



healthy body
happy me 2025
BUSY BODIES

Tuesday

Healthy Body, Happy Me 2025

Amazing Appetites



National Day Nurseries Association

*Brighter thinking
for early years

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Activity 1 Little gardeners

“There’s no better way to teach children to love food than to have them grow it, harvest it and then taste the fruits of their labour.” — Alice Waters

The joy of planting and growing food introduces children to the magic of how it grows from tiny seeds into flourishing plants whilst nurturing their understanding of nature and healthy eating.

Resources

- Soil
- Labels and pens
- Jasper’s Beanstalk by Nick Butterworth
- Seeds (sunflower, beans, peas, cherry tomatoes, cress etc.)
- Watering cans or spray bottles
- Recycled containers such as yogurt pots, egg cartons etc.

Little gardeners

Activity outline

- Gather children together and talk about how plants grow. Show pictures of different plants at various stages (seeds, sprouts, fully grown etc.)
- Explain that plants need soil, water and sunlight to grow. Invite children to choose their seeds and share out the equipment for planting.
- Demonstrate how to gently plant the seeds by creating a small hole in the soil with their finger then covering it with soil
- Water the seeds, talking about how plants need water to help them grow — just like we need water to stay healthy. Provide resources for children to label their plants with their names, pictures and the type of seeds they have planted
- Encourage children to find a sunny spot to store their seed pots and to water them regularly. Create a ‘plant diary’ where they can draw or photograph any changes they notice as they start to grow
- Read Jasper’s Beanstalk by Nick Butterworth to support children to wait for their seeds to sprout.



Nurture them to grow



The fruits of our labour

Activity 2 Squeeze and taste

As children squeeze fruits, this activity enhances fine motor skills and stimulates sensory exploration through touch, smell and taste, fostering curiosity. Additionally, it introduces basic concepts of cause and effect as they explore how juice is extracted from fruit as they squeeze.

Squeeze and taste

Activity outline

- Begin by introducing different fruits. Discuss their colours, shapes and textures. Encourage the children to touch and smell each fruit. Demonstrate how to cut the fruit and observe the differences when comparing the inside and outside of the fruit along with the scent of the fruit
- Invite children to choose some fruit. Demonstrate how to squeeze the fruit to extract juice into a small bowl or cup and encourage children to try this with their own fruits. This will spark a sense of awe and wonder as children observe the vibrant colours and experience the refreshing citrus aromas. Encourage them to notice how the texture of the fruit changes as they squeeze it and to take in the strong, zesty scent. This sensory exploration helps deepen their understanding of the fruit's transformation and engages their curiosity
- Once the juice is collected, encourage children to have a taste and encourage them to describe the taste - sweet, sour, tangy - and talk about their individual preferences.



Resources

- A variety of citrus fruits (e.g. oranges, lemons, limes, grapefruit etc.)
- Small bowls or cups
- Child-safe knives
- Child-friendly juicers or squeezers.



How does it taste?

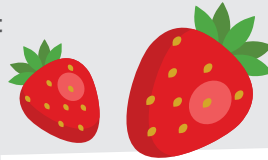


Tangy



Activity 3 Taste adventure

Inspire children to try new foods with a fun story about 'Benny Bunny', promoting positive attitudes towards unfamiliar tastes and textures and fostering a sense of curiosity and openness about new foods.



Taste adventure

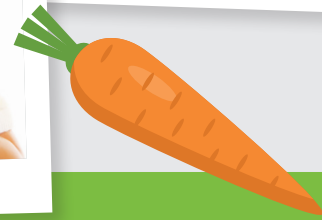
Activity outline

Tell the story of Benny Bunny. Invite children to tell Benny their favourite food repeating the sentence - "My favourite food is ..." - don't forget to join in too! Have a selection of foods ready for the children to be like Benny Bunny and try some new foods.



Resources

- Benny Bunny story (see below)
- A variety of foods for the children to try e.g. strawberries, carrots etc.



