

4-H Healthy Living Activity Guide



Try one or all 30 of these fun, skill-building activities to help your kid live a healthy life.

TIP: You can print this or save a digital version for new ideas anytime. Many of the activities are shown as an abbreviated version—simply visit the web page listed for the activity to find out how you can get the full version with additional instructions!



INSPIRE KIDS TO DO

4-H Healthy Living Activity Guide

INDEX

Family First Aid Kit	1
How Much Water Do You Need?.....	2
Take a “Penny Walk”	2
Don’t Worry, Journal	3
Staying Healthy: It Starts With Food	3
Your Daily Intention	4
How to Create a Family Bucket List	5
Healthy Mother’s Day Breakfast	5
Family Yoga Session	5
Down With Brown	6
Backyard Camping Ideas and Tips	7
Clean Teeth Experiment	7
Breathe into Mindfulness	8
Letter of the Week	8
Mystery Fruit and Veggie Taste Test	9
Easy (and Healthy!) Banana Pancakes	10
Keeping It Positive: Affirmations	10
Cooking Over Campfire Coals	10
Fruit and Vegetable Hopscotch	11
Physical Activities for All Ages	11
Don’t Bug Me! The Experiment	12
Fruit and Vegetable “Bouquet”	13
Think Before You Speak	13
Mason Jar Herb Garden	14
10-Minute Stress Busters	14
Fitness Dice	15
How to Make Fresh Guacamole	16
Scavenger Hunt	16
Building Resilience	17
Easy Picnic Food for Kids: Watermelon Pizza	18

Family First Aid Kit

Description

What's in your family's first aid kit? This activity will teach your kid how to think through emergency situations and create a practical first aid kit for your family.



Activity Steps

1. Assign an index card for each type of emergency that could happen (burns, bites, breaks, nosebleeds, cuts, stings, etc.)
2. Think about and ask your family what supplies would be most helpful to treat emergencies. Ask questions like: "When was the last time you got hurt?", "What were you doing when you got hurt?", "How did you treat the injury?" and "What did you wish you had with you when it happened?"
3. Review your notes. What kinds of emergencies do you need to prepare for? On each index card, write down what kinds of supplies you would need for that type of emergency.
4. Build your kit! First, notice what supplies you have at home and put them aside for your kit. Make a shopping list of the supplies you still need.
5. Sort the cards into two piles: "injuries we might get" and "injuries we probably won't get." Rank the injuries from most likely to least likely in each pile.
6. Put the cards into a folder you can easily find. This will be your first aid book the whole family will refer to!
7. Have a family meeting to discuss each section of the kit, where it will live, and what to do in case of an emergency. Feel free to add pictures or decorate the kit to make it easy to find.

► Learn more at [4-H.org/FirstAid](https://www.4-H.org/FirstAid)

Supplies



Index Cards



Markers



Pen



Notebook



Container to hold first aid supplies



First aid supplies

How Much Water Do You Need?



Description

Your kid can try this activity to track their water intake and make sure they stay hydrated.

Supplies



Know your
body weight



Paper



Pen

1. Find out how much water you need by dividing your body weight in half. This number is equal to how many ounces of water you should drink every day.
2. Use the number from step one and divide by eight to find out how many cups of water you should drink each day (8 ounces = 1 cup). For example, if you weigh 80 pounds, then you should drink 10 cups of water per day.
3. Draw a chart like our example. Column one shows how many cups you should drink each day and column two should how many cups you *actually* drink. Keep track of your water intake for the next week using this chart.
4. Share the results with your family and challenge them to track their own water intake!

► Learn more at [4-H.org/StayHydrated](https://www.4-h.org/StayHydrated)

My Water Intake (Example Chart)

	Ounces I should drink	Ounces I actually drink
Monday	45	41
Tuesday	45	34
Wednesday	45	57
Thursday	45	62
Friday	45	26
Saturday	45	74
Sunday	45	42

Thanks to Pearl, Michigan 4-H.

30 minutes | Grades: Pre-K, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12

Take a “Penny Walk”

Description

Get outside and take a “penny walk” to see everything that is springing to life!

“Penny walks” help kids explore new surroundings and get physical exercise at the same time.



