

# Classroom Activities Related to Health

Good hygiene and a well balanced diet are important factors in maintaining good health. It is essential to educate children about the importance of eating healthy and being hygienic, so they can try and implement those ideas in their day-to-day lives, from an early age. Given below are some activities that teachers can use to educate students in a fun and interactive manner. These activities will instill the importance of a healthy and nutritious lifestyle by focusing on our everyday surroundings, and will foster both group work and individual learning.

## HYGIENE ACTIVITY

### Objective

Realize that we are surrounded with things that only look clean, and that our hands are prime targets for contamination by germs.

### Material

Magnifying glasses.  
Microscopes.

**Time:** 1 hour.

### Method

- Most of the experiment is done collectively, with some parts done individually.
- Ask the children their opinions on how and where we get dirty hands.
- In class, the children look through a magnifying glass at all the marks we cannot see with our naked eye on things we touch all the time, e.g. door handles, tables.
- Next, the children should gather some items (paper, wrappings, pens, etc.) from places where they spend time (classroom, playground, canteen, toilets, etc.).
- Put the items under the microscope and look at the germs living on them.
- Get the children to draw in their exercise books what they see through the microscope.
- In the light of the experiment, collectively draw conclusions, with emphasis on washing hands:
  - Are our hands often dirtier than we realize?
  - What makes hands dirty?
  - In which professions is hand washing a must?
  - When should we wash our hands?
- Emphasize the need to wash our hands every time we touch something which could contaminate (any living creature or dirty object), after sneezing or blowing our nose, after going to the toilet and before meals.

## NUTRITION ACTIVITIES



### Activity 1

#### Being Healthy

#### Discussion:

- What can we do to help our bodies stay healthy?(exercise, eat healthy, sleep, brush our teeth, take baths, wash our hands often)
- What kinds of food help to keep us healthy?(fruits, vegetables, meat, eggs, milk) Is sleep important for our bodies?
- Should we eat a lot of sweet foods and snacks? Why or why not? (cavities and they are not good for us)
- What is your favorite food to eat?(pizza, cookies, chicken)
- What is a fruit?
- What is a vegetable?

Read any story about healthy living or healthy foods. Discuss the book. Have posters up in the room with healthy habits on them. For instance children washing their hands, brushing their teeth and eating healthy foods.

## Activity 2

### Healthy Food Collage

#### Objective:

To be able to name healthy foods.

**Plan:** Have many food magazines from local grocery stores for children to cut out pictures. Try to have as many colored pictures as possible. The children also need glue, scissors and a piece of construction paper to glue it on.

#### Activity:

- Talk to children about healthy foods.
- Give them each some glue, scissors and a piece of construction paper. Have them look through brochures and magazine pictures for healthy foods they like to eat.
- Then let them cut them out and glue them onto their piece of construction paper.
- When they are all done they will be able to stand up one at a time in front of the class and tell the other students what they picked out and to point to the picture of that food item.
- Hang them up around the room for parents and other teachers to see.

## Activity 3

### Colours of Food

#### Objective:

To learn the different colors of foods and make a poster of the different colors to hang on the wall.

#### Plan:

- Have many food magazines with many pictures of different colors of food.
- Have four to five pieces of large poster board to glue the pictures onto.
- Label the posters by the color of the food that will be put on it, such as Green Foods, Red Foods, etc. (I did four posters: Red, Green, Purple and Blue)
- After the children cut out the pictures, label each item under the picture, such as Tomato, grapes etc.
- After you are all done gluing and making the posters have the children point to an item and the rest of the class tells what it is and what color it is.

Source: [www.atozteacherstuff.com](http://www.atozteacherstuff.com)

## HEALTH ACTIVITIES

## Activity 1

### Healthy Habits

(Nursing stuffed animals back to health in a pretend infirmary)

#### Material

- markers
- paper (large sheet)
- stuffed animals or dolls

#### Directions

Encourage healthy habits through discussion and role-play.

**1. Discuss:** Ask your children to think of a time when they were sick. Ask: What made you feel better when you were sick? Was it some medicine or treatment? Was it something nice someone gave you or did for you?

**2. Brainstorm:** On a large sheet of paper, help children make a list of ways to keep healthy (e.g., maintaining a nutritious diet, brushing teeth, washing hands and faces, exercising). Talk about things that help prevent injury (e.g., bicycle helmets, floatation devices for swimming, not running by a swimming pool, avoiding the stove or pot handles, holding a grown-up's hand when crossing the street).

