

**This toolkit aims to provide health professionals with a wide range of engaging activities to assist you with educating active juniors about how to fuel their bodies to perform at their best!**

Fuel to Go & Play aims to create healthier food and drink environments in sports clubs and recreation centres as well as, education individuals on how to fuel their bodies with healthy food and drink to perform at their best!

Fuel to Go & Play is an initiative of Foodcore Nutrition Services Inc. in partnership with Healthway.

If you have any questions about the activities in this toolkit or require further support/information, please contact:

Email: [fueltogether@education.wa.edu.au](mailto:fueltogether@education.wa.edu.au)

Phone: 08 9264 4999

## Contents

1. Stand-up/sit-down – Australian Guide to Healthy Eating food groups activity.....	2
2. Digestion activity.....	3
3. Hidden vegetables in a bag.....	6
4. Australian Guide to Healthy Eating hoops race.....	7
Food Groups – examples and key health messaging.....	8
5. How much sugar is in these drinks?.....	9
6. Cooking with children.....	10
7. Other ideas.....	11
Eating as a group.....	11
Food-related games.....	11

## 1. Stand-up/sit-down – Australian Guide to Healthy Eating food groups activity

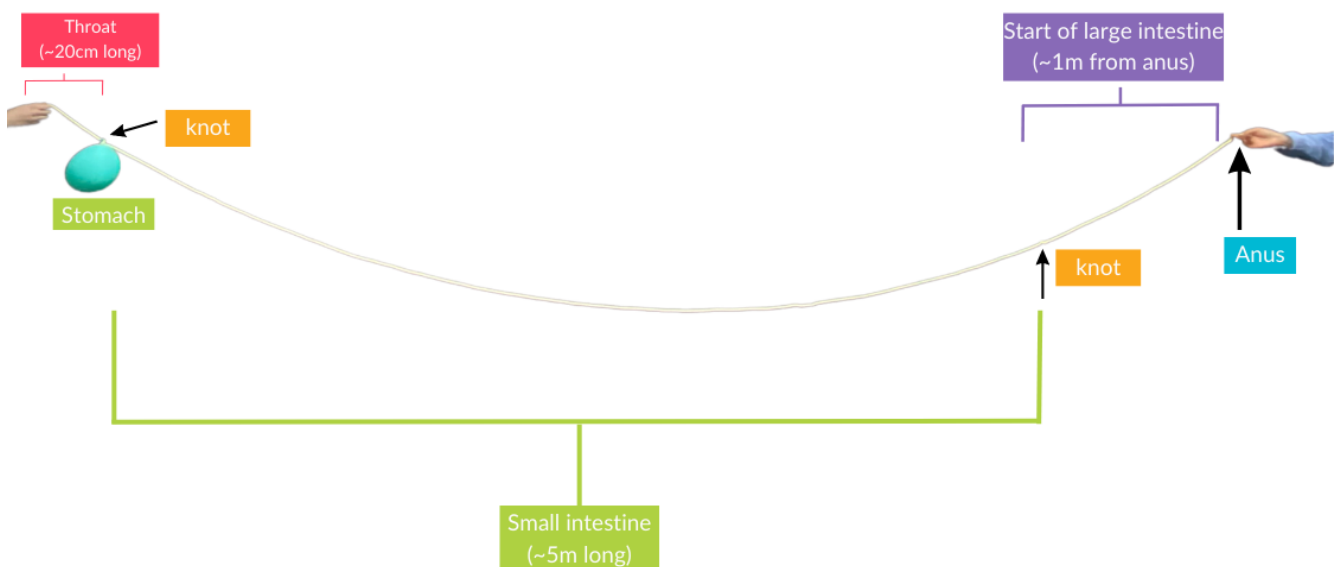
<b>Overview:</b>	This activity can be incorporated into any activity/event/workshop that focuses on the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating, i.e. at the end of the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating hoops race (see activity 4 below). The activity involves getting the entire audience to stand up, then sit down based on if they haven't consumed enough serves from each food group.
<b>Target audience:</b>	All ages
<b>Outcome:</b>	helping participants to identify foods that they can add to their foundation (everyday) diet.
<b>Key messages:</b>	Most of us find it difficult to eat enough from the five core food groups, building your 'everyday diet' around these foods will help to give you the Fuel to Go & Play.
<b>Equipment:</b>	Fuel your Body books and pens for all participants.

