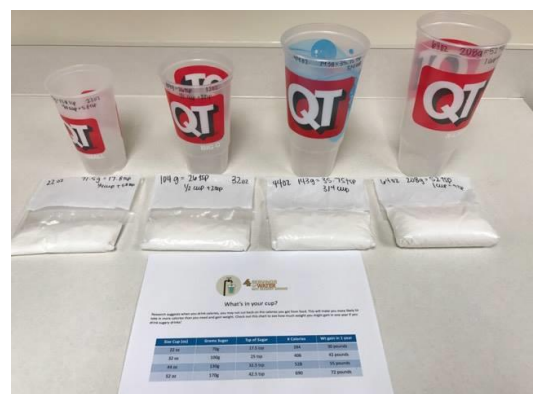
#### Other:

- ✓ Sharpie or marker to label cup sizes
- ✓ 4 Ziploc bags
- ✓ Granulated sugar
- ✓ Weighing scale or measuring cups and spoons
- ✓ Sugar content chart (see below)
- ✓ # 4 Fit-Tastic! Educational Handout- 4 servings of Water, Not Sugary Drinks
- ✓ Fit-Tastic! Message cards (optional, contact [weighingin@cmh.edu](mailto:weighingin@cmh.edu) for copies)



### Instructions:

1. Label each cup with its appropriate size in ounces (oz).
2. Label the amount of sugar on each cup and Ziploc bag:
  - 22 oz = 18tsp (1/4 cup + 6tsp)
  - 32 oz = 26tsp (1/2 cup + 2tsp)
  - 44 oz = 36tsp (3/4 cup)
  - 64 oz = 52tsp (1 cup + 4tsp)
3. Place the appropriate amount of sugar in each baggie.



# Fit-Tastic! through the Year

There are many fun ways to share the Fit-Tastic! message throughout the year! It can be fun to make your own Fit-Tastic! calendar, helping you organize when you want to share messages or communicate to families about health.



## Tips:

- Focus on promoting one of the 5 healthy habits at a time. See below for a sample ideas, focusing on one habit, for a few months at a time.
- Look at the list of Fit-Tastic! national holidays (page 20) that celebrate healthy eating and active living! Create your own ideas based on the list or use the examples below to get you started.
- Start with one Fit-Tastic! healthy habit and write the messaging and activities you want to incorporate on your calendar for the upcoming year.
- Write down the 12345 Fit Tastic! materials you will use for each month. Think of community partners related to the message you are focused on who you might invite to help you.



**3 SERVINGS OF LOW OR NONFAT MILK OR YOGURT**

## January- February

### 3 Servings of low or nonfat Milk or Yogurt

January - Milk Day

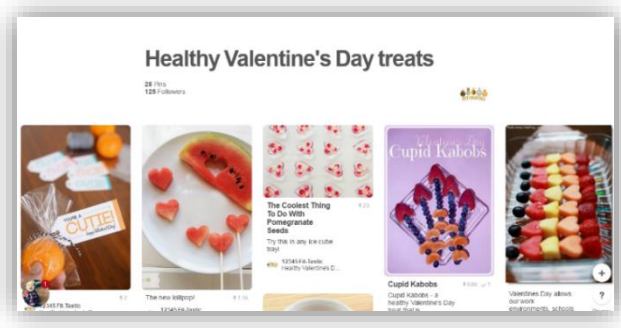
February –Frozen Yogurt Day, Children’s Dental Health Month (low/nonfat milk helps build strong teeth and bones; milk and water instead of sugary drinks for oral health

### Fit-Tastic! #3 Materials:

- ✓ #3 “Moo More” Fit-Tastic! poster
- ✓ #3 Educational Handout
- ✓ Fit-Tastic! Winter Newsletter
- ✓ 12345 Fit-Tastic! Pinterest for healthy Valentine’s day and yogurt recipes
- ✓ Fit-Tastic! #3 Family Policy Letter

## Fit-Tastic! Ideas:

- ✓ Hang up #3 “Moo More” Fit-Tastic! posters or create a Fit-Tastic! bulletin board focused on the #3 message.
- ✓ Provide #3 handout to parents on National Milk Day.
- ✓ Make sure milk you serve is low or nonfat (for ages 2 and up).
- ✓ Include low/nonfat yogurt as a snack.
- ✓ Share with families what your policy is for milk (customize the *Fit-Tastic! family policy letter #3*).
- ✓ For Valentine’s Day classroom parties or family events, make a “red” sign-up sheet with healthy red or pink foods (strawberries, peppers, tomatoes, apples, raspberries, etc.). Try a smoothie station or yogurt parfait (go to *Fit-Tastic! Pinterest* for recipes).
- ✓ Provide the Fit-Tastic! Winter Newsletter- this includes articles about each of the 12345 Fit-Tastic! messages; pass the newsletter along to families or pull out articles about 3 servings of low/nonfat milk or yogurt and include them family communications.
- ✓ Share books like *The Milk Makers* by Gail Gibbons.
- ✓ Visit 12345 Fit-Tastic! Pinterest boards “Drink More Milk” and “For the Love of Yogurt.”





**March- May**  
**2 hours maximum of Screen Time**

**March-** Nutrition Month, Day of Unplugging, Take a Walk in the Park Day

**April-** Week of the Young Child, Earth Day, Picnic Day

**May-** Screen Free Week, Bike Month

**Fit-Tastic! #2 Materials:**

- ✓ #2 “Unplug” Fit-Tastic! poster
- ✓ #2 Educational Handout
- ✓ Fit-Tastic! #2 Family Policy Letter
- ✓ Fit-Tastic! Activity Ideas (screen time alternatives)
- ✓ Fit-Tastic! Spring newsletter
- ✓ Fit-Tastic! Activity Dice

**Fit-Tastic! Ideas:**

- ✓ For National Nutrition Month, look at your practices for screen time. Eliminate or minimize screen time whenever possible. Make sure screens are never a part of snacks or meals.
- ✓ Emphasize all the educational and interactive experiences that you provide to kids as part of the *Week of the Young Child*. Give parents sample ideas to do at home, that can replace screen time. (See *Fit-Tastic! Activity Ideas* for screen-time alternatives.).
- ✓ Create a bulletin board or take home activity about screen-free week. Include #2 Fit-Tastic! educational handout with ideas for alternatives to screen time and have teachers/families post pictures of kids doing their favorite “non-screen” time activities (family games, playing outside, puzzles, crafts, etc.).
- ✓ Host a community partner like Sunflower House or a local police department to talk with families about internet safety or discuss age appropriate screen time guidelines.



