Fall Unit

Harvesting for Health

SEPTEMBER – Healthy Bodies
OCTOBER – Cooking and Eating
NOVEMBER – Get Moving
September Theme
“Healthy Bodies”

**Week 1:**
- What kind of foods do you like to eat?
- Have you ever eaten a (insert color) food?
- What food group does your favorite food come from?
- Have you ever been to the farmers market? Let’s make a list!
- Vegetable tasting
- Read “Am I Fit and Healthy?” by Claire Llewellyn and Mike Gordon

**Week 2:**
- Why are vegetables important in our diet?
- Do you have a garden at home?
- Where can you be active? Why is this important?
- Vegetable tasting
- Read “Am I Fit and Healthy?” by Claire Llewellyn and Mike Gordon

**Week 3:**
- What were your favorite vegetables that we grew in the garden?
- What were your least favorite vegetables that we grew in the garden?
- What do you want to plant next spring?
- Vegetable tasting
- Read “I Will Never, Not Ever Eat a Tomato!” by Lauren Child and Corina Fletcher

**Week 4:**
- How much have you grown? What makes you grow?
- Tell me your favorite thing to do in the garden
- Bring in a picture of your favorite foods
- Why are vegetables important in our diet?
- Vegetable tasting
- Read “I Will Never, Not Ever Eat a Tomato!” by Lauren Child and Corina Fletcher
September “Healthy Bodies”

Background for Teachers
This month your children will be learning all about things that they can do to stay healthy. You should be harvesting (picking) the last of the vegetables from the outdoor garden.

Young children are very active by nature but not all families lead active, healthy lifestyles. It is important for them to learn how and why to get and stay healthy. You will be viewed as a role model by your children and should encourage yourself to display healthy behaviors. Talk to the children about eating right, exercising, and getting good quality rest.

Monthly Goals
The fall unit is very important because it is where you will begin to tie in the garden with its health benefits. During the summer, the children got the opportunity to really work in the garden and see their efforts from the planting stage pay off. They also got to taste lots of new things and this should continue on a weekly basis. Remember, it takes 10-30 exposures to a new food before a child starts to develop a preference for it. Along with healthy eating, however, this unit teaches the importance of exercise and sleep. This month in particular will provide a good foundation of what the body needs to be healthy overall.
Dear Family,

This month’s theme is “Healthy Bodies” and is the first focus of our fall unit, “Harvesting for Health.” All summer long we tended to our garden and got to taste all the great vegetables that we’ve grown. This month we are going to be harvesting the last of the garden and really talking about the importance of good eating.

Like plants, our bodies are growing and need certain things like nutrients, water, exercise, and rest. Later in the unit we will be learning some new ways to use vegetables in our meals, as well as some great physical activity ideas! Join us this month on our quest to discovery what it means to be healthy!

Happy (and Healthy) Eating!

Your Child’s Teacher

At home CONNECTION
Check out MyPyramid.gov! MyPyramid offers personalized eating plans, interactive tools to help you plan and assess your food choices, and advice to help you:

- Make smart choices from every food group
- Find your balance between food and physical activity
- Get the most nutrition out of your calories
- Stay within your daily calorie needs
Food Pyramid Match

Materials List:
- Poster of the food pyramid
- Clear contact paper
- Scissors
- Velcro

Purpose:
To help the children understand the components of eating in a balanced way.

Instructions:
Create “pieces” out of the duplicate copy of your food pyramid and cover them in clear contact paper or laminate. Attach Velcro to both the piece and the poster. Encourage children to match the pieces and discuss with them the different components of the pyramid and healthy eating.

What they learn:
Exposing the children to the food groups is important so they understand what it takes to feed our bodies. This activity will allow them to gain confidence as they easily match the brightly colored pieces of the pyramid and discuss with you and each other what the pieces represent.
Materials List:
- Scissors
- Pictures from magazines of different food items
- Glue
- Construction paper

Purpose:
Children need to learn in hands-on ways and simple cutting and pasting is a simple task that they can do while you discuss the concepts of healthy food choices.

Instructions:
Place all items in your art area and encourage children to cut and paste photos of food onto the paper. Discuss with them the differences between the foods they are selecting and ask them questions like, “Tell me why that is a healthy food choice.”

What they learn:
The children will begin to learn how to recognize healthier food items and hopefully take the mystery out of them. For example, one way might be that most fresh vegetables are not generally sold in packages unlike processed foods that are less nutritious.
Materials List:
- Play food items including fruits, vegetables, recycled cans and food boxes, egg cartons, etc.
- Cash register
- Play money
- Paper shopping bags
- Chart paper
- Marker

Purpose:
Allowing children to discover materials freely is a great way to see what concepts they are picking up on.

Instructions:
Put all materials in your dramatic play learning center and encourage the children to explore them freely. Suggest that they set up a grocery store and see how many “healthy” food items they can buy or sell. Observe their interactions and record what you see on the chart paper and display it in your classroom.

What they learn:
You’ve been talking about healthy foods for the last couple of days and the children should be starting to pick up on what is healthy and what is not so healthy. If you notice that they are not, perhaps repeat this activity again in a few days or leave the materials out for the rest of the week. This type of play also builds teamwork, communication skills, and encourages cooperation.
Fall Unit “Harvesting for Health”
September Week 1
“Healthy Bodies”
Science

Scavenger Hunt Harvest

Materials List:
• Chart paper
• Marker
• Brown paper bags for gathering

Purpose:
To see if the children can identify different items related to the garden.

Instructions:
Decide on a list of items that you want to gather and identify with your children. Examples could be seeds, sticks, worms, roots, ladybugs, leaves, etc. See how many of the items you and your children can find. Talk with the children about the concept of “harvesting.” Keep track of who found what and how many items your class successfully harvested on the chart paper and display the chart in your classroom.

What they learn:
As the children identify the items, they will develop self-confidence. Perhaps you could ask them to identify different varieties of items to increase the difficulty. Also, finding and touching the items help reinforce the concepts you’ve been discussing indoors.
Fall Unit “Harvesting for Health”

September Week 1
“Healthy Bodies”

Music and Movement

If You’re Hungry and You Know It!

Materials List:
- Chart paper
- Marker

Purpose:
It is important for children to begin to understand the concept of eating only until the point of fullness.

Instructions:
Copy down the words to the poem and recite them with your children. Display the words in your classroom.

What they learn:
Hopefully the children will begin to think about only taking as much food as they will eat and only getting more if they are still hungry. This idea is something that you can reinforce in many ways and discussing it at mealtimes is a great way!