### Method:

1. Ask everyone in the audience to stand-up
2. Using page 5 of the Fuel your Body booklet, pick the age group most relevant to your audience and ask questions of if they have eaten X number of serves from each food group.  
For example:
  - a. Question 1: "Sit down if you have eaten less than two (2) pieces of fruit today (or "yesterday" if session is run early in the morning)
  - b. Question 2: "Sit down if you have eaten less than two (2) types of dairy foods today – this could be milk, yoghurt or cheese"
  - c. Go through each food group, with the last question being: "Sit down if you have had less than X different coloured vegetables today"
    - i. For adults and older children 5 different coloured vegetables
    - ii. For younger children 3 different coloured vegetables
  - d. Note: the last question is always vegetables to demonstrate that this is the food group that most of us struggle to eat enough of
3. Assuming most of the audience are seated after the previous question, tell them to turn to page 6 in their Fuel your Body books, and write down a few ideas of how they could add more of the foods they are missing into their everyday diet.  
Say: "For example, if you sat down because you have not had two different types of fruits today, write down a couple of ideas in the fruit "wedge" of how you could have some more fruit tomorrow!"
4. Ask participants if they might like to share what they are going to add to their day, to help give their peers some ideas too.

## 2. Digestion activity

<b>Overview:</b>	This is a simple way to help people visualize their digestive tract and understand how long it takes for their body to digest foods and provide energy. It also helps them choose the right foods to maximise sports performance.
<b>Target audience:</b>	All ages
<b>Outcome:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to help participants visualise/understand how long the digestive tract is and how it works (where food is broken down and where nutrients are extracted)</li> <li>to help participants understand the importance of not eating immediately before training/games but giving their body enough time to get energy from the food before playing.</li> </ul>
<b>Key messages:</b>	Our body needs time to break down food so that our muscles and brain get the energy they need to perform at their best.
<b>Equipment:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>rope (roughly 6-6.5m long for children; roughly 9m long for adults)</li> <li>balloon (1/3 filled with air)</li> </ul>



Imagine the rope is a representation of a person's digestive tract.

For children:

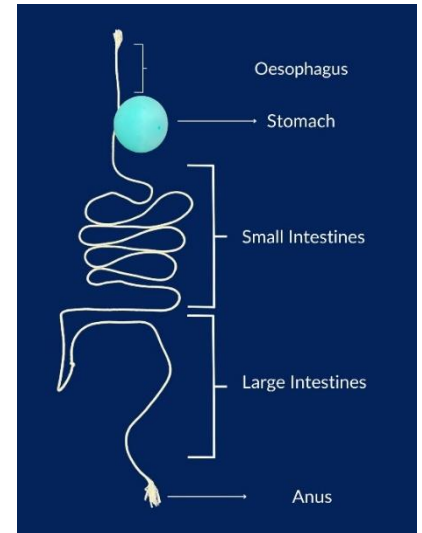
- tie the semi blown-up balloon onto the rope 20cm from one end; (this will mark the stomach, 20cm away from the mouth)
- tie a knot in the rope 5m away from the balloon/stomach; this marks the end of the small intestine and beginning of the large intestine
- this should leave around 1m of rope to the end of the digestive tract (the anus).

For adults:

- tie the semi blown-up balloon onto the rope 25cm from one end; (this will mark the stomach, 25cm away from the mouth)
- tie a knot in the rope 7m away from the balloon/stomach
- this should leave around 1.5m of rope to the end of the digestive tract (the anus).