**June- August**  
**5 servings or more of Fruits and Veggies**

**June-** Fresh Fruit and Veggie Month, Eat Your Veggies Day

**July-** Picnic Month, Berry Month

**August-** I Watermelon Day, Kids Eat Right Month, Peach Month

**Fit-Tastic! #5 Materials:**

- ✓ #5 “Eat Right” Fit-Tastic! poster
- ✓ #5 Educational Handout
- ✓ Fit-Tastic! #5 Family Policy Letter
- ✓ Fit-Tastic! Fruit and Veggie Brochures (9 total)
- ✓ Fit-Tastic! social media
- ✓ Fit-Tastic! Summer newsletter
- ✓ Fit-Tastic! community resources

**Fit-Tastic! Ideas:**

- ✓ Hang up #5 “Eat Right” Fit-Tastic! posters or create a Fit-Tastic! bulletin board focused on the #5 message; Ask children to draw a picture of their favorite fruit or veggie to include on the board.
- ✓ Provide #5 handout to parents on Eat your Veggies Day. Include Fit-Tastic! Fruit and Veggie Brochures with recipes (pictured).
- ✓ Have a family picnic at a local park or on your playground. Ask families to bring fruit or veggie sides.
- ✓ Invite a community partner like Research and Extension for a healthy cooking demo for families.
- ✓ Follow Fit-Tastic! Facebook for seasonal recipes and local events that promote the 12345 Fit-Tastic! behaviors and healthy eating.
- ✓ Share children’s books such as *Growing Vegetable Soup* or *Eating the Alphabet: Fruits & Vegetables from A to Z* by Louis Ehler.





**September- October**  
**1 hour or more of Physical Activity**

**September-** Childhood Obesity Awareness Month, Women’s Health and Fitness Day, Family Health and Fitness Day

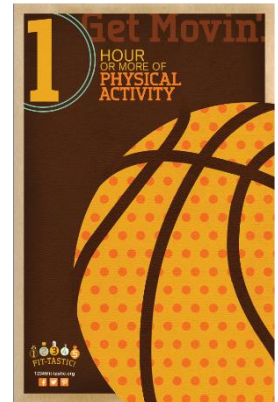
**October-** Walk to School Day, Child Health Day

**Fit-Tastic! #1 Materials:**

- ✓ #1 “Get Moving” Fit-Tastic! poster
- ✓ #1 Educational Handout
- ✓ Fit-Tastic! #1 Family Policy Letter
- ✓ Fit-Tastic! social media
- ✓ Fit-Tastic! Fall newsletter
- ✓ “Fall into Fun” 12345 Fit-Tastic! Pinterest board has daily physical activities and active fall party ideas

**Fit-Tastic! Ideas:**

- ✓ Hang up #1 “Get Moving” Fit-Tastic! posters or create a bulletin board focused on the #1 message. Include photos of staff and children engaging in their favorite physical activities and highlight upcoming community walks and events that promote activity.
- ✓ Provide the #1 handout on Family Health & Fitness Day.
- ✓ Invite a community partner like the YMCA to lead a fun new physical activity for children or families.
- ✓ Encourage families to follow the 12345 Fit-Tastic! Facebook page for tips on physical activity and other health habits.
- ✓ Share books that promote physical activity such as *Babar’s Yoga for Elephants*, *Clifford’s Field Day* or *Curious George Rides a Bike*.



**November- December**  
**4 servings of Water, not sugary drinks**

**November-** Eating Healthy Day, Diabetes Awareness Month, Take a Hike Day, Healthy Skin Month

**December-** Handwashing Awareness Week

**Fit-Tastic! #4 Materials:**

- ✓ #4 “Drink Up” Fit-Tastic! poster
- ✓ #4 Educational Handout
- ✓ Fit-Tastic! #4 Family Policy Letter
- ✓ Fit-Tastic! social media
- ✓ Fit-Tastic! Winter newsletter
- ✓ “Water Love Affair” & “Get Active with Water Games” Pinterest boards on 12345 Fit-Tastic!

**Fit-Tastic! Ideas:**

- ✓ Make sure drinking water is always accessible for children throughout the day. Share with parents how and when water is offered (*customize the Fit-Tastic! family policy #4 letter*).
- ✓ Hang up the #4 “Drink Up” Fit-Tastic! posters or create a bulletin board focused on the #4 message.
- ✓ Share *Potter the Otter: A Tale About Water* book, downloadable at <http://www.pottertheotter.com/>.
- ✓ Make Potter the Otter puppets and use corresponding activity sheets to reinforce choosing water.
- ✓ For winter holiday celebrations, replace sugary drinks with water. Provide fun water cups or crazy straws to make it fun!
- ✓ Plan a special “Water Wednesday” activity such as taste testing fruit-infused water or exploring an activity that uses water such as water color painting. (See Fit-Tastic! activity ideas or Fit-Tastic! Pinterest boards).



# Fit-Tastic! National Holidays

Below is a list of national months or days that celebrate one the 5 Fit-Tastic! healthy habits! This list can help you plan activities and messaging for kids and families. Follow 12345 Fit-Tastic! on Facebook and Pinterest for links and information you can share for these celebrations.

