New Resources for Nutrition Educators

CURRICULUM


This nutrition-based curriculum introduces students to the fundamentals of healthy food choices, using the Nutrition Facts label as the starting point.—US Food and Drug Administration

With competing priorities and core subject demands, integrating nutrition education into science and other subjects creates the opportunity to fit in important nutrition lessons without overwhelming teachers. Science and Our Food Supply: Using the Nutrition Facts Label to Make Healthy Food Choices complements the US Food and Drug Administration’s previous food safety-focused curriculum.¹

This next edition focuses on food labels, with a version for middle school classes and 1 for high school classes. This curriculum combines scientific concepts with details on how to read nutrition labels effectively, as well as basic nutrition knowledge. The curriculum creates a foundation of nutrition understanding and skills through a variety of media including lessons supported with a teacher guide, activities, videos, and resources for more learning. This partnership project between the Food and Drug Administration and the National Science Teachers Association used nutrition educators and classroom teachers from family and consumer science, health, biology, and other related subjects to create a comprehensive and user-friendly curriculum that was also validated through classroom testing.

The authors thoughtfully evaluated curriculum standards and the Common Core for teachers to overlap this resource easily with state and local requirements for their classrooms. Modules in this curriculum align science and health standards with current popular topics in which students are interested, including eating out, cooking at home, and making good food choices.

Students learn science while gaining important skills for their own life when shopping, cooking, or planning meals. This comprehensive curriculum thinks of every need a teacher should consider, from background information to exact timing and advanced preparation and ready-to-print handouts. It is a one-stop shop to execute high-quality classroom activities that will engage students. This could become the foundation for a series of classes or provide fill-in activities within science classes as well as food, cooking, and health classes. It is filled with an abundance of other resources to which teachers and students can go for further research and investigation.

Module 1 provides an overview of the Nutrition Facts and explains the nutrients declared on packaging. Module 2 explores nutrients about which students should be aware and nutrients to limit in drinks and snack foods, including sugar and sodium. There are hands-on activities to evaluate popular foods and personal behaviors. Module 3 encourages nutrients to increase with healthy meal-planning concepts. Module 4 identifies different types of fats, and module 5 includes skills for healthy eating out.

The lessons provide skills that students (and teachers) can use every day to maintain a healthy lifestyle or pursue fitness goals.

Schools lack sufficient nutrition education, whereas research links how healthy eating habits in students correlate to positive outcomes at school and into adulthood.² This curriculum can help teachers fill the gap. With the new Nutrition Facts panel as well as menu labeling that is included, this is a great resource.
currently being implemented, this curriculum prepares middle and high school students to navigate their food world effectively with knowledge and empowerment. Learning to read nutrition labels through these lessons can become an important tool for students to make a lifetime of healthy food choices.

Nicole Turner-Ravana, MS, Strategic Nutrition Communications, PO Box 1283 CO, Fort Collins, CO 80522

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jneb.2018.02.013


REFERENCE

JNEB’s Research Awards @SNEB Annual Conference

Sunday, July 22 | 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Join us for presentations from the recipients of the Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior’s Best Article and Best GEM Awards at the SNEB Annual Conference.

All are welcome to attend.