If You’re Hungry and you Know it!
(to the tune of “If you’re Happy and you Know it”)

“If you’re hungry and you know it, say - I am! (point to self)
If you’re hungry and you know it, say – I am! (point to self)
If you’re hungry and you know it and it’s really time to eat, if you’re hungry and you know it, say - I am! (point to self)

If it’s good and you know it, say – mm mm! (rub tummy)
If it’s good and you know it, say – mm mm! (rub tummy)
If it’s good and you know it you’re so thankful for it, if it’s good and you know it, say – mm mm! (rub tummy)

If you’re full and you know it, say – no thanks! (shake head)
If you’re full and you know it, say – no thanks! (shake head)
If you’re full and you know it and you’ve really had enough, if you’re full and you know it, say- no thanks!” (shake head)
Materials List:
- Photos of vegetable items and other food items that grow in nature
- Photos of processed foods that do not grow in nature
- Scissors
- Glue
- Cardstock or poster board
- Bean seeds

Purpose:
To continue to help children distinguish between foods that are grown in gardens and those that are processed.

Instructions:
Create bingo cards using the pictures. Encourage the children to place a seed on the item as you call it out. Discuss the items with them as you name them off and see which ones they recognize and what they can tell you about where they come from and how healthy they are.

What they learn:
This game will benefit the visual learners in your class as they can hear the word and associate the picture with it and help reinforce the classroom-garden connection.
Garden Mobiles

Materials List:
• Pictures of vegetables grown in the garden
• Yarn
• Plastic coat hangers
• Hole punch
• Card stock or poster board
• Glue

Purpose:
To allow the children to create artwork with a nutritional message!

Instructions:
Assist children in gluing the pictures onto the card stock (both front and back) and punching a hole in the top. Help children tie yarn in different lengths to the pictures and to the coat hanger. Label each mobile with the child's names and hang them throughout your classroom either from the ceiling or in front of the windows in your science area.

What they learn:
Doing this activity while discussing the vegetables with the children will reinforce the names of them. You could modify this activity and only glue to one side of the cardstock and on the other write child-dictated sentences or phrases about the vegetable. Ask open-ended questions like “I see you chose to glue a squash onto your mobile. What is your favorite thing about squash? Tell me about when we planted the squash.”
Materials
- Blanket or sheet, large enough for all children to sit on
- A variety of tasting vegetables, preferably those grown in the garden
- A basket or bucket to carry the supplies
- Anything else that you and your children dream up to go on a picnic with you!

Purpose:
Not all pretend play has to happen indoors, and not all pretend play has to even be pretend!

Instructions:
Encourage the children to plan an outdoor picnic. Carry the materials outside and enjoy the fresh fall air with your children.

What they learn:
Involving the children in the planning stage of different activities is a valuable thing. Often they will be more interested in the activity or the concept if they’ve had a hand and a say in the planning.
Materials List:
- A variety of photographs from magazines depicting both healthy and not so healthy foods
- Large sheet of paper or poster board
- Marker
- Tape

Purpose:
Now that the children have been engaged in activities to teach about the differences in healthy vs. not healthy foods, let’s see if they can make the distinction on their own!

Instructions:
Gather the children and explain that you are going to separate the food items into two categories, healthy and not so healthy. Draw a straight vertical line down the paper and label the two halves. You may have to get them started or somehow label the halves with pictures instead of words. Distribute the pictures so each child has at least 4 or 5. Encourage them to come to the front and tape their picture in the appropriate category. Discuss their reasons for selecting the category and reinforce the concepts as you go.

What they learn:
Allowing the children to “teach” each other is another great way to encourage the learning process and build self-confidence.
Materials List:
• Space large enough for children to move freely

Purpose:
To introduce the idea that when you are healthy you feel better!

Instructions:
Gather the children and encourage them to move about the space as they might if they feel really happy. Now ask them how they might move or act if they feel sad. Continue with different feelings and get progressively more challenging. Talk about concepts like “energy” and “strength.” Reinforce the idea that healthy foods contribute to feeling better and being healthier!

What they learn:
This simple movement activity should get the children thinking about all the ways they feel and how their food choices might affect that. Also, this type of activity will help validate the children’s feelings and let them know that it is ok to not always feel your best.
What Colors Did We Grow?

Materials List:
- Photographs of vegetables grown in the garden
- Colored construction paper or poster board
- Tape

Purpose:
Since the children will be spending less time in the outdoor garden as fall progresses and winter approaches, it is important to review and refresh on some of the concepts related to the garden.

Instructions:
Tape the colored construction paper or poster board on the wall around the room. Encourage the children to match the photograph of the vegetable item grown in the garden with the color of the paper. Discuss the color and ask the children to recall something about that particular vegetable and the growing experience.

What they learn:
Realizing that vegetables come in all different colors is exciting for kids and is a great way to encourage them to eat more of them!
Materials List:

- Photographs out of magazines of body parts
- Large poster board
- Glue

Purpose:
To help the children review the parts of the body and to engage them in a conversation about health

Instructions:
Set out materials in your art area and encourage the children to work together on a collage of body parts. Discuss different things that we can do and eat to keep our bodies healthy!

What they learn:
This activity should help reinforce the ideas you’ve been introducing these past few weeks. Also, working in a cooperative way on a group project helps encourage team work and cooperation!
Doctor’s Office

Materials List:
• Doctor play kit
• Variety of pretend food items
• Picture/poster of the food pyramid
• Notepads
• Pencils
• Chart paper
• Marker

Purpose:
Encouraging free play provides an opportunity for you to observe the children and see what concepts they are picking up and what things you should review again with them.

Instructions:
Place all materials in the dramatic play learning center and encourage the children to create a doctor’s or nutritionist’s office. Have them take turns role playing and give each other advice on ways to be healthy. Observe their behaviors and write down your observations on the chart paper and display it in your classroom.

What they learn:
The children should get guidance from you on the objectives of this activity but also be allowed to explore in their own ways. The goal is to get the children thinking about ways to be healthy and allow them to teach each other these concepts through role-playing.
Materials List:
- Ziploc bags
- Bean seeds
- Paper towels
- Water

Purpose:
To observe seeds growing without any soil!

Instructions:
Dampen the paper towel and place it, along with the bean seed inside the bag. Make sure that the bag is completely closed and that the towel remains damp. Set or hang the baggies in a window. In only a few short days, the seeds should begin to sprout. Observe the growth with the children and talk about what they see. Ask questions like, “Why do you think the seeds are growing without any soil?”

What they learn:
The children should begin to understand that you could grow things without soil and then transplant them to a soil bed once they are strong enough.
Materials List:
- Marker
- Chart paper

Purpose:
Connecting the concepts you’ve been studying all week with music is a great way to get kids to participate and to begin to internalize the information.