**Fit-Tastic! Tip:** Use Fit-Tastic! handouts on days below (i.e. provide #3 Educational Handout on low or nonfat milk or yogurt for National Milk Day; provide Fit-Tastic! Fruit and Veggie Brochure during berry month; create a berry-themed activity or snack, etc. See *pages 9-12 for list of Fit-Tastic! materials or at [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org)* ).

## January

### Monthly Observations

Slow Cooking Month, Soup Month

### Weekly Observations

Milk Day



## February

### Monthly Observations

American Heart Month, Cherry Month, Children's Dental Health Month, Grapefruit Month, Library Lovers Month

### Weekly Observations

Wear Red Day (heart disease awareness), Frozen Yogurt Day (Non-fat or Low-fat), Sweet Potato Day, Chili Day, Strawberry Day

## March

### Monthly Observations

Celery Month, Craft Month, Nutrition Month, Music in Our Schools Month

### Weekly Observations

Day of Unplugging, Plant a Flower Day, Artichoke Hearts Day, Spinach Day, Take a Walk in the Park Day

## April

### Monthly Observations

Keep America Beautiful Month, Garden Month

### Weekly Observations

Week of the Young Child, Walking Day, Earth Day, Picnic Day, Tell a Story Day

## May

### Monthly Observations

Bike Month, Get Caught Reading Month, Salad Month

### Weekly Observations

Screen-Free Week, Teacher Appreciation Day, Bike to School Day, Learn to Swim Day, Scavenger Hunt Day, Kids to Parks Day

## June

### Monthly Observations

Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Month, Dairy Month (non-fat or low-fat), Great Outdoors Month

### Weekly Observations

Eat Your Vegetables Day, Get Outdoors Day, Gardening Week, Trails Day, Picnic Day, Yoga Day, Running Day

## July

### Monthly Observations

Anti-Boredom Month, Picnic Month, Blueberry Month, Berry Month

### Weekly Observations

Teddy Bear Picnic Day, Dance Day

## August

### Monthly Observations

Family Fun Month, Peach Month, Water Month, Kids Eat Right Month

### Weekly Observations

Coloring Book Day, Watermelon Day, Book Lovers Day, Friendship Week

## September

### Monthly Observations

Childhood Obesity Awareness Month, Papaya Month, Better Breakfast Month

### Weekly Observations

Wildlife Day, Read a Book Day, Kids Take Over the Kitchen Day, Gymnastics Day, Women's Health & Fitness Day, Family Health & Fitness Day

## October

### Monthly Observations

Walk to School Month, Eat Better, Eat Together Month, Apple Month, Book Month, Spinach Lovers Month

### Weekly Observations

Child Health Day, Walk to School Day, Color Day, Food Day, Family Meals Week

## November

### Monthly Observations

Family Stories Month, Sweet Potato Month, Diabetes Month, PTA Healthy Lifestyles Month, Healthy Skin Month

### Weekly Observations

Take a Hike Day, Clean Out Your Refrigerator Day, Eating Healthy Day

## December

### Monthly Observations

Root Vegetables and Exotic Fruits Month, Tomato and Winter Squash Month

### Weekly Observations

Eat a Red Apple Day, Handwashing Awareness Day



## Fit-Tastic! Fun in the Classroom

**Share the 12345 Fit-Tastic! message in your classroom through your existing activities and practices!**

### **Here's some tips to get started:**

- Reflect on your room and think about messages you may be sending (intentionally or unintentionally) about health. Look for ways to tweak your room to make it fun and Fit-Tastic!
  - Are there places -inside and out- for kids to be active?
  - Do posters and books you share show healthy behaviors, like physical activity or healthy foods?
  - Do toys encourage physical activity or reinforce healthy eating such as play fruits and vegetables?
  - Is water accessible for children to drink? Do meals and snacks promote healthy eating habits?
- When looking for new ideas or activities try incorporating health or physical activity topics and the 12345 Fit-Tastic! message (See the *Fit-Tastic! Classroom Resources on page 22*).
- Keep snacks or celebrations in line with the 12345 Fit-Tastic! message (i.e. replace candy or sugary drinks with water, fruit, stickers, bouncy balls).
- When you talk with families, look for ways to share the 12345 Fit-Tastic! behaviors, including tips for being healthy at home! Send home Fit-Tastic! handouts (See page 9-12 or [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org) ).
- Hang up 12345 Fit-Tastic! posters and remind children when you are practicing the healthy behaviors. Contact us for a **FREE** set of 12345 Fit-Tastic! posters.
- Be a 12345 Fit-Tastic! Champion- the most powerful thing you can do is get active yourself with children and role model healthy eating habits at meal and snack times. Praise children for eating fruits & veggies, drinking water and milk, and being active

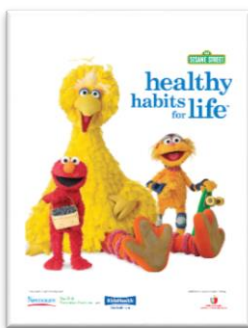


Go to [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org) to sign up as a partner and download for **FREE** 12345 Fit-Tastic! handouts. For printed posters and message cards, contact us at [weighingin@cmh.edu](mailto:weighingin@cmh.edu).



## Fit-Tastic! Classroom Resources

There are many ways to teach about healthy habits in your classroom or early education and care program! The resources below are examples that promote learning and healthy habits, using fun activities, songs, or crafts!



