

Preschool TRACKS Report

FY 2011

PENNSYLVANIA NUTRITION EDUCATION TRACKS

On track with healthy eating for low income audiences

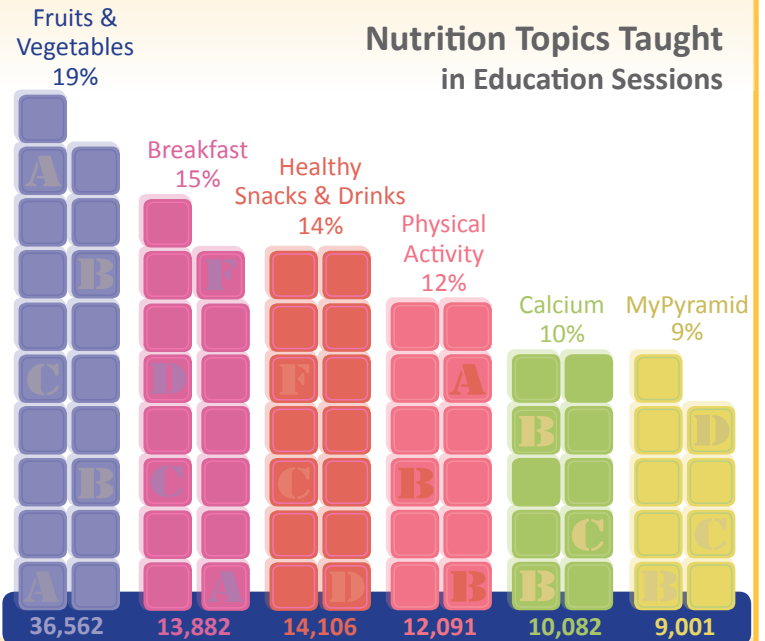
In the 2010-11 school year TRACKS preschool programs:

- Reached 10,036 preschoolers and 551 caregivers
- Delivered more than 1.5 million education contacts
- Provided over 95,000 education sessions
- Were delivered by 9 Local Partners in 12 counties

TRACKS preschool programming makes learning fun!

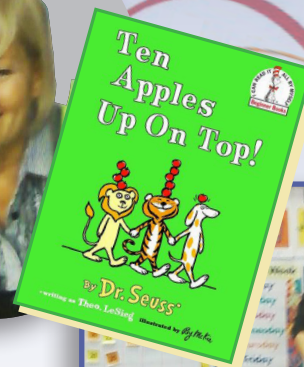
Color Me Healthy, Show Me Nutrition, and FUN nutrition lessons include hands on activities, songs, movement, and stories. Program sites include preschools, Head Start classrooms, daycare centers and health clinics.

Food tasting is a key component of TRACKS preschool education. Research shows that children learn taste preference through repeated exposure to foods and by seeing parents and other children enjoying food.¹



Spotlight on FUN

Families Understanding Nutrition (FUN) is a 28 lesson curriculum in which children learn about, and taste, healthy foods from A to Z. An apple lesson began with the teacher balancing an apple on top of her head as she read "Ten Apples Up On Top". Preschoolers listened attentively and when the teacher asked what the characters in the story did with the apples, they answered accurately – ate them. They sang apple songs while actively performing and moving to the words, ending the session with a cheer of "criss-cross applesauce"!



The Apple song: (sung to Bingo)

I know a food that's good to eat and
apple is its name-o

A-P-P-L-E . . . A-P-P-L-E

A-P-P-L-E

and apple is its name-o!

Preschoolers received wedges of 4 types of apples (Gala, Macintosh, Granny Smith and Golden Delicious). Most preschoolers were able to identify and name the different varieties. They used plastic knives to cut the wedges into smaller pieces and then placed them in plastic bags. The teacher added cinnamon and lemon juice to each bag and preschoolers used their wooden building blocks to smash the apples. When finished, they touched, smelled and then tasted their applesauce.

¹Birch LL. Development of food preferences. *Annual Review of Nutrition*. 1999; 19:41-62.

GO FOODS...



Preschoolers "performing" and reciting the Go Food poem...

Ready to run, ready to play
We eat Go foods each and everyday
Apples, peas, oatmeal, cheese
Let our bodies move with ease

Cookies, chips, soda, cake
Make us want to take a break

These foods really make us slow

We really want to go, go, go
So we'll eat GO foods
Each and every day

"I am delighted to have the FUN program; the children look forward to Tuesdays when Ms. Jessy comes; they like the songs and all the nutrition messages. I especially appreciate the way nutrition is woven into all the activities from hand washing and exercise to coloring and learning the alphabet. I hope that one day we will be able to receive programming twice a week"...
Preschool Teacher

Preschool Food Tasting Evaluation

To evaluate food tasting activities children are asked to indicate whether they "liked" the food, usually through a show of hands. Over 6,800 children rated the foods they tasted. Foods offered varied by location; however, statewide over 100 different foods were tasted, with vegetables and fruits offered most frequently. Following are selected food ratings:

Food Tasted	Percent of children who "liked"
Apple Smiles	100
Bran muffins	100
Breakfast banana split (w/yogurt)	76
Chick pea dip	42
Collard & artichoke spread	13
Cottage cheese (w/peaches)	95
Egg salad	100
Fruit pizza	100
Kale	79
Pumpkin pudding	96
Rutabagas	75
Sweet potatoes	84
Tangerines	92
Vegetable pizza	96
Zucchini bread	100



Preschoolers in Sullivan County taste the fruits and vegetables they used to create "food faces" during a nutrition lesson.



Caregiver Education

TRACKS offers a variety of educational opportunities for preschool caregivers. One approach is use of digital photo frames to deliver messages during preschool drop off and pick up times or in health clinic waiting rooms. The *Mealtimes is Family Time* program, which addresses the importance of family meals, was tested with caregivers who felt it provides interesting and useful information.



Could Your Site Qualify?

Preschools with 50% or more of students receiving free or reduced price meals are eligible to receive TRACKS funds. Other sites that serve low income families may also qualify. Contact TRACKS to learn more: panutritiontrack@psu.edu

For more details about TRACKS evaluation results, visit: <http://www.panutritiontracks.org/public/results.asp>