Instructions:
Copy the words to the poem on the chart paper and display it in your classroom. Teach the children the words and talk about why eating healthy is important.

What they learn:
Seeing the written words after they’ve learned them will strengthen emerging literacy skills.

The Vegetable Rock
(By Catherine Slonecki, M.S.and Adrienne Denmark, M.S.)

Some of the best food we ever chewed,
Is found in gardens and farms, you know.
Like corn and beets, they’re our special treats,
Fresh vegetables growing row by row.
Materials List:

• Pictures from magazines of different body parts (legs, arms, feet, etc.)

• Wooden blocks from your block learning center (or you could make your own “blocks” by stuffing old shoeboxes and cereal boxes with newspaper and covering them with colored contact paper)

• Clear contact paper

Purpose:
Stacking and building are great ways to work children’s gross motor development. Adding pictures of the body parts you’ve been talking about with the kids should spark lots of interesting conversations!

Instructions:
Cover the blocks with the pictures using the clear contact paper. Set the “body part blocks” in your block learning center and encourage the children to build with them. Ask open ended questions to get the children thinking about the human body.

What they learn:
Because children learn by doing, this activity should allow them to “build” a body and will hopefully connect some of the concepts of healthy living.
Materials List:
- Paper plates
- Pictures of foods from the food groups
- Glue

Purpose:
To re-introduce the food pyramid and the food groups

Instructions:
Place the materials in the art center. Encourage the children to make selections from the pictures that represent each of the food groups that you’ve been talking with them about. You could even provide a picture of the food pyramid for reference. Talk with them about why it is important to eat a balanced meal and what benefits the different foods have for our bodies.

What they learn:
Selecting healthy foods is a difficult task, even for adults. Hopefully with this art activity, you will get the children thinking about all they combinations of healthy items they can make to create a balanced meal.
Materials List:

• Child-sized table
• Notepads
• Pencils
• Play money
• Cash register
• Brown shopping bags
• Real or play vegetables

Purpose:
This activity could be pretend and could be done using all artificial produce, or you could set up a real stand* and allow children from other classrooms to visit and make “purchases.”

Instructions:
Encourage the children to role-play as if they were selling fresh produce. Observe their play and interactions.

What they learn:
This activity should get the children thinking about real produce stands, farmers markets, or grocery stores that they have visited. Hopefully you will hear the children talking to each other and explaining the different vegetable items.

*Even if you modify the activity in this way, still use play money
### Materials List:
- Brown paper lunch sack
- A variety of different size fresh vegetable items

### Purpose:
Children learn with all their senses and this activity will require them to put their sense of touch and smell to work.

### Instructions:
Encourage children who want to participate to gather in a circle. Without showing the children, put one of the vegetable items in the sack. Take turns allowing the children to stick one hand inside the sack and describe what they feel. Without looking, allow them to smell inside the bag. Ask them questions like, “Tell me what the vegetable feels/smells like?” or “Does it feel like something we grew in our garden this summer?”

### What they learn:
By now the children should be able to recognize most of the vegetables that they’ve seen growing in the garden. This activity will require them to call on other senses to get information and reinforce the classroom-garden connection.
Materials List:
- Chart paper
- Marker

Purpose:
To tie together all the themes of the month with a fun song about harvesting in the fall!

Instructions:
Copy the words to the poem and teach them to your children. You can add movements to the words to work their gross motor skills or sing the song outdoors while you rake leaves!

What they learn:
By this time the children should know what you mean by “harvest” but this fun song should re-enforce that connection.

“Autumn leaves”
(sung to the tune of “London Bridges”)

“Autumn leaves are falling down, falling down, falling down, Autumn leaves are falling down, welcome Autumn.

Sweep the leaves and put them here, put them here, put them here, Sweep the leaves and put them here, welcome Autumn.

Jump right in and have some fun, have some fun, have some fun, Jump right in and have some fun, welcome autumn.”
Fall Unit  Circle-Time Activities Menu

“Harvesting for Health”

October Theme

“Cooking and Eating”

**Week 1:** Let’s talk about kitchen safety!
Why is hand washing important? What are the steps to hand washing?
What can you do to help in the kitchen?
What are some things that are off limits to children in the kitchen?
Read “Germs are Not for Sharing” by Elizabeth Verdick and Marieka Heirilen

**Week 2:** How do you prepare vegetables to be eaten?
Why are vegetables important in our diet?
How do you choose healthy food items?
What kind of utensils do you use to eat a (insert food item)?
Read “Germs are Not for Sharing” by Elizabeth Verdick and Marieka Heirilen

**Week 3:** How do you read a recipe?
What were your favorite vegetables that we grew in the garden?
What kinds of things can we make with our vegetables?
How do you know what is in what you’re eating? Let’s talk about food labels!
Read “In the Kitchen” by Susan Canizares and Betsey Chessen

**Week 4:** What is your favorite part about cooking?
Tell me your favorite thing to do in the kitchen
Bring in a picture of your kitchen
Why are vegetables important in our diet?
Read “In the Kitchen” by Susan Canizares and Betsey Chessen
October “Cooking and Eating”

Background for Teachers

This month you will be focusing on two very fun topics… cooking and eating! The first couple of weeks will focus on places we can cook and eat, like home or at restaurants. You will work with your children on concepts like kitchen safety and how important it is. The last couple of weeks will be all about cooking projects and will be filled with fun recipes. Your teacher guide will take a slightly different format for weeks 3 and 4 and you will have a new cooking project each day!

Monthly Goals

This month your goals should be simple; have fun, be safe, and try new things! Remember that you are a role model for the children in your class and demonstrating good safety practices when cooking is very important. It is also important to encourage the children to try the items they’ve helped prepare. Remember that the ways that the children can be involved vary by development, but all children should be able to help with some aspect of the cooking project. Cooking is a great way to encourage expression and creativity. Be mindful not to discourage their efforts! Below are some of the benefits of cooking with children… feel free to share these with your children’s parents!

- Children learn new words like “whisk”, “knead”, “spatula”, and “grater”.
- Children learn language concepts from the words in a recipe.
- Children learn social skills as they plan, prepare, and eat food together.
- Children learn math concepts like: half, a tablespoon full, and three minutes.
- Children gain science knowledge through observing, investigating, and predicting.
- Children learn social studies as they explore what food is used in different cultures.
- Children develop small muscles as they squeeze and stir.
- Children learn about nutrition and safety, too!