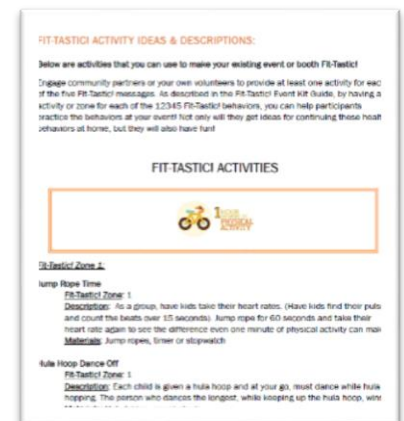
- **Healthy Habits for Life Child Care Resource Kit:** This guide provides easy-to-use, fun lessons and activities that will fit in with your existing routines. It includes ways to connect with families so that children continue to practice healthy habits at home. In these activities, familiar Sesame Street characters help you engage children as they learn! Go to <http://www.sesamestreet.org/toolkits/healthyhabits>.

- **Fit-Tastic! Activity Ideas:** Children's Mercy and the Healthy Lifestyles Initiative share some of our favorite, easy activities for each of the 12345 Fit-Tastic! messages. Little to no supplies or prep time are required. These are grab-and-go fun for preschoolers and older. Go to [FitTastic.org](http://FitTastic.org) and see pages 35-40.

- **The Institute of Child Nutrition** provides a variety of fun food activities that the child care provider can do with young children, helping them learn about the good things food can do for our bodies. Children learn to make healthful food choices and develop positive eating habits that will last a lifetime. Go to <http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=207>.

- **Spark PE- Early Childhood:** Spark offers curriculum, training and equipment on physical activity in early childhood (for purchase). Simple lessons and family activities are available for free. Learn more at <http://www.sparkpe.org/early-childhood>.

- **Farm to Preschool Curriculum and Lesson plans:** The state of Missouri has compiled toolkits, curriculum and resources for incorporating fruits and veggies into the classroom: <http://health.mo.gov/living/wellness/nutrition/farmpreschool/resources.php#curriculum>.



**CHOOSE HEALTHY HABITS FOR A HEALTHY FUTURE!**

Learn more at [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org)

Follow us on





# Fit-Tastic! Policies and Best Practices within Early Care and Education

**Policies and best practices** in your early care and education program are so important! Children often spend a majority of their day in your care, so the environment you set up can make a big difference.

## Tips:

- **Start Small**- How you can set-up your rooms, meals, snacks or daily routines to make it as easy as possible to achieve the 12345 Fit-Tastic! healthy habits.
- **Pick 1 or 2 wellness areas to start with for your wellness policy.** See pages 25-26 for Fit-Tastic! ideas.
- **Reach Out**-Technical assistance and training can help you make changes in your policies, practices or environments. Organizations like public health departments, The Family Conservancy, Child Care Aware® of Kansas and of Missouri, the American Heart Association, and Research and Extension may have programs that can help.

Contact us and we can help connect you with the right group! See page 24 for online resources and toolkits for policies and best practices in early childhood.

- **Family Connection**- Communicating to families about your wellness policies and practices can be powerful and easy! **See the sample Fit-Tastic! family policy letters on pages 27-31.** Send home the family letter with a Fit-Tastic! handout, and you can help families continue healthy habits at home.

## Getting Started Questions:

- What policies or practices are needed to make the **12345 Fit-Tastic!** behaviors easy for children, staff and families to achieve?
- How can **Fit-Tastic! resources** help you with your wellness policies?
- How can the **12345 Fit-Tastic! message** help families and staff understand the importance of your wellness policies? And continue healthy habits at home?



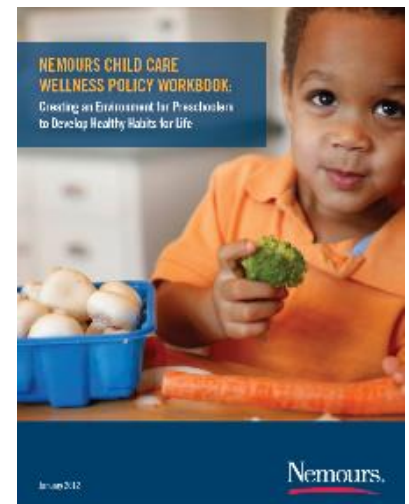
# Fit-Tastic! Policies and Best Practices in Early Care and Education



There are many best practices and model policies for health and wellness in early childhood that complement the 12345 Fit-Tastic! messages (see pages 25-26 for sample model policies).

The toolkits and online resources below can help you get started in assessing your program and targeting the changes you want to see.

- **The Nemours Child Care Wellness Policy Workbook:** Early childhood providers can use this comprehensive workbook to develop their own individualized wellness policies. <https://www.nemours.org/content/dam/nemours/www2/filebox/service/healthy-living/growuphealthy/Child%20Care%20Wellness%20Policy%20Workbook.pdf>.
- **Go NAP SACC** (Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care) is an online tool to help early care and education programs assess and improve their nutrition and physical activity policies and practices. Available at <https://gonapsacc.org/>.
- **Let's Move! Child Care** supports early care and education providers to make positive changes in five healthy goal areas: nurturing healthy eaters, providing healthy beverages, increasing physical activity, limiting screen time and supporting breastfeeding. Online assessment, tools, action plans and resources can be found at: <https://healthykidshealthyfuture.org/>.



**Model Policies for Creating a Healthy Nutrition and Physical Activity Environment in Child Care Settings:** This manual from the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services provides guidance on developing model nutrition and physical activity policies for child care. It includes examples of best-practice policies, tips to implement policies and materials to share with families:

[http://health.mo.gov/living/dnhs\\_pdfs/ChildCareModelPolicies.pdf](http://health.mo.gov/living/dnhs_pdfs/ChildCareModelPolicies.pdf).

**Recognition Programs in Missouri: *Missouri Move Smart, Eat Smart and Breastfeeding Friendly*** are voluntary programs that give you recognition for doing great work. By participating in these programs, you can get extra help and training around meal planning, physical activity tips and more. Toolkits for all three programs are at:

<http://health.mo.gov/living/wellness/nutrition/foodprograms/cacfp/>.

# Fit-Tastic! Policies and Best Practices in Early Care and Education

There are many best practices and model policies for health and wellness in early childhood that complement the 12345 Fit-Tastic! messages.