Method:

1. Ask for two participants to volunteer. Ask them to grab one end of the rope each and spread out until it is stretched between them.
2. Ask all participants if they know what the rope represents.
3. Tell participants that this rope represents their digestive system.
4. In simple language, start at the end closest to the stomach;
  - a. **Hold this part of the rope in your hands** *“the moment that our body thinks there is going to be food coming in, our body starts the process to break that food down. So, you might notice that when you see or smell food you start to produce more saliva.”*
  - b. *“So we chew the food and then this travels down our oesophagus (hold short end up and mirror your oesophagus with the rope) to our stomach (the balloon)”*
  - c. **Stop when you get to the balloon** *“in the stomach the food goes through a mixer a bit like a washing machine (squeeze balloon as you speak) and the food gets broken down further, before traveling to our small intestines” (visualise going along the rope again to the next knot)*
  - d. **Stand at the start of the small intestines (knot). As you speak, keep moving down until you get to the next knot;** *“in the small intestines this is where most of the nutrients in our foods gets absorbed. So our muscles can get energy and the building blocks they need to grow strong.”*
  - e. **Move onto the next knot** *“what is left goes into our large intestine (visualise going along rope towards the next knot and pause) where water is re-absorbed, so depending on how dehydrated you are your body will adjust how much water it holds on to. In the large intestines there is also lots of gut bugs which feed off food we can't break down, which helps to keep us healthy.”*
  - f. *“Before finally it ends up here (move to end of rope), does anyone know what this is? (generally, kids will find it funny to yell out “bum” or something similar; can joke with the person who’s holding this end to keep it light-hearted and fun), and finish the demonstration by explaining “this is where food leaves us once we’re done with it.”*



5. Go back to the beginning of the digestive tract and explain how since this all takes quite a bit of time, we can't expect to eat food 10 minutes before training or a game and get energy from it. In reality that would just sit in our stomachs and make us feel uncomfortable when playing sport.
- a. **Key notes:**
- i. Larger meals take longer for our bodies to break down, so we want to ensure 3-4 hours prior to a game, we are having a larger meal to give our bodies enough time to break it down and get the energy from it
  - ii. Foods which are higher in fat, like hot chips, nuggets and burgers, take our body longer to breakdown than having foods like a bowl of porridge or a chicken and salad wrap... so if people are having high fat meals before they play it is just going to sit in their stomach. They are going to feel uncomfortable before they play and get little energy from these foods.

### 3. Hidden vegetables in a bag

<b>Overview:</b>	<p>We know that even though some children won't like specific vegetables the first time they try them, it's important to keep exposing them to these foods. It can take up to 10 or more exposures to a fruit or vegetable for a child to start liking it, so getting comfortable holding, smelling, and looking at these foods can help the process.</p> <p>This is a fun activity to get children interacting with vegetables in unique way, talking with their friends about what they like/dislike, and what their favourite way is to eat vegetables. It also helps to identify uncommon vegetables.</p>
<b>Target audience:</b>	Children
<b>Outcome:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children to interact with vegetables in an interesting way</li> <li>• Group to discuss vegetables and potentially learn about new vegetables and hear from others if they like them and how they eat them</li> </ul>
<b>Key messages:</b>	Different vegetables are interesting to touch, smell, etc. and other children might have interesting opinions compared to their peers.
<b>Equipment:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a non-see-through bag (e.g. a reusable shopping bag)</li> <li>• plenty of different types of fresh vegetables and/or fruit</li> </ul>

#### Method:

1. Ask everyone to sit in a line. Explain how the activity is going to work to the group:
  - When it is their turn, children to close their eyes and take a vegie/fruit out of the bag and by feeling it and smelling it try to guess what vegetable/fruit they have. Once they have guessed ask the child to tell the group:
    - What is their favourite way to have that vegetable/fruit?
      - i.e eat carrots raw with dip
      - i.e broccoli cooked in a stir fry
    - can ask other children if they have had the vegetable before and to share how they eat it
      - if the child has not had the vegetable/fruit before ask if anyone else has and to share how they eat it. If no one has, then the facilitator to explain a bit more about the vegetable/fruit and how they can eat it.
2. Keep going down the line until everyone has had a chance to guess a vegetable.

**Tip: Mix it up!** Grab common (carrot, cucumber) and less common vegetables to make it more fun. Even things like corn still in the husk, different colours of capsicum, Asian veg (e.g. Bok choy), parsnip, silver beet, artichoke etc can be conversation-starters.