When you get to weeks 3 and 4 of this month, be sure that you are taking the time to explain the procedures to the children and allowing them to assist in any way they can. You may want to make a photocopy of the page and have the children “read” along with you the different steps. This will help them understand the concept of following a recipe. Some of the ways you can involve the kids are: allowing them to take turns stirring and mixing (even if it has already been stirred) and pausing at crucial times during the preparation to allow for special helpers! Also, these recipes can be modified and additional vegetables can be added, based on the type of vegetables you grew and harvested! Remember, your main goal is to inspire the children to learn and try new things so even if there’s something in the recipe you don’t think they’ll like, try it!
Dear Family,

This month’s theme is “Cooking and Eating” and is the second focus of our fall unit, “Harvesting for Health.” This month is sure to be a hit with your preschooler! During the first few weeks we will be learning about safety in and around the kitchen, which includes a weeklong focus on hand washing! Please help reinforce these ideas at home and role model good health habits for your children. Then we will be doing some cooking of our own! The end of the month will be filled with fun new recipes that use the items we’ve grown in our garden!

Happy Cooking!

Your Child’s Teacher

At home CONNECTION
Food safety can be a big concern, even at home. Because children under four years of age lack muscle control to chew and swallow very well, it is important to avoid sticky, slippery, round, and hard to chew foods. Avoid foods that could cause choking for children under six years of age: popcorn, hard candy, spoonfuls of peanut butter, marshmallows, nuts, seeds, peanuts, fish with bones, raw peas, whole grapes, raw carrot pieces or whole, ice cubes, dried fruit, large chunks of meat, or hot dogs.

Here are some ways to make foods safer: cut hotdogs lengthwise and into small pieces; mix applesauce with peanut butter and serve on crackers rather than bread; grate carrots into small pieces; and cut grapes in half lengthwise before serving to children.
Materials List:
- Variety of wooden blocks from your block learning center
- Two copies of the “hand washing steps” poster found on the following page
- Scissors
- Clear contact paper

Purpose:
To introduce the steps to effective hand washing to the children in a fun way.

Instructions:
Make a copy of the poster on the following page. Cut the steps out and cover them with clear contact paper and attach them to the blocks. Review the steps with the children and display another copy in your classroom. Place the blocks in the block-learning center. Encourage the children to sequence the blocks according to what step precedes another. Ask open-ended questions like “Why is it important to turn off the faucet with a paper towel?”

What they learn:
If you introduce a concept to the children and then allow them to work through it using something tangible (something they can touch and feel) they will likely grasp the concepts quicker.
Handwashing Steps

1. Wet
2. Soap
3. Wash
4. Rinse
5. Dry
6. Turn off water with paper towel
**Materials List:**
- Mud
- Paper
- Hand washing steps poster found on the previous page

**Purpose:**
To practice the hand washing steps

**Instructions:**
Have the children get “dirty” by participating in this finger-painting activity. Then have them wash their hands following the steps found on the poster on the previous page.

**What they learn:**
Because most germs that can harm us cannot be seen with our eyes, children often don’t understand why it is important to wash their hands so often. This activity will clearly show them that their hands are “dirty” and need to be washed and provide a great opportunity to reinforce the hand washing steps before the children do any food preparation!
Safe Kitchen Sort

Materials List:
- A variety of items that are commonly found in a kitchen (can be real items but make sure that they are not plugged in/do not have batteries, are not sharp, etc.)*
- A variety of items that are not commonly found in a kitchen*
- Large buckets or bins

Purpose:
To see if the children can recognize items that should and should not be in a kitchen

Instructions:
Label the two buckets “safe” and “unsafe” and put them in the dramatic play learning center. Put the items in the center as well. Tell the children that you want them to sort the items into the two categories. Talk with them and ask open-ended questions about why certain items belong in a kitchen and why others don’t.

What they Learn:
With your help, the children should start to think about kitchen safety and how important it is.

*If you do not have access to these type of items you can use pictures or photographs
Measuring

Materials List:
- A variety of plastic measuring devices like measuring cups, spoons, etc.
- Water
- Large tub or water table
- Marker
- Chart paper

Purpose:
To introduce the concept of measuring in cooking.

Instructions:
Fill the tub or water table with lukewarm water. Have all participating children wash their hands before the activity to help prevent the spread of germs into the water. Place the clean, plastic measuring devices onto the table and encourage the children to dump and fill using the containers. Talk with them about the units of measuring and why they think it might be important to have just the right amount in a cooking activity. Observe their interactions with this activity and chart your observations. Place the chart in your classroom.

What they learn:
Introducing math concepts can be fun and exciting and the children should start to see why and how math and measurement fits into cooking!
Fall Unit “Harvesting for Health”
October Week 1 “Cooking and Eating”
Music and Movement

Wash, Wash, Wash Your Hands

Materials List:
• Marker
• Chart paper

Purpose:
To revisit the hand washing concepts from earlier in the week with a fun song!

Instructions:
Copy the words to the song on the chart paper and display it in your classroom. Teach the children the words and talk with them about why hand washing is so important.

What they learn:
If you consistently reinforce the concept the children are more likely to develop an understanding of it, which will hopefully lead to behavior change: more hand washing!

“Wash, Wash, Wash Your Hands”
(sung to the tune of "Row Row Row your Boat")

Wash, wash, wash your hands
Wash them nice and clean
Wash them on top,
Wash them on bottom and fingers in between.
Wash, wash, wash your hands
Wash them nice and clean
Wash them on top,
Wash them on bottom and fingers in between.

Remember to introduce a new raw vegetable for tasting this week!
Cooking Puzzles

Materials List:
- Pictures of people cooking from magazines, the internet, or photographs
- Clear contact paper
- Scissors (teachers only)

Purpose:
To reinforce kitchen and cooking safety

Instructions:
Cover both sides of the pictures with the contact paper. Cut large “puzzle” shapes out of the finished picture. Place the individual pieces in plastic baggies and put them in the block learning center. Encourage the children to put the puzzles together. Talk with them about what the people in the pictures are doing and whether they think the picture represents a safe behavior or not.

What they learn:
This simple activity should help the children “put together” the ideas that you’ve been talking about related to safe practices in the kitchen.
Cooking Collage

Materials List:
- Pictures of kitchen utensils, appliances, vegetables or people cooking in the kitchen
- Construction paper
- Glue

Purpose:
To encourage teamwork and increase fine motor skills

Instructions:
Place the pictures, paper, and glue in your art learning center encourage the children to work together and create a collage using the pictures. Be sure to provide enough for all the children who want to participate. Talk with them about the pictures they choose and what they think about what they see happening in the photograph.

What they learn:
Hopefully some of the pictures will be of familiar things to the children and they will see people and maybe even children like them doing fun things in the kitchen.
Healthy Kitchen

Materials List:
• Markers
• Poster board
• Play food items
• Chart paper

Purpose:
To create your very own play kitchen in the classroom and encourage creative thinking.