Below are a few sample model wellness policies and practices that focus on key Fit-Tastic! behaviors\*. Under “Sample Policy Ideas”, see the list of **Fit-Tastic! materials** to help communicate with families!



More model policies, best practices and ideas can be found in the resources on page 24.

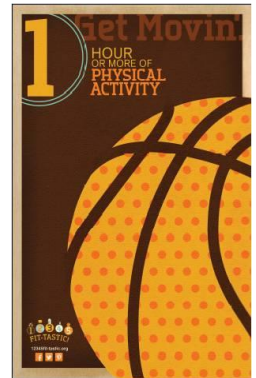
## Physical Activity Sample Policy Ideas:



- Preschoolers are provided with 120 minutes or more of active play time every day, both indoor and outdoor.
- Active playtime is not withheld when children misbehave.
- The center displays pictures or posters that promote physical activity.

## Physical Activity Fit-Tastic! Materials:

- ✓ Physical Activity Family Letter on page 27
- ✓ #1 Fit-Tastic! handout for Families at [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org)
- ✓ Move More Fit-Tastic! poster (pictured here; contact us for copies)



## Screen Time Sample Policy Ideas:



- Television or videos are rarely or never shown in the facility.
- Limit preschoolers' total screen time to no more than 30 minutes at child care per week or never for preschoolers, and work with families to ensure children have no more than 1-2 hours per day.
- Families with preschoolers are provided screen time reduction and/or media literacy education such as special programs, newsletters, or information sheets, 2 or more times per year.

## Screen Time Fit-Tastic! Materials:

- ✓ Screen Time Family Letter on page 28
- ✓ #2 Fit-Tastic! handout for Families at [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org)
- ✓ Fit-Tastic! quarterly newsletter (pictured here; available at [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org))



\*Model Policies and 12345 Fit-Tastic! message are targeted for ages 2 years old and up.

The policies listed were selected for alignment with the 12345 Fit-Tastic! message and based on results from two surveys conducted by Weighing In and the Early Childhood Working Group in 2013, available at the Weighing In webpage. All policies listed are based on national “Let’s Move Childcare” program, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, *Model Policies for Creating a Healthy Nutrition and Physical Activity Environment in Child Care Settings* or Missouri Eat Smart and Move Smart programs. See page 24 for details and links to these programs.



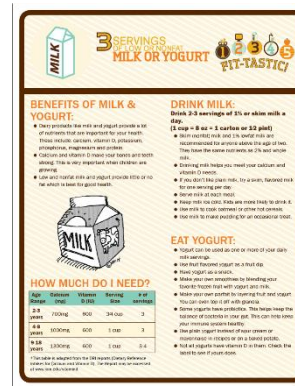
**3 SERVINGS OF LOW OR NONFAT MILK OR YOGURT**

### Milk and Yogurt Policy Ideas:

- ☐ For children age 2 and older serve low-fat (1%) or non-fat (skim) milk.

### Milk and Yogurt Fit-Tastic! Materials:

- ✓ Milk and Yogurt Family Letter on page 29
- ✓ #3 Fit-Tastic! handout for Families at [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org) (pictured here)



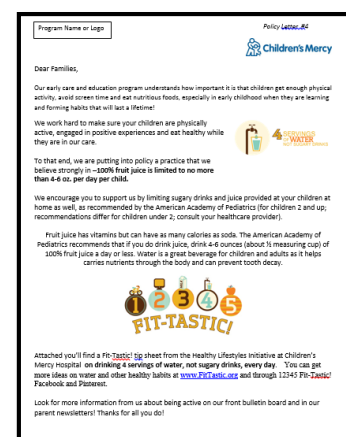
**4 SERVINGS OF WATER NOT SUGARY DRINKS**

### Water, Not Sugary Drinks Policy Ideas:

- ☐ Drinking water is visible and available inside and outside for self-serve.
- ☐ 100% fruit juice is limited to no more than 4-6 oz. per day per child and parents are encouraged to support this limit.
- ☐ Sugary drinks, including fruit drinks, sports drinks, sweet tea, and soda, are never offered.

### Water Fit-Tastic! Materials:

- ✓ Water, Not Sugary Drinks Family Letter on page 30
- ✓ #4 Fit-Tastic! handout for Families at [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org) (pictured here)



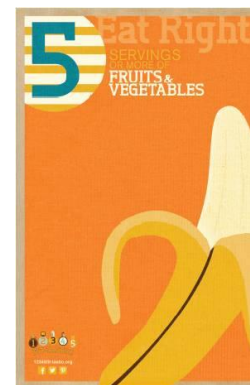
**5 SERVINGS OR MORE OF FRUITS & VEGETABLES**

### Fruit and Vegetable Policy Ideas:

- ☐ Fruit (not juice) and/or a vegetable is served to toddlers and preschoolers at every meal.
- ☐ Holidays are celebrated with mostly healthy foods and nonfood treats.
- ☐ The center displays pictures or posters that support healthy eating.
- ☐ Nutrition education opportunities are offered to parents at least twice a year.

### Fruit and Vegetable Fit-Tastic! Materials:

- ✓ Fruit and Veggie Family Letter on page 31
- ✓ #5 Fit-Tastic! handout for Families at [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org)
- ✓ Fit-Tastic! quarterly newsletter (available at [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org))
- ✓ Eat Right Fit-Tastic! poster (pictured here, contact us for copies)



In addition to those listed above, a list of more Fit-Tastic! educational and marketing materials be found on pages 9-12. Other Fit-Tastic! materials might be helpful tools in family education and communication about policy areas.

ADD Program Name or  
Logo

Dear Families,

Our early care and education program understands how important it is that children get enough physical activity, avoid screen time and eat nutritious foods, especially in early childhood when they are learning and forming habits that will last a lifetime.

We work hard to make sure your child is physically active and eat healthy while they are in our care.