#### 4. Australian Guide to Healthy Eating hoops race

<b>Overview:</b>	This is a fun way to familiarise with the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating and the types of foods that fit into each food group, and which foods aren't part of our foundation "everyday diet" (e.g. discretionary foods).
<b>Target audience:</b>	Children
<b>Outcome:</b>	To increase children's understanding of where foods fit within the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating.
<b>Key messages:</b>	Most of the foods we eat everyday should come from these five food groups.
<b>Equipment:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 hula hoops to represent the 5 food groups (or chalk circles on the ground, etc)</li> <li>• cut out pictures of foods/drinks from the 5 food groups and discretionary foods (plus water)</li> </ul>

#### Method:

1. Divide children up into two teams (tip: it can be fun to have healthy food-related team names, such as the Eggplants and the Cherries, the chickens and the eggs, etc), and line up a specified distance away from the hoops
2. Each team is given an equal number of food cut-outs i.e. images of fruit, veg, yoghurt, chicken, rice etc.
3. Once the race starts, children have to grab a food picture, run to the other end and place it in the correct hoop
4. Staff/facilitator stand near the hoops to assist with food group placement (if required) and provide encouragement and support to children who are struggling to place their food in the correct hoop
5. The team that has finished placing their stack of pictures first are the winners!
6. Everyone to help with placing the other team's foods in the hoops
7. Everyone then comes to sit/stand around the hoops and as a group go through each food group. Ask children to look and see if they think there is anything in each hoop that doesn't belong there, and where it should go instead if it is incorrect.
8. Go through each food group: see table below for key messages for each food group.
9. Depending on the age of the children, you could then ask how many serves/"types" of each food group they need to eat every day. Generally, children may know about 2 fruits and 5 vegetables.
10. Discuss how the foods that don't fit into the hoops are discretionary foods, and these foods don't support us to grow and perform at our best, so we should try to eat more foods from inside the hoops instead.

#### Note:

If there is a mix in ages split the older children evenly amongst the two groups. Instruct the older children to be role models and leaders of their group to help the younger children figure out the foods and which groups they belong to.

### Food Groups – examples and key health messaging

Food Group	Example foods	Health message for these foods
Grain foods	Cereals, breads, rice, pasta, noodles. Where possible we want to aim for wholegrain and/or high fibre varieties	These foods contain important vitamins and minerals to help with growth and development, and fibre which helps to keep us feeling fuller for longer. When these foods break down in our body, they provide our muscles and brain with energy.
Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds and legumes/beans:	Contains: lean red meat like lamb, beef, chicken, fish, nuts, seeds and legumes/beans, tofu, eggs and meat alternatives.	This food group contains important nutrients, vitamins and minerals for looking after our muscles, and helping them to be strong
Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives:	Milk, yoghurt and cheese and alternatives such as soy milk, soy yoghurts.	This food group includes important minerals such as calcium and protein for strong bones and can also give our muscles energy. When choosing dairy alternatives make sure to aim for products which contain calcium as an ingredient.
Vegetables: including fresh and frozen	Mushrooms, capsicum, broccoli, ...	Fruits and vegetables are high in vitamins and minerals to support our immune system and may help us from getting sick. They also contain fibre to keep us fuller for longer and our tummies happy. When it comes to eating vegetables aim to eat a rainbow!
Fruits	Banana, strawberries, kiwi fruit, oranges, ...	
Discretionary foods	Sports Drinks, doughnuts, lollies, chocolates	These foods are high in added salt, sugar and fat and building our everyday diet around these foods don't support us to perform at our best.



## 5. How much sugar is in these drinks?

<b>Overview:</b>	This is an interactive, visual way for children to understand how much sugar is in commonly consumed drinks. For more information about the amount of sugar in drinks, <a href="#">see this LiveLighter article</a> .
<b>Target audience:</b>	Children aged 12+ years; if younger they may need more help/supervision.
<b>Outcome:</b>	To visualise how much sugar popular drinks contain compared to water.
<b>Key messages:</b>	Water is the best choice to keep us hydrated every day, including when we are playing sports.
<b>Equipment:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an empty water bottle             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ contains 0 tsp sugar</li> </ul> </li> <li>• soft drink bottle             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ contains 16 tsp sugar (based on a 600mL Coca-Cola)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• sports drink bottle             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ contains 9 tsp sugar (based on a 600mL Powerade)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• juice bottle             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ contains 5 tsp sugar (based on a 400mL 100% orange juice)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Total: 30 sachets of sugar (1 sachet = 4g sugar)</li> </ul>