Supplies

- Penny
- Paper and pen for scavenger hunt list

Activity Steps

1. Step outside and walk until you reach an intersection in your path.
2. Flip your penny. If it lands on heads, then turn right and continue walking. If it lands on tails, turn left.
3. To make the penny walk more challenging, create a scavenger hunt list with objects you might find outside. Look for these items while you're on your penny walk!

Don't Worry, Journal

Description

Kids feeling uncomfortable about a test, a performance or a tough conversation is part of life. Encourage your kid to create a worry journal to help alleviate daily anxieties.

Supplies

- A notebook or diary
- Pen



Activity Steps

1. For one week, if you feel worried or anxious, take out your journal and write down how you feel. You can write a few sentences, draw pictures, paint or even make a collage.
2. At the end of the week, revisit your journal and reflect on what you wrote down. Try answering the following questions:
 - Did this worry stay in your thoughts only or were there physical reactions as well?
 - Was this worry specific, such as tomorrow's math test, or about school work in general?
 - Did worrying about this lead to steps you could take to solve the problem?
3. Connect with your family and friends. Do they have the same worries as you? Think about how can you support one another.

► Learn more at 4-H.org/DontWorry

Brought to you by The Ohio State University.

Staying Healthy Starts With Food

Description

How do different foods affect kids' health? Choosing nutrient-rich foods is important for staying healthy and maintaining energy!

Supplies

- Pen
- Paper

Activity Steps

1. With your pen and paper (or a computer) create a chart with five columns: colorful fruits, colorful vegetables, lean meat and other protein, low-fat dairy and whole grains.
2. List out the types of food that you love in each category. What's at the top of your list?
3. Take an inventory of your list. Did you have a hard time coming up with any foods for the different categories?
4. Find some new recipes! If you find yourself eating the same food often, make a list of three new nutrient-rich foods you'd like to try this week. Find a recipe that incorporates at least one of those new foods and get cooking!

► Learn more at 4-H.org/StartsWithFood



Daily Intention

Description

Help kids reduce daily stress with intention setting. Intention setting allows them to be mindful about their mental, emotional and physical selves.

Activity Steps

First, let's understand three key words: mindfulness, awareness and acceptance.

- What is mindfulness? A state of living in the moment with awareness and acceptance.
 - What is awareness? Recognizing the thoughts, feelings, sensations and surroundings that may be experienced in a particular moment.
 - What is acceptance? Not passing judgment or being critical of those thoughts, feelings, sensations and surroundings in that moment and not comparing yourself to others.
1. Select a word or a short phrase to be your intention or "code word" for the practice. Intentions or code words help remind you of your commitment to bettering yourself in a personal way.
 2. Sit or lie in a comfortable position and close your eyes.
 3. Think of a word or phrase that can help you focus on your activities today. This word or phrase will be your "code word."
 4. Think of your code word. As you take your next breath in, say the word in your head. Repeat three more times.
 5. Think about the reason you chose the code word. What does this word mean to you?
 6. When you think of this word, what do you picture? What do you feel?
 7. Concentrate on that image for a moment as you take a few more deep breaths.
 8. When you're ready, gently open your eyes.

► Learn more at [4-H.org/Intentions](https://www.4-h.org/Intentions)



Brought to you by the University of Delaware.

How to Create a Family Bucket List

Description

Create unforgettable moments with your family with these Family Bucket List ideas!

Activity Tips

1. Start a family book club.
2. Write a play and act it out.
3. Learn a new language.
4. Draw your own family tree.
5. Run a 5K race.

Looking for more tips? Check out more [goals](#) and [events](#) you can plan for the entire family.

► Learn more at 4-H.org/BucketList

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HEALTHY ESSENTIALS®



30 minutes | Grades: 3-5, 6-8, 9-12

Healthy Mother's Day Breakfast



Holidays are a great opportunity for kids to show appreciation. This Mother's Day, your kid can make a healthy breakfast for a loved one to show appreciation and practice healthy cooking skills. Eggs, whole wheat pancakes, fruit or yogurt are good options for a nutritious meal to start your family's day.

