

FALL 1999

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The FFA Mission
FFA makes a positive difference
in the lives of students by developing
their potential for premier
leadership, personal growth and career
success through agricultural education.

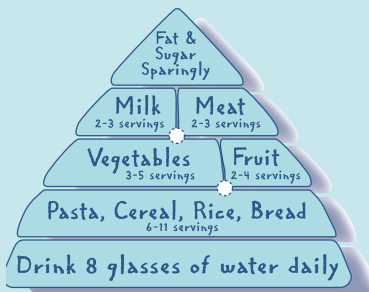
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PAL to PAL

A Newsletter for FFA Advisors and PALS Mentors

PALS are High School Heroes

WE'RE ALL LOOKING FOR HEROES. Elementary students frequently look up to their high school PALS as heroes. The Cabot, Arkansas, FFA Chapter took the concept one step further by implementing an anti-smoking program called "High School Heroes" that was developed by the American Lung Association (ALA).

"Through High School Heroes, high school students are trained to present a program on the dangers of tobacco use to elementary students, usually fourth and fifth graders," says Kevin Woodrow, agriculture instructor. "My students jumped on it as a PALS activity. They were really pumped up about it and I think they got a lot out of it."

The program helps high school students understand the health ramifications of tobacco

use and what smoking and using smokeless tobacco products can do to your body. "My students really enjoyed the program because they got to teach, prepare and present skits and help their little PALS make posters," Woodrow says.

He also knows that his high school students learned a lot from the program. "At one point, the trainer asked my students if any of them had ever used tobacco products and a couple of hands went up," Woodrow says. "The program reinforced for them how detrimental tobacco use can be. I had some students who did some real soul searching and decided to change their habits because they knew their PALS were looking to them as role models. They know they need to lead by example."

Woodrow also emphasizes the difference in messages that are delivered by high school students versus adults. "When a youngster hears a teacher or a parent or other adult



Cabot, Arkansas, FFA members work on an activity for their High School Heroes presentation.

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ACTIVITIES

Try this team-building exercise with your PAL and other mentor-mentee pairs. Look for even more ideas in the PALS Activity Handbook.

FOOD PYRAMID ABACUS

OBJECTIVE:

Working together, high school and elementary students will create a food pyramid abacus and use it to learn about good nutrition.

OUTCOMES:

Elementary students will use the abacus to track what they eat every day and determine if they are eating a balanced, healthy diet.

SUPPLIES:

- White matte board
- 5 colors of pony beads
- beading cord elastic or round cord elastic

EQUIPMENT:

- ice pick and wooden cutting board or wood block
- heavy duty scissors (for cutting matte board)
- ruler
- fine line pen or marker