To that end, we are putting into policy a practice that we believe strongly in – (ADD specific policy information and detail here: **Preschoolers will be provided with 120 minutes or more of active play time every day, both indoor and outdoor.**)



We encourage you to support us by providing your children with opportunities to be physically active at home as well, as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Being active at least an hour everyday can help children sleep better, build strong bones and muscles, feel good about themselves, and maintain a healthy weight.

Attached you'll find a Fit-Tastic! tip sheet from the Healthy Lifestyles Initiative at Children's Mercy Hospital **on getting 1 hour or more of physical activity every day, for you and your family.** You can get more ideas on physical activity and other healthy habits at [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org) and through 12345 Fit-Tastic! Facebook and Pinterest.



Look for more information from us about being active on our front bulletin board and in our parent newsletters. Thanks for all you do!

ADD Program Name or  
Logo

Dear Families,

Our early care and education program understands how important it is that children get enough physical activity, avoid screen time and eat nutritious foods, especially in early childhood when they are learning and forming habits that will last a lifetime.

We work hard to make sure your children are physically active, engaged in positive experiences and eat healthy while they are in our care.

To that end, we are putting into policy a practice that we believe strongly in – (ADD specific policy information and detail here: **We will limit screen time to no more than 30 minutes per week.**)



We encourage you to work on screen time limits at home, so that children get no more than 2 hours per day, as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics (recommendation is for children 2 and up; zero screen time is recommended for children under 2).

Screen time, like watching TV, has been shown to negatively affect children's food choices and their physical activity levels. Those who watch TV at meal times eat fewer fruits and vegetables.

Attached you'll find a Fit-Tastic! tip sheet from the Healthy Lifestyles Initiative at Children's Mercy Hospital **on screen time alternatives and limiting children to 2 hours of screen time every day**. You can get more ideas on screen time alternatives and other healthy habits at [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org) and through 12345 Fit-Tastic! Facebook and Pinterest.



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ADD Program Name or  
Logo

Dear Families,

Our early care and education program understands how important it is that children get enough physical activity, avoid screen time and eat nutritious foods, especially in early childhood when they are learning and forming habits that will last a lifetime.

We work hard to make sure your children are physically active, engaged in positive experiences and eat healthy while they are in our care.

To that end, we are putting into policy a practice that we believe strongly in – **ADD specific policy information and detail here: For children age 2 and older, we will serve low-fat (1%) or non-fat (skim) milk.**



We encourage you to support us by providing your children with low or nonfat milk at home as well, as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics (for children 2 and up; milk recommendations differ for children under 2; consult your healthcare provider).

Dairy products like milk and yogurt provide important nutrients, like Calcium and Vitamin D, for kids as they grow to build strong bones and teeth. It is best to drink 2-3 servings of skim (nonfat) or 1% (low-fat) milk a day. Both kinds of milk have the same nutrients as 2% and whole milk.



Attached you'll find a Fit-Tastic! tip sheet from the Healthy Lifestyles Initiative at Children's Mercy Hospital **on getting 3 servings of low or nonfat milk and yogurt every day**. You can get more ideas for milk and yogurt, and other healthy habits, at [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org) and through 12345 Fit-Tastic! Facebook and Pinterest.

Look for more information from us about being active on our front bulletin board and in our parent newsletters. Thanks for all you do!

ADD Program Name or  
Logo

Dear Families,

Our early care and education program understands how important it is that children get enough physical activity, avoid screen time and eat nutritious foods, especially in early childhood when they are learning and forming habits that will last a lifetime.

We work hard to make sure your children are physically active, engaged in positive experiences and eat healthy while they are in our care.



To that end, we are putting into policy a practice that we believe strongly in – **ADD specific policy information and detail here: 100% fruit juice is limited to no more than 4-6 oz. per day per child.**

We encourage you to support us by limiting sugary drinks and juice provided to your children at home as well, as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics (for children 2 and up; recommendations differ for children under 2; consult your healthcare provider).

Fruit juice has vitamins but can have as many calories as soda. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that if you do drink juice, drink 4-6 ounces (about ½ measuring cup) of 100% fruit juice a day or less. Water is a great beverage for children and adults as it helps carries nutrients through the body and can prevent tooth decay.



Attached you'll find a Fit-Tastic! tip sheet from the Healthy Lifestyles Initiative at Children's Mercy Hospital **on drinking 4 servings of water, not sugary drinks, every day.** You can get more ideas on water and other healthy habits at [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org) and through 12345 Fit-Tastic! Facebook and Pinterest.

Look for more information from us about being active on our front bulletin board and in our parent newsletters. Thanks for all you do!



ADD Program Name or  
Logo

Policy Letters #5

Dear Families,

Our early care and education program understands how important it is that children get enough physical activity, avoid screen time and eat nutritious foods, especially in early childhood when they are learning and forming habits that will last a lifetime.

We work hard to make sure your children are physically active, engaged in positive experiences and eat healthy while they are in our care.

To that end, we are putting into policy a practice that we believe strongly in - **ADD specific policy information and detail here: Fruit (not juice) and/or a vegetable is served to toddlers and preschoolers at every meal.**



We encourage you to support us by providing your children with fruits and vegetables at home as well, as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Fruits and vegetables help keep you from getting some types of diseases such as cancer. They help make blood and keep your bones and muscles strong.

Attached you'll find a Fit-Tastic! tip sheet from the Healthy Lifestyles Initiative at Children's Mercy Hospital **on getting 5 servings of fruits and vegetables every day.** You can get more ideas and recipes for fruits and veggies at [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org) and through 12345 Fit-Tastic! Facebook and Pinterest.



Look for more information from us about being active on our front bulletin board and in our parent newsletters. Thanks for all you do!