### Method:

1. Starting from the juice bottle, ask children to guess how many teaspoons of sugar is in this drink. If children are old enough and seem capable, they can try to use the nutritional information panel on the bottle to figure this out. With one sachet equalling one teaspoon.
2. After the group has agreed on an answer and placed that number of whole/closed sachets into the bottle, repeat the process for the sports drink, soft drink, and water bottle
3. Once all of the drinks are done, discuss with the group about which ones were correct/incorrect, and reflect on how many teaspoons/sachets of sugar are in some of the bottles. Briefly touch on how sugar doesn't give us long-lasting energy and can damage our teeth. Finish the activity with how water doesn't have any sugar, how our body is mostly made up of water, and therefore this is the best choice to keep us hydrated everyday and while playing sport.

**Tip:** if some children say that they like X drink because it tastes better than water, ask if they have tried putting some fruit in water. Some berries or citrus fruit in water gives it some natural sweetness that can help with liking.

### Top Tips to help this activity run smoothly:

- If there are many children (i.e. more than a dozen) split up into two groups and therefore double all of the equipment.
- Use sugar sachets rather than actual sugar to prevent children from eating them.

## 6. Cooking with children

Having children help with cooking is a great way to familiarise them with different types of foods/cooking methods, and generally children are enthusiastic to get involved in any way.

Tip: you may be surprised what jobs will get participants excited. For example, washing fruits/vegetables, transferring leftover cucumber juice from the bowl to the bin, helping to wipe down the bench before/after cooking, etc.

Some of our favourite recipes to get children involved include:

- Homemade tzatziki ([see recipe here](#)); children can:
  - grate the cucumber (if age appropriate)
  - juice the lemon
  - squeeze the juice out of the cucumber
  - measure and scoop the yoghurt into the bowl
  - crush the garlic (if age appropriate)
  - mix everything together
- Sandwich press, banana pancakes ([see recipe here](#)); children can:
  - Peel and mash the bananas
  - Crack eggs into the bowl and whisk
  - Add each ingredient and whisk
  - Add blueberry/yoghurt toppings after watching you cook on the sandwich press

Fuel to Go & Play has a wide range of recipes to choose from, visit:

<https://www.fuelto.go.com.au/recipes/>

## 7. Other ideas

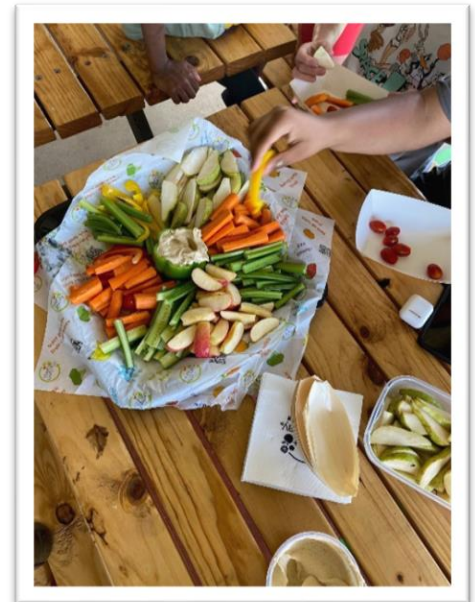
### Eating as a group

Historically, eating is a social event that brings together friends and families. If your session involves cooking or providing food, try to gather around a table or in a circle to make eating a fun, social event. This can help to improve children's relationship with food and increase enjoyment of the healthy foods on offer.

Something simple like a dip (see homemade tzatziki above, or hummus) with fresh vegie sticks can be gathered around and picked at. Some less common vegie sticks can also make things more interesting and increase exposure to vegetables (e.g. raw broccolini, cherry tomatoes, etc).

Ask children to set the table. Depending on the food served, location and supplies consider:

- Table clothes
- Cutlery and crockery
- Vases with plants picked from the garden
- Serviettes
- Jugs of water and glasses/cups.



### Food-related games

If some children are not interested in participating in the above games, print out some of our [Fruit and Veg word searches](#) and [flash cards](#) so that they are still engaged in something food-related.