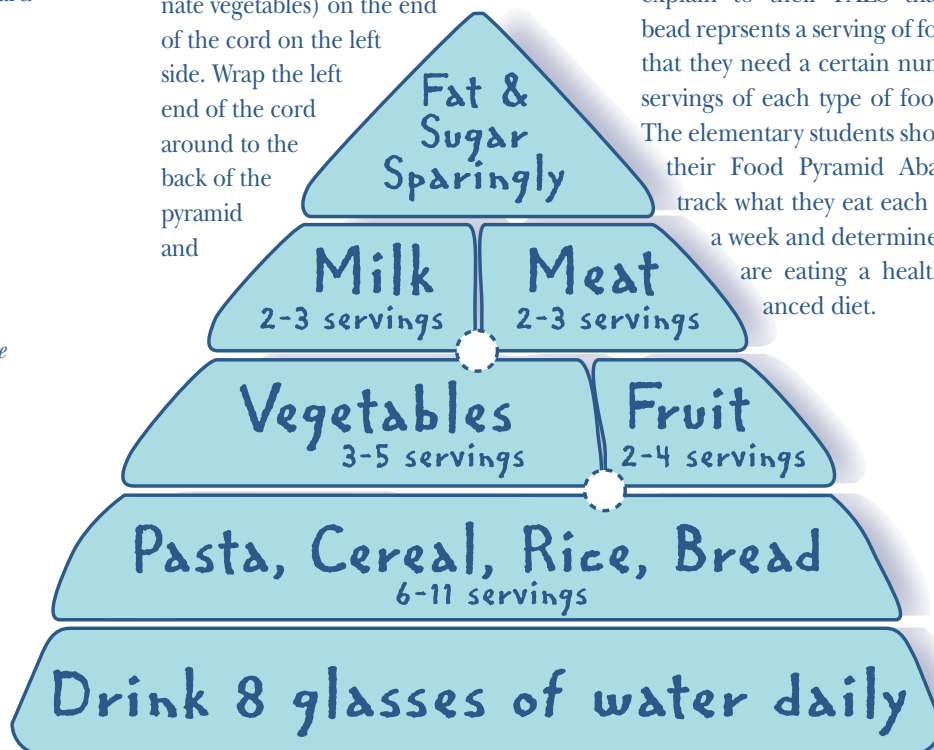
Important Note: High school students should use the ice pick and scissors and be aware of safety considerations with these tools around youngsters.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Using the pattern below, cut pyramids from matte board.
2. Cut notches in the designated locations.
3. Draw lines on the pyramid and write in the information as shown on the pattern.
4. Carefully punch holes where designated in the matte board using the ice pick and cutting board.
5. Cut an 18" piece of cord. String 11 beads (a color to designate Pasta, Cereal, Rice and Bread) on the cord. With the beads on the cord, locate the cord's midpoint. Place the midpoint of the cord on the midpoint of the line separating the Pasta, Cereal, Rice and Bread group from water. Wrap the ends around the back of the pyramid and thread both ends through the hole at the bottom of the vegetable and fruit categories.
6. String five beads (a color to designate vegetables) on the end of the cord on the left side. Wrap the left end of the cord around to the back of the pyramid and

thread it through the hole between the milk and meat categories.

7. String four beads (a color to designate fruit) on the end of the cord on the right side. Wrap the right end of the cord around to the back of the pyramid and thread it through the hole between the milk and meat categories.
8. String three beads (a color to designate milk) on the end of the cord on the left side. Wrap the left end of the cord around to the back of the pyramid.
9. String three beads (a color to designate meat) on the end of the cord on the right side. Wrap the right end of the cord around to the back of the pyramid and securely tie it and the other end of the cord together.
10. All of the beads should be in the appropriate place on the front of the pyramid.
11. Have the high school students explain to their PALS that each bead represents a serving of food and that they need a certain number of servings of each type of food daily. The elementary students should use their Food Pyramid Abacus to track what they eat each day for a week and determine if they are eating a healthy, balanced diet.





Learning about Nutrition

TEACHING YOUNG PEOPLE TO EAT A BALANCED DIET OF NUTRITIOUS foods is critical to their health, growth and development. You can teach your PAL the importance of good nutrition and help them develop healthy habits.

Nutrition is an integral part of a healthy lifestyle. As a PALS mentor, you have the ability to influence the eating habits and health of your young PAL. Healthy eating habits and nutrition information are an important part of agricultural and health education. You can help your PAL develop healthy eating habits early by teaching them how important it is to eat healthy and how eating the right foods helps them maintain their energy level and feel well.

Here are some dietary guidelines for you and your PAL to follow.

- Eat a variety of foods.
- Balance the food you eat with physical activity.
- Choose a diet with plenty of grain products, vegetables and fruits.
- Choose a diet low in fat.
- Choose a diet moderate in sugars.
- Choose a diet moderate in salt.
- Use the Food Pyramid Abacus to track what you eat each day.

Here are some tips for following these guidelines.

- Eat fruits, crackers or other healthy foods for snacks.
- Exercise every day!
- Eat many different foods on a regular basis.
- Try fresh fruit for dessert!
- Eat vegetables that taste good—experiment with cooking techniques!

PALS Mentoring Conference

THE SIXTH ANNUAL PALS MENTORING Conference will bring fun and new friends to the 72nd National FFA Convention in Louisville, Kentucky. About 700 elementary students from Louisville and southern Indiana schools will be paired with FFA members from across the country. Morning activities will include each pair conducting an agricultural activity and participating in team-building exercises. In addition to lots of fun, the conference will give FFA members a chance to discover new ideas and develop hands-on skills for use in their local PALS programs.