30-60 Minutes | Grades: Pre-K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12

Family Yoga Session

Description

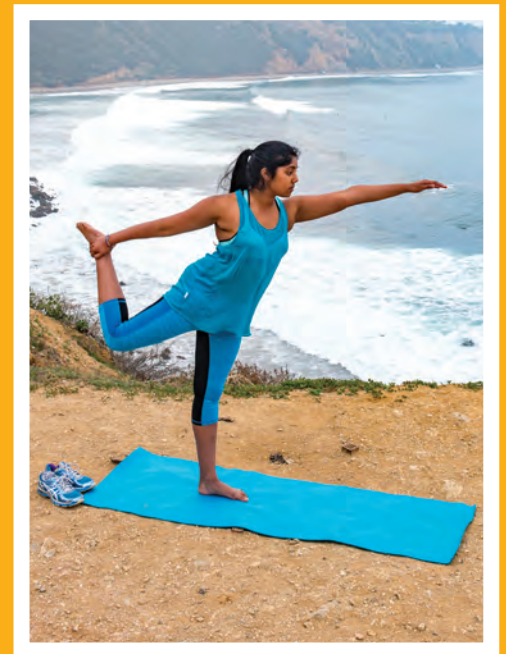
Hold a family yoga session to release stress, work on your flexibility and focus on breathing.

Supplies

- Yoga mat (if available)
- Comfortable clothes

Activity Steps

1. Gather your family members into a large room with open space to sit or lie down.
2. If available, each person can use a yoga mat for this activity, but it's not required.
3. Practice yoga poses like mountain, tree, warrior II, seated twist, downward facing dog and others found at 4-H.org/Yoga



Down with Brown



Description

Why do some fruits and vegetables brown after being cut? Can we prevent them from browning? Help your kid conduct this experiment to find out!

Supplies

- 1-2 apples
- Knife
- Cheese/vegetable grater
- Lemon juice or lemons
- Permanent marker
- Five paper plates and cups
- Vitamin C tablets
- Water
- Spoon
- Sugar
- Ice cubes (or really cold water)



Activity Steps

The browning we see happen in foods like apples, pears, avocados and potatoes is called enzymatic browning. When we cut into some fruit and vegetables, we break and damage its cell wall. This exposes enzymes and compounds that are normally inside the food to oxygen, which leads to browning.

1. Wash your apple and cut it in half.
2. Take half of the apple and cut into five slices. Shred the other half of the apple using the largest holes in your grater.
3. Divide the shredded apples into five equal portions. Use one shredded portion and one sliced portion for each group below.

GROUP 1: Control. Place an apple slice and a portion of shredded apple on a paper plate and label it "No Treatment."

GROUP 2: Lemon juice. Pour 1/4 cup lemon juice into your cup and label it "Lemon Juice." Put one apple slice into the cup. After 20 seconds, remove the slice and put on your paper plate labeled "Lemon Juice." Do the same thing with your shredded apple portion. Place it next to your apple slice on the plate labeled "Lemon Juice."

GROUP 3: Vitamin C and water. In another cup, mix a crushed Vitamin C tablet with 1/2 cup water. Keep the apples in the solution for 20 seconds each and remove to a plate labeled "Vitamin C Solution."

GROUP 4: Sugar and water. Take 2 teaspoons of sugar and mix with 1/2 cup water in a new cup. Label this

"Sugar Solution." This time, put both the slice and the shredded portion in the same cup and soak for 10 minutes. After 10 minutes, remove the apple slice and place on a new plate labeled "Sugar Water."

GROUP 5: Cool water. Take two ice cubes and put into a cup of water labeled "Cool Water." Put the apple slice and shredded portion into the same cup for 10 minutes. Remove both portions and put on a new, labeled plate.

4. Wait 20 minutes and then record your observations. Use a 1-5 number system to rate how much the apples browned in each group.

- 1 = No browning, natural color
- 2 = Very light brown, mostly around edges
- 3 = Light brown, around edges
- 4 = Moderately brown, around edges
- 5 = Dark brown on most surfaces

5. Which group prevented browning the most? Try experimenting with other foods to see how different solutions affect different foods!

► [Learn more at 4-H.org/DownWithBrown](http://4-H.org/DownWithBrown)



Backyard Camping Ideas and Tips

Description

Create a happy, healthy camping adventure in your own backyard with these helpful tips.



