



Energy In, Energy Out

Ages: 6 – 12

Time: 15-20 minutes

Message Connection: 5 Servings of Fruits and Vegetables, 3 Servings of Low-Fat Dairy, 1 Hour or More of Physical Activity

Space Needs: Medium to large room indoors or outdoors

Materials:

- Plastic food or laminated pictures of food – use a combination of healthy food (fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy) and unhealthy food (chips, cake, pizza, fries, etc.)
- One hula hoop
- Portable CD player and CD of upbeat music

Objective: Participants will learn about energy balance by selecting foods (energy in) and then exercising more for unhealthy foods and less for healthy foods (energy out).

Set-up: Place the plastic food or laminated pictures of food in a hula hoop in the center of the playing area.

Steps:

1. Ask the participants to form a big circle around the hula hoop and spread out arms-length apart.
2. Explain: “I will call up small groups to come up. When you come up, select a food you like from the hula hoop.”
3. Call participants in small groups to select a food. For example, say, “Everyone wearing black should come to the center.” It’s best not to have all the participants making their selections at the same time.
4. Once the participants have selected a food, have them return to their place in the circle.
5. Continue in the same manner, calling small groups to select their food. Make sure each participant takes just one item from the hula hoop.
6. Ask a series of questions: What happens when we eat? *Answer: Our bodies take in energy from the food. This is called ‘energy in.’* What happens when we are active? *Answer: Our bodies burn energy (calories) from the food. This is called ‘energy out.’*
7. Explain: “We are going to pretend this big circle represents one big belly. We all are about to eat a lot of food. Look around the room. Do you see all the food your teammates selected? Are you all hungry? Here we go!” Turn on the music to get the group energized.
8. The leader asks the first participant, “What food do you have? Is that food healthy or unhealthy? Why? How much exercise do you think we need to do to burn it off?”

9. If it is a healthy food such as a fruit or vegetable, the group will do five repetitions of an exercise such as five toe touches or five jumping jacks. If it is an unhealthy food such as French fries or a hot dog, the group must do twenty-five repetitions of an exercise.
10. Proceed around the circle asking each participant what they picked, if it is healthy or unhealthy and why, and how much exercise they think we need to do to burn it off.
11. For the first few rounds, the leader should determine the exercises. Then, the leader should take suggestions from the participants for other exercises to try. Ideally, a new exercise should be performed each round. The leader should guide the participants with this process.
12. If there are too many participants to go all the way around the circle, collect all the foods from one food group half way through the game and complete them in one round. (For example, collect all the healthy foods and do five exercises for each card, and then collect all the unhealthy cards and do twenty-five exercises for each card.)
13. Watch the group to make sure everyone is exercising safely and with proper technique.

Debrief:

- What is energy in? *Answer: Food.*
- What is energy out? *Answer: Physical activity.*
- What types of foods are healthy? *Answer: Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, and baked/lean meat.*
- What types of foods are unhealthy? *Answer: Fried foods, fatty foods, high sugar foods, salty foods, etc.*
- What kind of food does your body need to stay healthy? *Answer: Fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy.*
- Why? *Answer: Because they provide vitamins, minerals, and fiber that your body needs to be strong.*
- Why low-fat dairy? *Answer: Only children under two need the extra fat found in whole or 2% milk.*
- What are the consequences to your body when you eat a lot of unhealthy foods? *Answer: It takes a lot extra work to burn off the extra calories and fat, and they can also make you sick if you eat too much.*
- Explain: “This was just a demonstration, but to really work off a burger and fries would take a full hour of running, swimming or other high-intensity activities.”

Developed by: The Go Team. Referenced: We Can! Energize Our Communities Toolkit.

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