Make sure your FFA chapter sends several representatives to be a part of this informative and inspiring event! All FFA chapters, advisors, state staff, school administrators and sponsors are invited to participate. The PALS Mentoring Conference will take place Wednesday, October 27, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. To register or for more information, contact Becky Meyer at the National FFA Organization via e-mail at bmeyer@ffa.org or phone at 317-802-4262.

The PALS Conference is sponsored by Fifth Third Bank of Kentucky, Inc., Kentucky's Electric Cooperatives and Greens Foundation, Inc. as a special project of the National FFA Foundation. Kraft Food, Inc. provides lunch for all of the participants.





WINNING WITH HAND WASHING

Q Young children are always getting hungry and snacking. How important is it that they wash their hands before touching their food?

A Food-borne illnesses are very common and very dangerous. You can help your PAL stay healthy and avoid painful food poisoning by teaching him or her the importance of clean hands and how to wash properly. Here is an activity to help you teach this important lesson.

Supplies:

- non-stick cooking spray or vegetable oil
- ground cinnamon
- liquid hand soap
- paper towels

Procedure:

Explain to your PAL that when we touch all sorts of objects—from doorknobs to toys—we are likely to “pick up” germs from those objects. To protect ourselves from becoming ill, we need to make sure we wash away all the germs on our hands before we touch anything that we’re going to eat or use to eat with, such as a spoon or fork. Apply corn oil or non-stick cooking spray to your PAL’s hands, then sprinkle cinnamon on the palms, backs and in between the fingers. Have your PAL rub his or her hands together and tell them that the cinnamon represents germs. Their goal is to get rid of the “germs.” Have them try to wash away the “germs” with just plain water. When they have difficulty, explain that many harmful substances won’t wash away without soap. Then, have students try again using warm water and a squirt of liquid hand soap. They will be amazed when they actually watch the “germs” (cinnamon) rinse right off their hands into the sink. Tell them to remember this activity as a way to remind themselves to wash their hands before eating.



PAL to PAL is the newsletter of PALS (Partners in Active Learning Support), the National FFA Mentoring Program.

The Agricultural Education Mission

Agricultural education prepares students for successful careers and a lifetime of informed choices in the global agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems.

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\$25 for Your PALS Program!

We pay \$25 for each idea we publish! If you have an activity idea to share with other PALS programs, send it to *PAL to PAL*, National FFA Organization, P.O. Box 68960, Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960. We hope to hear from you!

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PALS ARE HIGH SCHOOL HEROES, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

say things like ‘smoking is bad for you,’ it’s preaching. When that same message is delivered by the high school quarterback or the FFA president, it has a much more powerful impact.”



Woodrow says the High School Heroes program materials are well-planned, well-organized and free. “The ALA provides the lesson plans, brochures, posters and t-shirts for the high school students. All the teacher has to do is make the transportation arrangements.”

For more information on the High School Heroes program, contact Teresa Conner in the Little Rock, Arkansas, office of the the American Lung Association at 1-800-880-5864.

GIVING BACK

WHEN TARA RUNION WAS IN THE sixth grade, her family moved. Although she made the transition fairly easily, she did encounter some discrimination because she was “different.” At that point, Runion decided to do anything she could to help others who were considered “different.”

Through PALS, Runion started a tutorial program for local elementary students who had limited English speaking skills. “For many of the elementary students,” Tara says, “the tutors were the first influential American

citizens in their lives. The tutors took an active interest in the personal lives of their students and helped to make their transitions easier.”

A member of the South Rowan FFA Chapter, Runion was recognized for her efforts at last year’s national FFA convention as a national H.O. Sargent Award finalist. The H.O. Sargent Awards are sponsored by Merial as a special project of the National FFA Foundation. For more information on the H.O. Sargent Award program, contact Becky Meyer via e-mail at bmeyer@ffa.org or via telephone at 317-802-4262.