Activity Steps

1. Pitch your tent and put some blankets and pillows inside. If you don't have a tent, don't worry: Just stretch a rope between two trees, throw a blanket over it, then weigh down the four corners.
2. Still feels like just your backyard? Download and play some nature sounds from a phone and through mobile speakers.
3. It's hardly a camp-out without some fireside storytelling. Share your own or search online for a few campfire stories to tell.
4. Take advantage of the peacefulness and embrace the chance to connect with your family.

[Click here](#) for more backyard camping tips!

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One Day | Grades: Pre-K

Clean Teeth Experiment

Description

Your kid can try this easy and fun experiment to learn why it's important to take care of their teeth.

Supplies



Hard boiled egg

+



Cup of soda

+



Toothbrush

+



Toothpaste

Activity Steps

1. Place a hard boiled egg in a cup of soda for a day.
2. Observe how the egg becomes discolored, similar to how plaque discolors your teeth.
3. Brush the egg with a toothbrush and toothpaste and notice how the color disappears.
4. Discuss with a family member or friend what you learned from the experiment and share why it's important to brush your teeth.



Breathe into Mindfulness

Description

Being aware of your breathing is an important part of mindfulness, which can help keep kids calm in difficult moments and reduce stress in school or other parts of their lives.

Activity Steps

1. Find a quiet place. Sit in a cross-legged position on the floor or in a chair with a tall spine and shoulders relaxed.
2. Inhale through your nose. As you exhale through your nose with your mouth closed, count “one” to yourself.
3. Inhale again and count “two” to yourself on your exhale. Continue to do this as you count up to “five.”
4. Begin a new cycle, counting up to “five” with each out-breath.
5. Repeat three times, counting up to five and then beginning back at one again. Having your eyes closed may be helpful.
6. Reflect on this breathing session. Did you start back at one after counting to five or did you continue past the number five? Did you lose focus or stop counting? If so, were you able to draw your attention back to counting?



► Learn more at 4-H.org/Breathe

Brought to you by the University of Delaware.

Letter of the Week

Description

How many healthy foods can your kid think of for each letter of the alphabet? Have them try this word activity to find out!

Activity Steps

1. Each week, choose a different letter from the alphabet and think of healthy foods that begin with that letter. For example, if you choose the letter B, you could identify “broccoli” and “beets” as the healthy food.
2. Use one or more of the healthy foods you identified in a home-cooked meal that week.
3. Bonus challenge: Help your family prepare the healthy meal by offering to wash produce, help cook the main course, set the dinner table or wash the dishes afterwards.



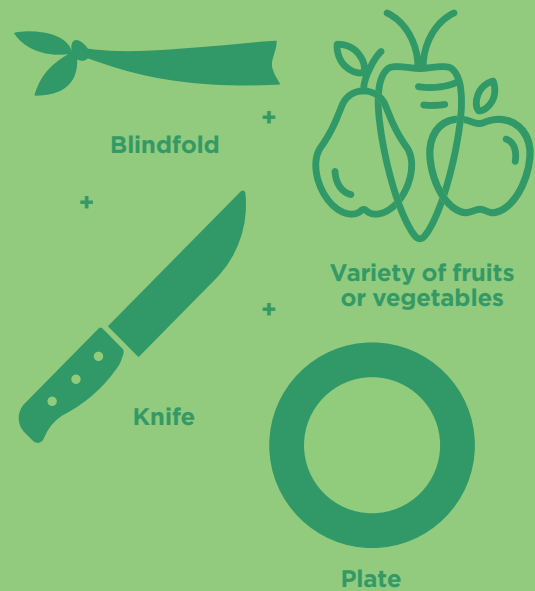
Mystery Fruit and Veggie Taste Test

Description

Test your kid's sense of taste with this mystery fruit and veggie taste-test challenge!



Supplies



Activity Steps

1. Gather your family or a group of friends together.
2. Place a variety of fruits or vegetables on a table.
3. Blindfold one person and choose another person to be the leader of the first taste test round.
4. Have one person cut a small piece of the fruit or vegetable for the blindfolded person to try (make sure to ask if there are any food allergies beforehand!).
5. Ask the blindfolded person to guess what type of healthy food they taste! If they guess correctly, they earn one point.
6. Repeat with each person in the group for as many rounds as you'd like. The person with the most points wins!