## Frequently Asked Questions Early Childhood

- **We already do a lot of activities promoting health. What is the value of engaging in this initiative?**

Participating as a partner with the Healthy Lifestyles Initiative is an opportunity to join others to improve the health of the whole community. Together, we can provide consistency across different types of organizations by all sharing the same message-**12345 Fit-Tastic!**- and working to make our organizations healthier for staff, families and children.

- **Is this a new program I need to implement in my early care and education setting?**

This is not a new program, but rather a way to rethink our current approaches and be more effective to improve health. The goal is to create and implement an action plan- **“MAPPS for Change”**- tailored to your needs and interests in better coordinating and implementing health and wellness activities within your early care and education program.

- **How much classroom time will this require?**

This will only involve classroom time if you as a center/program decide that is the approach you would like to use to incorporate your wellness activities into the day.

- **Are we expected to incorporate all of the 12345 Fit-Tastic! messages/themes?**

The messages exist as a bundle (**12345 Fit-Tastic!**). We can work with you to determine the best plan for your program, whether that be emphasizing one of the 5 areas, or taking small steps towards each. With the support of Healthy Lifestyles Initiative, you will determine how best to carry out this initiative in your program and which points you would like to focus on.

- **If the 12345 Fit-Tastic! messages are targeted for children 2 and older, will there be a way for this initiative to impact children younger than 2?**

Although some of the messages are only targeted for children ages 2 and older, incorporating the Healthy Lifestyles Initiative framework can impact your entire early childhood program. You may choose to focus on increasing the amount of free time spent being physically active during the day, providing healthy snacks for all ages, or on encouraging families to make healthy lifestyle changes in the home. The initiative aims to have an effect on the entire program, which can benefit all children, families and staff.



# FIT-TASTIC! ACTIVITY IDEAS & DESCRIPTIONS:

**Below are activities that you can use to make an existing event or table Fit-Tastic! You can incorporate these activities into the classroom too!**

In hosting a family night or event, you can engage community partners or volunteers to provide at least one activity for each of the five Fit-Tastic! messages. As described in the Fit-Tastic! Event Kit Guide, by having an activity or table for each of the 12345 Fit-Tastic! behaviors, you can help participants practice the behaviors at your event! Not only will they get ideas for continuing these healthy behaviors at home, but they will also have fun! These ideas can make great classroom activities too!

## FIT-TASTIC! ACTIVITIES



### **Fit-Tastic! Message 1:**

#### **Hula Hoop Dance Off**

**Fit-Tastic! Message:** 1

**Description:** Each child is given a hula hoop and at your go, must dance while hula hooping. The person who dances the longest, while keeping up the hula hoop, wins!

**Materials:** Hula hoops, music player

#### **Ball Hug Race**

**Fit-Tastic! Message:** 1

**Description:** Set up a line for the relay race. Have each child place a ball between his/her knees and race to the opposite line and back again. Use a smaller ball for the younger students and change the distance for different age groups.

**Materials:** Balls, Tape (for line)

## Scarf Juggling

### **Fit-Tastic! Message: 1**

**Description:** Direct children for different activities with their scarf:

- Throw the scarf with dominant hand and catch in non-dominant hand, and then throw with their non-dominant hand to their dominant hand. Encourage them to throw higher and higher.
- Throw the scarf in the air and do a full spin, before catching it in the opposite hand.
- Throw the scarf in the air and catch it with your arm/knee/foot/head/back.
- Throw the scarf in the air and do 3 squats/lunges/star jumps before catching it in the opposite hand.

**Materials:** Small scarves

## DIY Obstacle Course

### **Fit-Tastic! Message: 1**

**Description:** Get creative with a DIY obstacle course. Here are some ideas to start with:

- Use hula hoops to place on the ground like tires for children to high step.
- Set up an air mattress for the children to climb over.
- Use big boxes for the children to climb through.
- Set up a balance beam (half pool noodles, taped down or use tape to mark a line).
- Set up a start and finish line for kids to crabwalk (Kids sit on the grass, bend their knees, lean back, and lock their elbows, then "walk" as straight and fast as they can).
- Throw a ball into a basket for the end.

**Materials:** Hula Hoops, air mattress, large boxes, pool noodle (cut in half and taped to the ground), tape, ball, basket



## **Fit-Tastic! Message 2**

### Bookmark Making

#### **Fit-Tastic! Message: 2**

**Description:** Reinforce time away from the screen by having participants make their own bookmarks. Not only is a great craft but you can have them write “no screen time facts” on their bookmark!

**Materials:** Pre-cut cardstock or cardboard, sharpies, yarn (for tassel), hole punch.

## Digging for Treasures

### **Fit-Tastic! Message: 2**

**Description:** Time away from the screen doesn't have to be only for reading. Reinforce no screen time with a fun "archeologist" inspired activity. Fill up bins or buckets with sand, bury small items and have participants search for them.

**Materials:** bins/ buckets, sand, small items/ toys, list of items to find

## Recycle Craft

### **Fit-Tastic! Message: 2, 3, 4, 5**

**Description:** Reinforce milk /yogurt and re-use those milk/yogurt cartons to make something fun! Check out our Drink More Milk pinterest board ([www.pinterest.com/12345fittastic/](http://www.pinterest.com/12345fittastic/)) for a milk carton craft idea. Other recycle ideas include making birdfeeders, boats and event mini planters for a DIY home garden. Or reinforce drinking more water and reuse water bottles for a craft.

**Materials:** milk/ yogurt cartons, water bottles, craft items such as glue, scissors, ribbons, Sharpies/markers, stickers, etc.

## Screen Time Limit Badge

### **Fit-Tastic! Message: 2**

**Description:** Help you and your children stay on track with your screen time goal by making a "Screen time Limit" badge. This badge can later be hung on the TV or other screen time object to remind you that you have reached your screen time limit.

**Materials:** crayons, markers, screen time limit badge



## **Fit-Tastic! Message 3**

### Bowling for 3

#### **Fit-Tastic! Message: 3**

**Description:** Get a strike and bowl for 3 servings of milk and yogurt. Set up 3 empty milk bottles/yogurt tubs and have participants roll a ball to knock them down!