Instructions:
Create a colorful sign with the words “Healthy Kitchen” and hang it in a visible place near the dramatic play area. Make sure that there are plenty of play food items and ideally, a pretend kitchen set * in the area and encourage the children to “cook” different meals. Observe their behavior and interactions and record what you see on the chart paper, displaying it in your classroom.

What they learn:
This activity allows the children to take some of the concepts that you’ve introduced these last two weeks and use them in creative ways.

*if your classroom is not equipped with a play kitchen set, you can make your own with large boxes; cutting a fridge door and creating a stove and sink area too!
Materials List:

- Variety of unwashed vegetables, preferably picked from the outdoor garden
- Small tubs with cool, clean water
- Clean scrub brushes
- Towels

Purpose:
Since the cooking projects will start next week, it is important to talk with children about how to properly wash vegetables before cooking or eating them.

Instructions:
In small groups, allow the children to gently wash the vegetables in the cool water. Make sure all children have washed their own hands in the sink before starting this activity. Explain why you don't use soap with the vegetables like with our hands. Discuss with them their ideas for how to wash and prepare the vegetable items.

What they learn:
This activity is designed to teach children the importance of, as well as the correct way to wash vegetables.
Materials List:
• Chart paper
• Marker

Purpose:
To review the steps of vegetable preparation using a fun song!

Instructions:
Copy the words to the song on the chart paper and display it in your classroom. Teach the words to the children and sing it as a group.

What they learn:
Things that rhyme tend to be easier for children to remember and this fun song helps reinforce the important concepts of the last two weeks.

“The vegetable soup song”
(sung to the tune of “The Mulberry Bush”)

This is the way we wash our vegetables,
Wash our vegetables, wash our vegetables.
This is the way we wash our vegetables
So early in the morning.

(Continue with other verses, such as)

This is the way we peel our vegetables.
This is the way we chop our vegetables.
This is the way we add our vegetables.
This is the way we stir our vegetables.
This is the way we serve up our vegetables.
This is the way we eat our vegetables.
Ants on a Log

Ingredients:
• Celery from the garden
• Cream cheese or peanut butter
• Raisins

Supplies:
• Clean food preparation surface
• Plastic knives for child use
• Knife for teacher use

Instructions:
1. Have all children and teachers wash their hands
2. Cut the celery into 3 inch long pieces
3. Have children spread cream cheese onto the celery
4. Sprinkle with raisins
5. Enjoy!
Vegetable Soup

Ingredients:
- A variety of vegetables grown in the garden
- Vegetable or chicken stock (approximately 3 cans)
- 2 cans of stewed tomatoes
- Salt and pepper, herbs (optional)
- One clove of garlic (optional)

Supplies:
- Large pot
- Knife for teacher use
- Plastic knives for child use
- Clean food preparation surface
- Spoons to stir

Instructions:
1. Have all children and teachers wash their hands
2. Wash the vegetables
3. Cut them into bite sized pieces; allow children to help using plastic knives
4. Take turns “tossing” the cut vegetables into the large pot
5. Pour in the stock
6. Pour in the stewed tomatoes
7. Add salt and pepper to taste
8. Chop garlic into fine pieces and add to pot
9. Simmer on medium-low heat 30-45 minutes
10. Enjoy!
Garden Salsa

Ingredients:
- Vegetables grown in the garden or purchased in the store (onions, tomatoes, peppers, avocado, beans, etc.)
- Salt and pepper
- 2 cloves of garlic (optional)
- Fresh herbs (preferably grown in the garden) like parsley and basil
- ½ lemon or lime

Supplies:
- Large mixing bowl
- Knife for teacher use
- Plastic knives for child use
- Spoons to stir

Instructions:
1. Have all children and teachers wash their hands before beginning the activity.
2. Gently wash the vegetables.
3. Cut them into very small pieces.
4. Allow the children to help add the ingredients to the mixing bowl.
5. Gently mix all vegetables.
6. Add salt, garlic, and pepper to taste.
7. Squeeze the juice of ½ a lemon or lime.
8. Serve with pita bread, tortilla chips, or crackers and enjoy!
Zucchini Bread

**Ingredients:**
- 3 cups All purpose flour
- Salt
- 1 tsp. Baking soda
- 1 tsp. Baking powder
- 3 tsp. Ground cinnamon
- 3 Eggs
- 1 cup Vegetable oil
- 2 ¼ cups White sugar
- 3 tsp. Vanilla extract
- 2 cups Grated zucchini

**Supplies:**
- 2 8”x4” Pans
- Sieve
- 2 Mixing bowls
- Non-stick spray
- Electric mixer
- Grater
- Measuring cup and spoons

**Instructions:**
1. Grease and flour both pans.
2. Preheat oven to 325 degrees.
3. Sift flour, salt, baking powder, baking soda, and cinnamon together in mixing bowl.
4. Beat eggs, oil, vanilla, and sugar in another mixing bowl.
5. Add sifted ingredients to the creamed mixture and beat well.
6. Stir in zucchini until well combined.
7. Pour into prepared pans.
8. Bake for 40-60 minutes.
9. Cool in pan for 20 minutes.
10. Remove from pan gently, cool completely and enjoy!
Vegetable Juice

**Ingredients:**
- 10 Ripe tomatoes (should be about 5 pounds when chopped)
- ½ cup Water
- ¼ cup Chopped green pepper
- ¼ cup Chopped carrots
- ¼ cup Chopped celery
- ¼ cup Lemon juice
- Salt and pepper
- 2 tbs. Chopped onion

**Supplies:**
- Sieve
- Large pot
- Pitcher
- Knife for teacher use
- Plastic knives for child use
- Measuring spoons and measuring cup

**Instructions:**
1. Have all children and teachers wash their hands before beginning the activity.
2. Carefully wash and chop all ingredients.
3. Add all ingredients to large pot.
4. Bring to a boil and reduce heat.
5. Simmer for 30-40 minutes.
6. Cool.
7. Press mixture through the sieve and into a large pitcher.
8. Refrigerate until completely cooled.
9. Enjoy!
Veggie Pizza

**Ingredients:**
- 2 Packages refrigerated crescent rolls
- 2 Packages of cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup Mayonnaise
- 1 package Dry ranch dressing mix
- 1 cup Chopped fresh broccoli
- 1 cup Chopped fresh tomatoes
- 1 cup Chopped fresh green bell pepper
- 1 cup Chopped fresh cauliflower
- 1 cup Shredded fresh carrots
- 1 cup Shredded cheddar cheese

**Supplies:**
- Knife for teacher use
- Plastic knives for child use
- 9”x13” baking sheet
- Medium sized mixing bowl
- Spatulas for spreading