Easy (and Healthy!) Banana Pancakes

Description

Try this simple and healthy pancake recipe, which is full of ingredients your family likely has at home in the pantry! Customize the recipe with your favorite extra fruit or nuts.

Supplies

- One overripe banana
- 1 tablespoon creamy nut butter (peanut, almond, walnut or cashew)
- One large egg
- Pinch of salt

Activity Steps

1. In a medium bowl, mash the banana until smooth.
2. Whisk in egg, nut butter and salt into the bowl.
3. Heat a non-stick pan over medium heat. Grease the pan with butter or oil of choice.
4. When the pan is hot, pour batter into 3-inch rounds.
5. Cook until the edges become firm and can be flipped easily, about 2-3 minutes.
6. Once the pancake is browned on the bottom, flip it and allow to cook for an additional 1-2 minutes.
7. Repeat for the remaining batter.
8. Top with maple syrup, more nut butter or fruit.



Recipe makes six 3-inch pancakes.

Thanks to Elisabeth Watkins, California 4-H and the 2019 Youth in Action Healthy Living pillar winner.

🕒 15 Minutes | Grades: 3-5, 6-8, 9-12

Keeping It Positive: Affirmations

Description

Mental health is just as important as physical health. Boost a friend's self-esteem by writing simple, positive and encouraging notes.

Supplies

- Notepad
- Pen

Activity Steps

1. Think about a quality you enjoy or appreciate in a friend. This is your positive affirmation.
2. Write your positive affirmation on a small piece of paper and share it with your friend.
3. That's it! You've helped spread some joy.

I appreciate your generosity.

► Learn more at 4-H.org/KeepItPositive

Brought to you by The Ohio State University.

🕒 One Hour | Grades: 6-8, 9-12

Cooking Over Campfire Coals



Learn how to organize an outdoor cooking experience with this free activity guide from Iowa State University. It includes planning the menu, building the fire and lighting the grill.

► Learn more at 4-H.org/CampCooking

Fruit and Vegetable Hopscotch



Description

Help your kid learn types of healthy vegetables and fruits by playing a game of hopscotch!

Supplies

- Chalk
- Timer

Activity Steps

1. Gather a friend, parent or sibling to set up this game of hopscotch.
2. Find different colored chalk to use for each hopscotch level. Find chalk colors that are similar to vegetables and fruits like yellow, orange, green, purple, white and red.
3. For each level, name a fruit or vegetable that is the color of one of your pieces of chalk.
4. Once a fruit or vegetable is named for that color, move onto the next color and repeat.
5. To make this activity more challenging, use the same color multiple times to think of more than one option. Use a timer to track your speed, never naming the same fruit or vegetable twice!

Thanks to Brandi, Oklahoma 4-H.

🕒 Full Day | Pre-K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12

Physical Activities for All Ages

Description

At any age, kids can benefit from exercise to help prevent childhood obesity. Here are some ideas to help get your family moving.

Activity Tips

- For Toddlers: Toddlers are born explorers and adventurers. If your little one is able, give them a few minutes out of the stroller to help move their little legs.
- For Preschoolers: Keeping preschoolers active and away from screens isn't hard if there's a playground nearby. Take them to a safe park or playground and let them run wild.
- For Grade-schoolers: The 60 minutes-a-day recommendation is targeted at kids age 6 and up. You can break the timing into smaller blocks such as walking to and from school.
- For Pre-teens: Only half of children in this age range engage in regular exercise. Introduce tweens to physical activity now to help pave the way to lifelong fitness habits. Gymnastics, jumping rope and swimming are great places to start.
- For Teens: Teens have access to many types of physical activity, but often choose to do none at all. Encourage teens to try out for a sports team, make martial arts a hobby or host an after-school dance party to blow off steam.



Looking for more exercise tips for your kid? Visit [Healthy Essentials](#) for tips.

► Learn more at 4-H.org/PhysicalActivities

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Don't Bug Me!

The Experiment



Description

Your kid can perform this experiment to learn what attracts critters and how to protect themselves from bug bites.