**3. Role-play:** Invite your children to take care of sick stuffed animals or dolls. Ask: Why doesn't the toy feel good? What would make it feel better? Children can nurture their toys, and practice some first aid. You may want to let the toys "sleep overnight" in beds your children fix for them, and have them feel better the next day.

#### Take It Further

Provide toy medical props for kids to use in their role-play situations.

#### With a Group

Ask your children and their friends to assemble a collection of old toys and books that are in decent condition. Help them arrange to donate these things to a local children's hospital.

Source: [www.pbskids.org](http://www.pbskids.org)



## Activity 2

### Clean, safe water



### STEP 1: Helping children understand the importance of clean, safe water

Start by drawing and showing a picture of a pond with an animal like a buffalo sitting in it, a girl collecting water, a boy drinking from the same water source and a woman washing clothes with a small child urinating in the same water. Ask children what they see and if there is anything wrong happening in the picture? Remember to stress the following important health messages:

- Germs and dirt, which cause disease, can get into water and make those who drink the water become sick.
- Clear water does not mean it is clean and safe to drink!
- Drink the cleanest possible water available. To be safe, drinking water should be boiled for at least 20 minutes to kill all germs.

After the discussion, the children can write stories, plan short dramas or make pictures to spread messages about how water can get dirty and how it can be made safe to drink.

### STEP 2: Helping children find out more about how to get enough clean, safe water to drink

The children interview other children at school or family members about how to make water safe for drinking. How many minutes should they boil it for? They can record the results of their survey using a tick, tally chart or pictogram.

The children can report and display their survey results using a pictogram or bar graph. (You will have to give them examples of tick charts, tally charts, pictograms and bar graphs before they do these on their own.)

### STEP 3: Helping children to plan and take action

Use the following questions to help children plan and take action based on the findings from their survey.

- What did you find out from the survey?
- How will these results help us plan action?
- Why is it important to take action?
- What health messages are important to spread?
- Who will we spread health messages to?
- What action can be taken at home, at school or in your community?

#### Examples of action:

- Children make sure that the drinking water at home is as clean as possible. They can help to boil it for 20 minutes.
- They can make sure that the clean water is kept safely covered.
- Children bring their own boiled water from home to drink in school.
- Children write and perform songs to spread health messages about the importance of drinking boiled water. The songs can also be taught to children in other classes or at home.

### STEP 4: Helping children evaluate the action they took

Children discuss the following questions and also draw pictures and talk about them.

- Were the health messages about the importance of drinking boiled water understood?
- How do you know if the health messages were understood?
- Are children drinking boiled water at home?

## Teacher's Reflection



- Did the children learn the following health messages?
  - a) Germs and dirt, which cause disease, can get into water and make those who drink the water become sick.
  - b) Clear water does not mean it is clean and safe to drink!
  - c) Boil water for at least 20 minutes to kill all germs even if you think the water is clean.Are the children translating these messages into action?
- Do the children feel more responsible for helping their families drink clean water?
- How do you feel after teaching this topic? Are you happy with the lessons? What would you do better next time?

## By the end of this topic children should KNOW:

### Important health information

- Germs and dirt, which cause disease, can get into water and make those who drink the water become sick.
- Illnesses caused by dirty water are diarrhoea, cholera, typhoid, hepatitis A and worms.
- Clean water does not mean it is clean and safe to drink!
- Boil water for at least 20 minutes to kill all germs even if you think the water is clean. Do not take any risks even if water is from a tap!
- Always put stored water in a clean container, preferably with a tap on it, and do not touch it with dirty hands or utensils.
- Cover containers in which water is stored with a wooden or metal lid so that flies, dust and dirt cannot fall in.
- Do not put dirty hands, cloth, ladles or cups in the water.
- Do not share a cup with a sick family member.

## By the end of this topic children should be able to DO:

### Important health skills

- Ensure that water is boiled for at least 20 minutes in their homes before they or their family members drink it.
- Bring boiled drinking water from home to school.

## By the end of this topic children should FEEL:

### Important health attitudes

- Pride in drinking clean, safe water.
- Concern for younger sisters and brothers and family members who do not drink clean, safe water.