**Instructions:**
1. Have all children and teachers wash their hands before beginning the activity.
2. Carefully wash and chop all vegetables.
3. Roll out crescent dough on baking sheet, pinching the edges together to form a pizza-like crust.
4. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
5. Bake crust for 12 minutes in preheated oven.
6. Remove from oven and allow to cool.
7. Combine cream cheese, mayonnaise, and dry ranch dressing in mixing bowl. Spread the mixture over the cooled crust.
8. Arrange vegetables and cheddar cheese on cream cheese layer.
9. Allow to chill for one hour.
10. Serve and enjoy!
**Ingredients:**
- 20 ounces Cooked or canned chickpeas, drained
- 1 tbs. Peanut butter or 1/3 cup tahini (sesame butter)
- ¼ cup Lemon juice
- ¼ cup Water
- 2-3 cloves Garlic
- 1-2 tbs. Olive oil

**Supplies:**
- Blender
- Mixing bowl

**Instructions:**
1. Blend the first 5 ingredients in the blender until mixture is a smooth paste.
2. Slowly add olive oil.
3. Pour into the mixing bowl and chill.
4. Serve with pita bread, raw vegetables from the garden, or crackers and enjoy!
Ingredients:
• Lettuce
• Tomatoes
• Carrots
• Cucumbers
• Turkey breast slices
• Wheat bread
• Sliced cheese

Supplies:
• Straws
• Knife for teacher use
• Plastic knives for child use

Instructions:
1. Have all children and teachers wash their hands before beginning the activity
2. Gently wash and cut vegetables into bite sized pieces
3. Tear the turkey slices and cheese slices in half and fold over
4. Cut bread slices into small pieces
5. Poke the vegetables, bread, cheese and turkey onto the straw, creating a kabob
6. Enjoy this deconstructed sandwich!
Broccoli Forest

Ingredients:
• ¼ cup light sour cream
• ⅓ cup mayonnaise
• ½ tsp. Sugar
• 1 tbs. Lemon juice
• 1 tbs. Chopped fresh basil
• 1 head fresh broccoli
• 4 carrots

Supplies:
• mixing bowl
• knife for teacher use
• plastic knives for child use
• plate

Instructions:
1. Prepare the dip by mixing the sour cream, mayonnaise, sugar, lemon juice, and basil in a medium sized mixing bowl
2. Gently wash vegetables and cut carrot in half widthwise and then lengthwise into four pieces.
3. Cut broccoli into florets, reserving the stems
4. Assemble on plate by laying three carrot pieces side by side for a trunk and broccoli florets as the leaves
5. Spread dip under the trunks for the forest floor
6. Enjoy!
**Ingredients:**
- 6 flour tortillas
- 1 package cream cheese, softened
- 4 ounces fresh basil
- 1 cup chopped fresh tomatoes
- 12 leaves of lettuce
- 1 bell pepper

**Supplies:**
- Knife for teacher use
- Plastic knives for child use
- Spatulas for spreading
- Large serving dish
- Tooth picks

**Instructions:**
1. Have all children and teachers wash their hands before participating in activity.
2. Gently wash and chop vegetables
3. Spread cream cheese onto tortillas
4. Layer the lettuce leaves on the cream cheese
5. Scatter the chopped peppers, tomatoes, and basil
6. Gently roll up tortilla
7. Place tooth picks in four evenly spaced sections of rolled up tortilla
8. Cut into sections
9. Place on dish and chill for 1 hour
10. Enjoy!
Fall Unit  Circle-Time Activities Menu

“Harvesting for Health”

November Theme

“Get Moving”

**Week 1:**
- Why is it important to exercise?
- What type of movement can we do in the garden?
- Let’s talk about energy! Where does it come from?
- How does what you eat influence how you feel?
- Read “Get up and Go!” by Nancy Carlson
- Vegetable Tasting

**Week 2:**
- How do you take care of your body?
- Where can you be active?
- Bring in a picture of yourself/your family doing something active
- Let’s talk about heart rate!
- Read “Get up and Go!” by Nancy Carlson
- Vegetable Tasting

**Week 3:**
- Why is stretching important?
- How can we make exercising fun?
- How strong are you? Let’s talk about muscles!
- What do you need to grow big like the plants in our garden?
- Read “Alexander and the Great Food Fight” by Linda J. Hawkins
- Vegetable Tasting

**Week 4:**
- Let’s talk about vitamins!
- Why are vegetables important in our diet?
- How can we be active together?
- Let’s see how much we’ve grown!
- Read “Alexander and the Great Food Fight” by Linda J. Hawkins
- Vegetable Tasting
November “Get Moving”

Background for Teachers
This month you will be focusing on physical activity. Did you know that just 30 minutes of gardening burns off about 130 calories? Well there are many ways and many reasons to get active and this month you will go on an active adventure with your class! Physical activity is very important to our health and children as young as 3 need to learn the benefits of an active lifestyle.

Monthly Goals
This month your goal is to really focus on creative ways that children and adults can be active and healthy. Although children are generally more active than adults, it is important to instill in them an understanding of why physical activity is good for them. Even small, mundane tasks in the classroom can be “teachable moments” and you should take advantage of them. For example, if you are watering the indoor plants, talk about the stretching that’s involved in the lifting of the watering can. Take time out to explain the importance of movement.

Be aware of important physical milestones for preschoolers

36 months:  Balance momentarily on one foot
              Walk on tiptoes

36-40 months:  Run
               Put on shoes
               Run at an even pace
               Walk backwards
               Turn and stop well

40 months:  Dress self
             Hold pencil or crayon to draw figures

40-48 months:  Pedal or steer a wheeled toy
                 Stand on one foot for 5 seconds
Dear Family,

This month’s theme is “Get Moving” and is the final theme in our Fall Unit, “Harvesting for Health.” This month we will focus on why physical activity is important in our lives and learn some really easy ways to be active. We’ve been exercising all summer without even knowing it… in the garden! Not only will we explore some of the great ways that our garden helps us stay physically active, but we will think of some other ways to move our bodies and get our heart rates up!

Your children will be learning about vitamins and where they come from, what a heart rate is, and how being active helps improve our overall health! We invite you to join us this month in our exploration of health and encourage you to continue to role model positive healthy behaviors at home.

Happy Moving!