Supplies

- Four brightly colored pieces of cloth or paper: bright pink, red, yellow and orange
- Three dull pieces of cloth or paper: tan, grey and black
- Perfume, cologne or aftershave
- An open can of (non-diet) soda
- An unopened can of soda

Activity Steps

1. First, test the bugs' attraction to colored paper or cloth. Take the colored paper or cloth pieces outside and place in a sunny spot about a foot apart. Sit 5 feet away for 1-2 hours and record how many stinging insects visit each color. Rank the colors in order from most visited to least visited.
2. Now, test the bugs' attraction to sweet-smelling things. Set out two pieces of the same colored paper or cloth and spray one piece with perfume. Sit 5 feet away and record how many insects visit each piece.
3. Finally, repeat these steps with an open can and unopened can of soda. Set both cans outside about a foot apart. Watch for 1-2 hours and record which one the bugs like more.
4. Review your data! What surprised you the most? Based off what you've learned, think about what clothing you should wear outside to avoid bug bites. What happens if you wear sweet scents or leave sugary food or drinks outside? What other things might attract insects?
5. Add your findings into your First Aid Kit (page 1 of this activity guide)!

Record your data. Draw conclusions. Which can attracted the most insects?

	Open can of soda	Unopened can of soda
Insect visits		

Record your data. Draw conclusions. Which site got the most visits?

	Perfume, cologne	Plain
Insect visits		

Record your data. Draw conclusions. Which can attracted the most insects?

	Open can of soda	Unopened can of soda
Insect visits		

► Get the full activity at 4-H.org/DontBugMe

Fruit and Vegetable “Bouquet”

Description

Let your kid’s creative juices soar by creating a flower bouquet made out of fruit and vegetables.

Supplies

- 4-5 types of colorful fruits and vegetables
- Wooden skewer

Activity Tips

1. Go to a local farmers market with your parent or guardian.
2. Purchase a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables.
3. Cut them into fun shapes to use for a healthy fruit and vegetable “bouquet.” For example, cut cherry tomatoes diagonally and rotate them to form cherry tomato “hearts.” Another option is to slice a carrot into circles, cut triangles into them and put a cucumber wedge underneath to form a “flower.”
4. Attach the pieces of fruit and vegetables to your wooden skewer and gift it to a parent for Mother’s Day or a birthday!



Thanks to April, California 4-H.

Brought to you by The Ohio State University.

15 Minutes | Grades: Pre-K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12

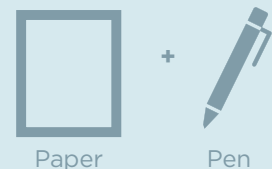
Think Before You Speak

Description

Help your kid learn how to be more conscious about everyday “slang” words or phrases related to mental health.

Fill in the phrase	How would this make those with a mental disorder feel?	How can I re-phrase this?
1.		
2.		
3.		

Supplies



► Learn more at 4-H.org/Think

Activity Steps

1. Brainstorm common words or phrases that you’ve heard your friends and family say.
2. Write them down in a chart, even if you’re not sure if they are associated with mental health.
3. Describe how using this word might affect people who have mental disorders. Will this make them feel bad?
4. Think about how each word or phrase can be rephrased and write it down.
5. Talk to your family and friends. How do they feel about these words and phrases? Is this something they think about?
Being more conscious about the words we use will help people experiencing mental disorders feel more accepted.

Mason Jar Herb Garden

Description

Create an herb garden out of mason jars and use the herbs to cook healthy, flavorful meals!

Supplies



Mason jars

+



Your choice of herb seeds

+



Small rocks

+



Soil



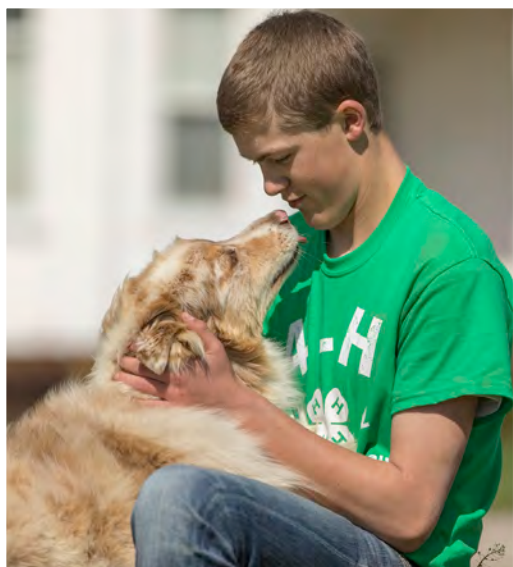
Thanks to April, California 4-H.