Benny Bunny

Benny Bunny has come to visit us! Benny lives in a forest nearby and he loves hopping, running and wiggling his nose. But there is one thing Benny doesn't like to do...try new foods!

Every day, Benny eats the same thing - carrots. Breakfast, lunch and dinner. Just carrots! His friends have tried lots of different yummy things, but Benny always say, "No, thank you, I like my carrots."

Then one day, Benny's friend, Sarah Squirrel, bounced over, saying, "My favourite food is strawberries - would you like to try one of these sweet strawberries?"

Benny twitched his nose. He was curious but a little scared too. What if he didn't like it? But then he thought, "I'm big and brave and I can do anything!" So, Benny took a tiny bite of a juicy strawberry. And guess what? It was sweet and yummy! Benny's eyes got big. "Wow, this is delicious!" he said.

From that day on, Benny Bunny still loved carrots but he also loved trying new foods. So now Benny travels around making new friends and trying new foods.



My favourite food is...

Activity 4 Fruit faces fun

This playful activity introduces children to new fruits, encourages creative thinking and develops fine motor skills while promoting healthy eating habits in a fun, hands-on way.

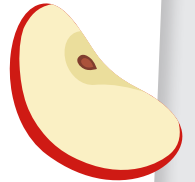


Smile!

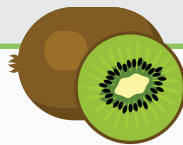


Resources

- Small plates
- Child-safe knives or pre-cut fruits
- Variety of fruit (bananas, strawberries, blueberries, apple slices, kiwi, grapes).

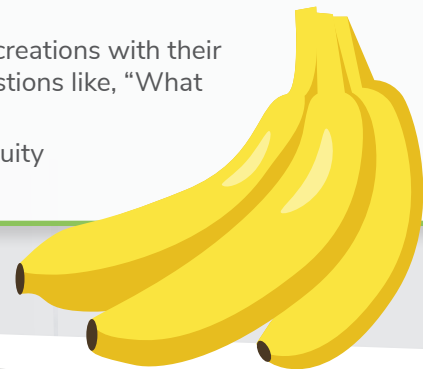


Fruit faces fun



Activity outline

- Introduce a variety of fruits to the children, encouraging them to explore them with their senses. Invite them to touch, smell and taste the different fruits, fostering curiosity and engagement. Discuss the unique textures, scents and flavours and ask open-ended questions like, "What does this fruit feel like?" or "How does it smell?"
- If appropriate to children's development, involve the children in cutting the fruits into halves and slices, or cut the fruits for the children to see. Talk about the differences inside each fruit and introduce new vocabulary like 'pips', 'juicy' and 'core'. Spark conversation by asking which fruits they like the most and talk together about the vibrant colours, shapes and smells
- Invite the children to use the fruit slices to create fun patterns and funny faces. Join in using blueberries for eyes, a strawberry slice for the mouth, etc. Let their creativity run wild
- After completing their fruit faces, encourage the children to share their creations with their friends. Engage them in a discussion about their designs by asking questions like, "What inspired your face?" or "What fruits did you use and why?"
- Why not encourage the children to take photographs of the delicious, fruity masterpieces before they enjoy eating them?



Learning life skills

Further resources, links and stories:

Healthy Eating - NDNA
England Factsheet

ndna.org.uk/HealthyEatingFS



National Day Nurseries Association

At NDNA, we don't just provide nursery membership, lobby government and offer training, we are dedicated to making a difference. We are a charity that believes in quality and sustainability so we put our members' businesses at the very heart of ours. We enhance, support, nurture, cherish and challenge.

Every year we run an annual Healthy Body, Happy Me campaign to encourage better health and happiness by giving nurseries FREE resources for play, learning and fun.

Get involved with our 2025 campaign and help keep your children happy and healthy.

Important: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision. Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.



National Day Nurseries Association

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