

The Healthy Food Slide Rule: Foods in Appropriate Amounts for Healthy, Active Families

Key Words

Dietary Guidelines for Americans, adults, youth, educational activities

Objective

Adults and youth should consume nutrient-dense foods from all food groups in appropriate amounts depending on one's age, gender, and activity level.

Use of theory or research

The *Eat Right for Life nutrition education curriculum* developed by the University of Florida Cooperative Extension for the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) provided the structure for nutrition classes. Educators developed the Healthy Food Slide Rule using the *Dietary Guidelines* and *MyPyramid.gov* food group recommendations.

Target audience

Racially and culturally diverse, low income, adults and youth

Description

EFNEP nutrition advisors taught a series of 6 *Eat Right for Life* nutrition lessons incorporating The Healthy Food Slide Rule. This tool provided hands-on learning activities; comments and suggestions were recorded.

Evaluation

Nutrition advisors taught 10 groups (n=50) using the slide rule. Comments indicated the slide rule reinforced the lessons. Parents talked with their children about eating healthy foods, portion sizes, and the importance of physical activity. Program constraints, time, and low literacy limited additional feedback from participants.

Conclusions and implications

Participants learned how to include a variety of healthy foods in their daily diet, and appropriate serving sizes. They learned that the level of physical activity for a food plan is based on age, gender, and physical activity. Low-literate adults found the tool easy to use and planned to use it to promote more conversations with other family members about eating a healthy diet and getting more exercise.