Activity Steps

1. Find several mason jars around your house or purchase from a craft store.
2. Decorate each one with paint, stickers, ribbon, paper and other craft supplies.
3. Fill the bottom with small rocks and top with soil.
4. Plant herbs such as mint, thyme and basil in the soil.
5. Place the herb jars in your kitchen window (make sure there is sunlight) and watch them grow.

🕒 10 Minutes | Grades: 9-12

10-Minute Stress Busters



Description

Encourage your teens to try these quick tips to reduce stress (and try a few for yourself too!).

Activity Steps

1. **Listen to Music.** Classical is relaxing, but they can choose any genre that speaks to them.
2. **Laugh!** A good chuckle can increase blood flow and relax muscles.
3. **Take a walk.** It can help clear your head and boost endorphins. Bad weather? Crank up your favorite song and dance!
4. **Pet a Dog.** A four-legged friend can help lower your heart rate and take your mind off things.

[Check out](#) more tips that can help your family reduce stress!

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Fitness Dice

Description

Start a fitness routine with your family and friends by creating a set of fitness dice!



Supplies



Scissors

+



Marker

+



Glue

+



Paper

Activity Steps

1. Think of six activities that you can do on the spot and are related to physical fitness, such as jump-roping, jumping jacks, or hopping on one foot.
2. Create two dice out of paper. This [template](#) might be helpful if you aren't sure where to start.
3. On the first die, write a physical activity on each side. On the second die, list the numbers one through six, one on each side.
4. Gather your friends or family to play the Fitness Dice game! Start by rolling both dice at the same time.
5. See what activity (first die) and number (second die) you landed on. For example, if your dice landed on "jumping jacks" and "5," you would need to do five jumping jacks!
6. Each friend or family member should take a turn, until the group is ready for a break!

Thanks to Casey, Texas 4-H.

How to Make Fresh Guacamole

Description

This easy fresh guacamole recipe is one that the whole family can help create and enjoy!

Activity Steps

1. Make sure you cut the avocado all the way around the center, starting at the stem and circling until you reach the stem on the other side. Then, twist softly and pry apart.
2. Remove the pit and then slice the avocado vertically, horizontally – then scoop it out and into a bowl.
3. Add the diced tomato, garlic salt, fresh juice from half a lime and a pinch of sugar.
4. Mash the ingredients together – then, grab some chips, and dig in!



Ingredients

- Two avocados
- One small Roma tomato
- Garlic salt
- One lime
- Pinch of sugar

► Learn more at 4-H.org/Guacamole



Brought to you by HEALTHY ESSENTIALS*

Scavenger Hunt

Description

This scavenger hunt will get your kid on their feet, thinking about nutritious food, and having fun!



Supplies

- [Balanced meal template*](#)
- Well-stocked refrigerator or pantry
- Timer

Activity Steps

1. Gather a group of friends or family members in the kitchen.
2. Review the balanced meal [template](#) and discuss what types of foods make up each category.
3. Set the timer for 5 minutes. Now, each person is tasked to find at least three foods in each food category from the refrigerator or pantry.
4. Once they find the food item, set it on “base” (countertop or table).
5. Continue until the time is up or until the group has completed the challenge.

* Source: US Department of Agriculture

Thanks to Casey, Texas 4-H.

Description

Activity Steps

- [illegible]

Supplies



Examples: modeling clay,
a potato, rubber bands,
paper clips, banana,
blanket, bouncy ball,
empty bottle, full bottle,
a book, eraser



Hammer



Pen

Easy Picnic Food for Kids: Watermelon Pizza



Description

These fun, easy watermelon pizza slices are a fun way to enjoy fruits outdoors.

Ingredients

- Watermelon slices
- ½ cup of white chocolate chips, melted
- Sliced/diced fruit of your choice: strawberries, kiwi, blueberries, pineapple, mango



Activity Steps

1. Spread melted white chocolate on top of the watermelon slice.
2. Add the pieces of fruit, which serve as the “pizza toppings.”

► Learn more at 4-H.org/WatermelonPizza

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