Your Child’s Teacher

**At home CONNECTION**

Did you know that gardening is a lot more than a valuable hobby or a way to have fresh vegetables and salads? Research is showing that gardening is an ideal form of exercise because, in addition to its physical exertion values, it also has many other merits. Gardening is moderate, and sometimes strenuous, exercise that incorporates many important elements of accepted exercise regimes, such as stretching and stance, repetition and movement, and even resistance principles similar to weight training, while expending calories. Gardening provides an adequate and challenging workout, but is not as stressful to the body as other exercise options, such as jogging or aerobics. It is still important to warm up muscle groups by properly stretching before gardening and is imperative to use proper techniques for lifting objects, bending, or carrying. Also, unlike many exercise options, you can become involved in what you are doing and still take time to smell the roses!
Ways to Be Active Sort

Materials List:
• Pictures of people and children doing active things (running, stretching, dancing, climbing, walking, etc.)
• Pictures of people doing inactive things (reading, watching TV, sleeping)

Purpose:
To engage children in a discussion of what it means to be active and help them visualize and decipher between active and non-active behaviors.

Instructions:
Put the pictures in your block learning center. Instruct the children that they should look at the pictures and decide which ones are of active behaviors and which ones are of inactive behaviors. Encourage the children to sort them in groups. Ask open-ended questions like “in what way do you think that person is being active?”

What they learn:
Working their hand-eye coordination will be an essential skill for this activity. Classifying and sorting objects or pictures are an important mastery skills.
Activity Collage

Materials List:
- Pictures from magazines of people being active in different ways
- Glue
- Chart paper

Purpose:
Exposing the children to as much visual stimulation as possible to reinforce the idea of physical activity will be key in helping them grasp the concepts.

Instructions:
Place the materials in the art center and encourage children to create a collage using the pictures. Talk openly with them about their thoughts and ask them how they can be physically active like the people in the pictures.

What they learn:
Seeing pictures in conjunction with good role modeling by you will help encourage the children to move physically.
Materials List:
• Appropriate outerwear for the children

Purpose:
To help the children maintain the connection with the outdoor garden space and think about ways in which gardening encourages physical activity!

Instructions:
Take the children outside to the garden area and revisit it. As you move around the area, think of and demonstrate ways in which the garden encourages physical activity, such as digging, lifting, raking, watering, bending to plant and pick, etc. Practice these movements deliberately with the children.

What they learn:
The children will remember doing most of these activities earlier this season when there was gardening work to be done so they should be familiar with these movements and their purpose. It is important to explain that what they’ve been doing all spring and summer is actually good physical activity!
Materials List:
- Diagram on the following page
- Markers or crayons
- Chart paper

Purpose:
As children are learning about getting healthy, it is important to provide them with a basic understanding of the human body.

Instructions:
Copy enough of the diagram on the following page for each child to have one. Talk with the children about the parts of the body that are being shown. Talk about what function those parts serve. Allow the children to color their worksheet. Write each child’s name on the worksheet and display it in the classroom. Write down things that the children say during your open-ended conversations with them on the chart paper and display this in the same area of your room—ideally in your science learning center!

What they learn:
This simple activity allows the young children to gain a basic understanding of the internal function of their bodies and why keeping it healthy is so important!
Shake My Sillies Out

Materials List:
• Chart paper
• Marker
• Large area for movement

Purpose:
To get the children moving!

Instructions:
Copy down the lyrics to this Raffi song and display it in your classroom. Teach the words and movements to your children and have fun!

What they learn:
Repetition is a key element for early learning. Repeating the chorus of this song will help them recall it.

Shake My Sillies Out

"I'm going to shake, shake, shake my sillies out
Shake, shake, shake my sillies out
Shake, shake, shake my sillies out
Wiggle my waggles away!

I'm going to clap, clap, clap my crazies out
Clap, clap, clap my crazies out
Clap, clap, clap my crazies out
Wiggle my waggles away!

I'm going to jump, jump, jump my jiggles out
Jump, jump, jump my jiggles out
Jump, jump, jump my jiggles out
Wiggle my waggles away!

I'm going to yawn, yawn, yawn my sleepies out
Yawn, yawn, yawn my sleepies out
Yawn, yawn, yawn my sleepies out
Wiggle my waggles away!

Remember to introduce a new raw vegetable for tasting this week!
Vegetable Block Bowling

Materials List:
• 3-10 empty boxes (preferably tissue boxes or saltine cracker boxes)
• Newspaper
• Packing tape
• Pictures of vegetables grown in the garden
• Small rubber ball

Purpose:
To show the children that fun, physical activity can occur anywhere and with most anything!

Instructions:
Stuff the empty boxes with the newspaper and using the packing tape, secure them shut. Attach the pictures to the front of the boxes. Set up the boxes in a triangle format and encourage the children to “bowl” for vegetables by knocking the blocks down with the ball.

What they learn:
Kids really enjoy stacking the blocks more than rolling the ball, as they try to make it difficult for the bowler to knock all the blocks down. Also, this activity allows the children to bowl for some very familiar items that they grew in the garden! By allowing all the children to participate in different ways, you are also encouraging team building skills!
Materials List:
• Large paper (flip chart paper, butcher paper, etc.)
• Markers, crayons, paints
• Tape

Purpose:
The children will enjoy a new way to explore with art materials and their muscles will exercise in a way that develops and improves fine motor skills.

Instructions:
Tape the paper to a flat wall in your classroom, slightly higher than the children's eye level. Encourage the children to reach up as they decorate the paper. Encourage them to draw or paint things relevant to their garden. Ask a lot of open-ended questions and supervise closely to make sure that they keep their artwork on the paper!

What they learn:
When children hold a marker, paint brush or other instrument against a vertical surface, extra muscles in the wrist and hand are strengthened — muscles that don’t get exercise when they write on a table or other horizontal surface.
Materials List:

- Large area for movement

Purpose:
Imagination makes this fitness walk a fun adventure for children to explore. For indoors or outdoors, this movement activity requires no equipment but provides great benefits for fitness and creative thinking skills.

Instructions:
Lead the children on a fitness adventure walk. Between each “place”, pause and allow the children time to “explore.” Start with things like “Today we are going to imagine that we are…” and “As we’re walking through the crowds, make sure you don’t bump into anyone (weave your body back and forth)…” You can “take” the children anywhere you want to go!

What they learn:
The children will enjoy an imaginary walk that takes them up and down mountains, through and over water and around obstacles. This activity builds their imaginations and encourages physical activity!
Materials List:
- Space large enough for all children to sit in a group
- Table
- Cotton balls
- Straws

Purpose:
Understanding how breathing works will enable the children to identify times when their breath is more rapid due to increased physical activity! This fun activity will expand on the concepts!

Instructions:
Ask the children to breathe in and out with you. Have them notice the chest and belly moving and the soft feel of air passing from the nose. Encourage them to listen for the quiet sounds of breathing in and out. Then, one or two at a time, allow the children to place a cotton ball at one end of a table and blow through the straw towards the cotton ball. Watch as the power of their breath moves the cotton ball down the length of the table!