**Materials:** 3 milk/ yogurt containers, ball

### Calcium Bingo

#### **Fit-Tastic! Message: 2, 3**

**Description:** Reinforce the importance of 3 servings of milk and yogurt by playing a quick game of bingo! These customized calcium bingo cards are educational and fun! They can even take them home to play again and again.

**Materials:** Calcium bingo cards, milk caps as placers (or any other small object).

## Forever Parfait

**Fit-Tastic! Message:** 3, 5

**Description:** Make a forever parfait and introduce the fun of layering yogurt and fruit. With a plastic cup as your frame, glue layers of white and colored strips of paper (i.e. red, purple, blue, orange) on to the cup like you would layer a parfait. Have the participants write or draw fruit on the colored strips and tell them to go home and make their creation and see how it tastes!

**Materials:** cups, glue, strips of white and colored paper

## Milk the Cow

**Fit-Tastic! Message:** 3

**Description:** Teach participants where milk and yogurt comes from and have them milk the glove utters. Fill up the glove with milk or water and have the participants' squeeze the fingers as if they are milking cow utters. Great motor skill practice and lots of laughs!

**Materials:** Sanitary gloves, milk/water, cup/bucket

## Moostache Photo

**Fit-Tastic! Message:** 3

**Description:** Have fun with the iconic "milk mustache" and have participants make their own #moostache and take a picture. You can also create an instagram cut out and use other props like stuffed animal cows, milk or yogurt cartons, etc. (NOTE: this requires pre-work to create the photo props and/or background. Check out our website for some pictures of how this was done)

**Materials:** Giant cutout or background with #moostache #moomore on it, white mustaches on a stick or stickers or a real milk mustache other photo props.



## **Fit-Tastic! Message 4**

### Beanbag Toss for H2O

**Fit-Tastic! Message:** 4

**Description:** Reinforce four servings of water by having participants toss four beanbags into a designated area (ex. hula hoop, bucket, box, laundry basket, taped area on the ground). Use a larger area (or place farther away) for younger participants, use a smaller area (or place closer) for older participants. You can also use a ring toss instead of beanbags.

**Materials:** Hula hoop (or other item), 4 bean bags; or 4 rings, 4 water bottles

### Cups of water

**Fit-Tastic! Message:** 4

**Description:** Playing with cups can be a great reminder to fill that cup with water. Have participants race against the clock to see how fast they can flip 4 cups from right side up to



upside down. Go to <https://www.speedstacks.com/> for other fun cup games. You can add water/ sugar trivia questions to make it more challenging for older participants.

**Materials:** minimum 6 cups, trivia questions, timer

### **Sugar Stomper Dance**

**Fit-Tastic! Message: 4**

**Description:** Turn Dance Dance Revolution into a game about stomping out sugar. Set up your sugar stomper quadrant and have your participants stand in the middle. Hold up your coordinating sugar stomper cards and have the participants stomp their foot on that corresponding quadrant. Go slower for younger participants and faster for older. Set up two quadrants and have participants do it together. Be sure to turn on the music to add to the fun!

**Materials:** sugar stomper quadrant, sugar stomper cards

### **Toss The Can**

**Fit-Tastic! Message: 4**

**Description:** You may have seen this game at your local carnival, but with this little twist we can reinforce trashing those soda cans and replacing them with water! All you need is some empty soda cans stacked in a pyramid or rectangle. Give the participant a beanbag or small ball and have them throw it towards the soda cans. Give them four chances to trash those cans and start drinking water.

**Materials:** empty soda cans, beanbag or small ball, stool/table/other flat surface (to stack soda cans on).



### **Fit-Tastic! Message 5**

#### **Coloring the Rainbow**

**Fit-Tastic! Message: 2, 5**

**Description:** Reinforce eating fruits and vegetables by having participants color pictures of fruits and vegetables. Feel free to use our Fit-Tastic! coloring pages available on the website (<http://fittastic.org/partners/resources>).

**Materials:** coloring pages, crayons/markers

#### **Fruit/ Veggie Race**

**Fit-Tastic! Message: 5**

**Description:** A variety of fruits and vegetables exist and what better way to teach participants about them than put them to the test. Have participants race to separate a deck of fruit/vegetable cards into their category. Have space to make them move? Make them race back and forth from two spots as they categorize the cards (this is great with a larger group).

**Materials:** Fruit/ Vegetable cards (templates available on [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org)), timer

### **Guess Who?: Fruit/ Veggie Edition**

**Fit-Tastic! Message: 5**

**Description:** Play the “Guess Who,” or in this case what, game with your favorite fruits or vegetables. Have your participants place a fruit/ vegetable card on their forehead and ask yes/no questions to figure out which fruit or vegetable they are.

**Materials:** Fruit/vegetable cards (templates available on [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org))

### **Mystery Fruit or Veggie**

**Fit-Tastic! Message: 5**

**Description:** See if our sense of touch can guess what fruit or veggie we are holding. Place a fruit or veggie in a cardboard box or brown paper sack with just an opening for a hand. Have the participant reach in and guess what fruit or veggie they are touching. You can help them by giving them clues if they are stuck. This is a great game to play with kids at home, have them guess what they are about to eat just by touching it!

**Materials:** Shoebox, fruit and vegetables (ex. those with unique skin textures are often more interesting like kiwi, artichoke, celery, broccoli, cauliflower, etc.)

For more ideas, visit [12345 Fit-Tastic! Pinterest](#)

Go to [www.FitTastic.org](http://www.FitTastic.org) to sign up as a partner and download 12345 Fit-Tastic! handouts for FREE.

For printed posters, message cards, graphics or to check out specialty items, contact:

[weighingin@cmh.edu](mailto:weighingin@cmh.edu).