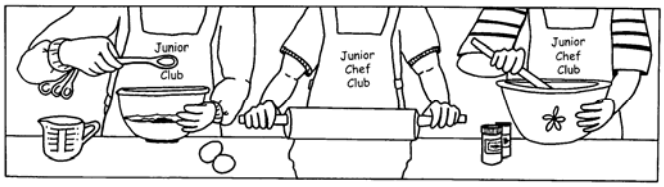

Jr. Chef Club
Making Brainy Breakfasts
Lesson 4

Educator Information
Preparing to Teach the Lesson

Physical Activity

Child health experts have found that rather than try to encourage kids to be "more active" it is more successful to encourage them to be "less sedentary." Use the Children's Physical Activity Pyramid to show students that sedentary activities should be done the least often and activities such as active play and walking should be done most often. The 2005 U.S. Dietary Guidelines recommend that children be active for at least 60 minutes per day. You may want to suggest that the classroom teacher consider starting some type of walking program with the students. For example, walking laps around the playground or using physical activity (games on the playground) with some type of non-food reward after an individual student or class goals are achieved can be very rewarding to students.

Activity One – The Importance of Breakfast

Numerous studies show that children who eat breakfast are able to concentrate better in school. They make fewer mistakes and outperform their counterparts who do not eat breakfast. Tardiness and absenteeism are reduced, and test scores soar when students eat breakfast. Before conducting this lesson, check to see whether the school you're working at offers a school breakfast program. Impress upon the students that school breakfast is for everyone regardless if economic status. If mornings are hectic, or the cupboard is almost empty, eat breakfast at school!

Breakfast affects the body in these ways:

- Provides the brain with fuel.
- Increases the body's metabolism for the day. (Skipping breakfast lowers metabolism 4–5 percent, resulting in a one-pound weight gain every seven weeks without eating any extra food. When food doesn't come in within two hours of getting up, the body thinks starvation may be impending so it lowers its metabolism to make its stored reserves last longer.)
- Averts hunger pangs so students doesn't focus on feeling hungry and getting food.

Optional: How many students ate breakfast this morning? Record numbers on data sheet and ask again next week to get pre/post data.

Breakfast can be any type of food. What are examples of what students ate for breakfast? Children from other cultures may eat rice, vegetables or beans for breakfast-any kind of food is okay. Many students probably eat cereal and milk. Discuss what it takes to make a complete breakfast—grain/bread, fruit or vegetable, dairy, protein. For example, a complete breakfast would be: bagel, a glass of milk, and fruit or 100 percent fruit juice.

Many children in this country probably start their day with cereal. Cereal advertisers are supposed to always state that their cereal is "part of a complete breakfast" and show a complete breakfast. Most of the time, the "complete breakfast" is flashed on the screen for a mere second or so. Challenge students to notice when advertisers say this, what they show as a complete breakfast, and how long they show it.

Whole grain toast is also a good addition to a typical breakfast, because it may reduce the amount of cereal eaten (which is desirable if the cereal is not whole grain and higher in sugar). Many children throw out the milk leftover in the bowl, so it's a good idea to have them drink at least a half glass of milk in addition to what is on the cereal.

Sugar Budgets

Some cereals are loaded with sugar, making them more of a candy than a grain food. Some even have sugar listed as their first ingredient. Walk down the cereal aisle and you'll see that many kids' cereals consist of sugar and flour, with colorings, flavorings and a few marshmallows. Several of them mimic popular cookies and candy, such as peanut butter cups and cookie-flavors. Excessive amounts of sugar are unhealthy because sugar:

- Causes tooth decay.
- Provides empty calories—they are without vitamins and minerals
- Makes food taste good to most kids— it is easy to overeat
  Note: Some youth start preparing for their adolescent growth spurt as early as 4th grade. Differences in body size may start becoming very visible. Over-consumption of sugary foods may lead to laying down more soft tissue as adipose (fat) than needed. The point to make with students is that when the body is getting ready to grow into an adolescent, it is important to eat the healthiest food (most nutrient dense) possible so all the nutrients are 'stored' and ready to make a healthy teen body (long bones and strong muscles).

For these reasons, the US Dietary Guidelines recommend consuming no more than 10 percent of daily calories from added sugar. For 3rd and 4th grade students eating an average of 1600 to 2000 calories per day, this comes to 40-50 grams. To make this more tangible to students, divide grams by 4 to convert to the number of teaspoons (4 grams per teaspoon). The students' sugar budget

therefore is 10–12 teaspoons of sugar per day, depending on caloric intake. Show students the size of a teaspoon from your measuring spoons. Make a "Sugar Budget" mini-poster using a baggie with 10 teaspoons of sugar in it.

Fiber Goal

Fiber is the un-digestible part of carbohydrates. Fiber helps keep intestines moving and healthy. Children need to eat fiber each day.
To calculate how much:

Child's years of age plus 5 grams = _____ daily fiber goal

Example: A fourth grade child who is 9 years old: 9 plus 5 grams = 14 grams fiber

Reading Labels

Point out the ingredient label. Inform students that ingredients appear on the label by their prominence of weight in the product. In other words, what appears first on the label is the main ingredient, and the rest are listed in descending order depending on how much of it is in the product.

On the Nutrition Facts Panel, point out the following items:

- *Serving Size*—this how much students usually eat? Show examples of ½ and ¾ cup of cereal poured into a bowl. Does that look similar to their serving? Do they eat more? Twice as much? Half as much? If so, then values on the label need to be adjusted accordingly-doubled or divided in half, and so on.

- *Sugars (listed under Total Carbohydrates)*—sugar is a simple carbohydrate. This includes naturally occurring sugars as well as added sugars. Choose cereals that have less than 5 grams of added sugars. Note: if a cereal includes raisins or other dried fruit, the fruit in a serving contributes roughly 7 grams of sugar; therefore choose fruited cereals that have less than 12 grams of sugars listed.

- *Fiber*—choose cereals that have 2 grams of fiber per serving or more.