What they learn:
This basic introduction to breathing will hopefully lead to many open-ended questions and discussions between you and the children as you continue with your lessons on movement and health. In addition, the children will be learning about resistance and force — how much force it takes to blow the cotton ball off the table.
Materials List:
- Crepe paper streamers
- Dowel rods
- Pictures of vegetables from magazines or photographs

Purpose:
This lively dance activity uses ribbons or streamers to keep children fit indoors. Ribbon and streamer dancing is a fun indoor fitness activity that keeps them moving, twirling, leaping, jumping, swaying and more.

Instructions:
Attach crepe paper streamers to ends of dowel rods. Attach the pictures of the vegetables to the ends of the streamers. Talk with the children about the pictures as you help them make them. Turn on your choice of music and encourage the children to dance and twirl using their vegetable streamers!

What they learn:
If you change the music and alternate between fast and slow, quiet and loud, or even on and off, you can increase the difficulty and build coordination skills.
Balance Beam

Materials List:
- A variety of wooden blocks from your block center
- An area big enough for movement

Purpose:
Balance and coordination are important skills for young children.

Instructions:
Encourage the children to construct a balance beam out of the wooden blocks. It can be straight or curved and any length you prefer. Allow the children to walk the beam one at a time and talk with them about what it means to have balance.

What they learn:
The children will be able to exercise their muscles with this fun, simple, team-building activity!
Footprint Garden

Materials List:
- A variety of washable paints or finger paints in colors that match those of vegetables commonly found in the garden
- Large piece of paper (butcher paper works well)
- Paint trays
- Tape

Purpose:
To create a garden with your feet!

Instructions:
Pour the paint into the paint trays and place the paper on the floor (inside or out), securing the corners with tape. Encourage the children one at a time to step into the paint barefoot and move down the length of the paper in any way they choose (running, skipping, tip-toeing, walking, hopping, etc.) to create a beautiful garden. Some children could make the vegetables and others, the sky… all with their feet!

What they learn:
This activity is a great way to encourage movement and physical activity while also creating a beautiful piece of artwork!
Fall Unit “Harvesting for Health”
November Week 3
“Get Moving”
Dramatic Play

This is the Way We...
Plant, Pick, Pull!

Materials List:
• Large space for movement

Purpose:
To revisit all the ways that gardening encourages physical activity through pretend play.

Instructions:
Tell the children that you are going to pretend to garden with them. Gather the children in a large space and lead them in the movements that go along with the song.

What they learn:
This activity will help children learn the steps to gardening.

“This is the way”

“This is the way we plant the seeds, plant the seeds, plant the seeds (bend down and pretend to throw and spread seeds)

This is the way we plant the seeds, so early in the morning!”

Repeat with other verses…

Cover the seeds
Water the seeds
Pick the vegetables
Pull the plants
How Fast Can You Go?

Materials List:
- Stop watch
- Chart paper
- Marker

Purpose:
To encourage children to move rapidly for short periods of time to get their heart rate up!

Instructions:
One at a time, encourage the children to do some sort of movement and time them using the stop watch to see how long they moved. Record their name, type of movement, and time on the chart paper. You could reverse the activity and tell the children to move for a certain allotted amount of time.

What they learn:
This activity will lend itself to discussing physical activity and heart rate, as well as introduce some math and time concepts.
Vegetable Relay

Materials List:
• Real or plastic root vegetables (carrot, zucchini, etc.); enough for each group of children
• Space large enough for movement

Purpose:
To engage the children in a team game!

Instructions:
Divide the children into small groups of 2 or 3. Explain to them the concept of a relay race. Allow the teams to pick their team vegetable. Encourage the children to run the relay, handing the vegetable off at each interchange.

What they learn:
This activity will require practice for the children to grasp the concept, but is sure to be fun! They will learn team-building skills, cooperation, and get their bodies moving!
Build a Greenhouse

Materials List:
- A variety of wood pieces
- Child-safe tools
- Pictures of greenhouses (found in magazines or online)

Purpose:
Allowing the children to build is a great way for them to explore and learn about math.

Instructions:
Talk to the children about what a greenhouse is and what function it serves. Then encourage the children to explore the materials in the blocks and building area of your classroom. Observe how they use the tools and materials.

What they learn:
Exploring these materials freely will allow the children to become fully engaged in the learning. By adding information about greenhouses they will begin to understand their function in gardening!
Materials List:
• Small containers for gathering leaves
• Leaves gathered from outside
• Paint
• Paper
• Paint trays or plates

Purpose:
In this activity the children will be involved in all steps of the preparation, including gathering the leaves!

Instructions:
Go on a nature walk with your children and encourage them to gather up leaves that have fallen from surrounding trees. Encourage them to reach, bend, and stretch as they gather. Once inside, encourage the children to press the leaves into paint that has been poured onto trays and make prints of the leaves onto the paper. Encourage the children to tell you about their experience and record what they say about the gathering of the leaves on the paper. Display the finished artwork in your classroom.

What they learn:
Exposing children to nature and allowing them to use natural items for indoor exploration allows them to increase their environmental awareness.
Materials List:
• Outdoor space that preferably has ledges or steps

Purpose:
Children in your classroom may know what some people do when they go to the gym, they might even be able to imitate someone they know exercising! In this activity, you will exercise with your children as if you were in a gym or fitness center, but using steps or ledges that you can find in your outdoor space or playground.

Instructions:
Encourage the children to “work out” with you in your outdoor gym! Remember to dress appropriately for outdoor activity!

What they learn:
Not all exercise has to take place in a gym!
Growing Like Weeds!

Materials List:
• Tape measure
• Marker
• Chart paper
• Tape

Purpose:
All summer and fall the children have been planting and harvesting their gardens. Part of that process has likely involved weeding the garden space. In this activity, the goal is to make the connection between how plants and weeds grow and how we grow!

Instructions:
Attach the chart paper to a wall in your classroom using tape. You could draw a vine plant “growing” up the side of it if you wanted to. Then measure the children in inches and write their names next to the line marking their height. Leave this growth chart up all winter and then re-measure the children in the springtime. As new children enter your classroom, be sure to mark their height on the growth chart!

What they learn:
This fun activity will help the children learn about growth. It is also a great way to show the children that you value them and their uniqueness.
Materials List:
• Large space for movement

Purpose:
To reinvent the old favorite, “Duck, Duck, Goose!”

Instructions:
Gather children in a circle and explain how to play the classic game of “Duck, Duck, Goose!” Explain to them that this time you will be playing “Carrot, Carrot, Beet!” and the object is still the same.

What they learn:
This game has been loved by children for many years and is a great team building and cooperation based activity. In this fun twist, adding vegetable names should help reinforce the importance of our special vegetables!