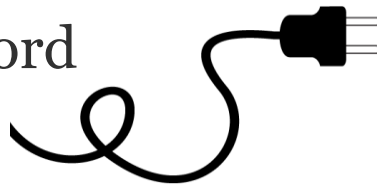


The Extension Cord



Health and Human Sciences

March & April 2024

Hello,

March brings the first day of spring, and with it another busy season. Soon the weather will be warm and stay warm and we will be planting gardens, flowers, corn, soybeans, and more. This issue is jam packed with information for eating on the go, reviewing a budget, upcoming programming, and tips for reading to children.

-Jessica Riffle

National Nutrition Month

“Beyond the Table” is this year’s National Nutrition Month Theme. Every March the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics celebrates food, nourishment, and people. The focus this year, addresses the farm-to-fork aspect of nutrition. Encouraging people to learn more about a variety of topics like; food production and distribution, navigating grocery stores and farmers markets, and home food safety and storage practices. It also highlights the various ways we eat — not only around a dinner table, but also on the go, in schools and restaurants, at games and events.

Think about how often you, your family, and people you know eat beyond the table. We are generally a society frequently on the run. Often that means looking for fast, easy, and good-tasting foods that fit a busy lifestyle. I encourage you to work to make smart choices, even when you’re away from the table.

First, try to think ahead and plan your on-the-go meals. This may mean looking at the week’s schedule and noticing late meetings or events 3 nights this week. If the event requires travel, look ahead at restaurants near-by and choose one with a wider menu selection or that offers a few healthier choices. Menu items that are baked, braised, broiled, grilled, roasted, or steamed are often healthier choices. The batter-fried, pan-fried, buttered, creamed, and breaded items are usually higher in saturated fat and should be chosen less frequently and in smaller portions.

Secondly, think about the start of your meal. The chips or bread baskets that come ‘free’ at some restaurants make it easy to mindlessly crunch before more nourishing entrees arrive. If self-control is a challenge, then don’t be afraid to ask the server to hold off bringing bread or chips until the rest of the meal is delivered. Maybe you prefer a soup or salad starter. This can help increase the amount of vegetables during mealtime.

Appetizers can also be used in place of a main course dish. Avoid super-sizing and stick to regular or even child-size portions. The much larger portions are probably more than needed. Don’t forget that entrees can be shared. You can plan to split an appetizer and entrée, entree only, or a sweet treat at the end of a meal. If traveling or eating alone, save the other half and take it home for another meal.



Lastly, don't be afraid to ask for swaps. For example, ask for a baked potato or side salad in place of fries, no bacon on your sandwich, and for sauces to be served on the side. This helps you control what and how much you eat.

For more specific ideas and tips regarding healthy eating on the run, visit eatright.org and view the National Nutrition Month resources.

Work to Make Your Own Pot of Gold

As one story goes, a leprechaun was pulled out with the last carrot of a couple farmers in Ireland. The leprechaun was dangling from the roots and promised the couple one wish in exchange for his freedom. The husband and his wife struggled to decide on one single wish and began wishing for anything and everything. Items like tools, jewelry, and a new house were listed until the leprechaun interrupted them. The leprechaun was disappointed, discouraged, and disheartened by their greed and told them they could have all they wished for if they could find his pot of gold hidden at the end of the rainbow. With that, the leprechaun escaped the farmers and left them to chase rainbows forever, looking for the imaginary fortune.



The leprechaun's story remains as a reminder that relying on luck, magic, and greed can lead to disaster when building financial stability. Time and resources can be wasted when looking for the "quick fix" or "pot of gold" rather than working hard and making strategic financial plans.

A simple monthly budget can be a good first step when setting your sights on a new savings goal. Like I tell third graders when teaching Captain Cash, it's easier to save money when you have a goal. For them, it could be a new bike or new shoes. Adult may have their sights on a new car, down payment for a home, or building retirement funds. Regardless, start by noting your savings goal. What am I saving for and how much do I need to save?

Next, determine your monthly income. This can include wages, salary, tips, investment income, government benefits and more. Sometimes income can vary. It may be helpful when building a monthly budget to average three months income to create a more consistent income to plan from.

Monthly expenses could also be averaged for three months as you continue to plan towards your saving goal. A few examples of expenses are:

- Home- rent, mortgage, utilities, internet, cable
- Debt- loans, credit cards
- Food- groceries, restaurants, deliveries
- Transportation- fuel, insurance, maintenance, public transportation
- Family- child care, child support, tuition, school supplies, activities, toys, clothing, allowances
- Health- medical providers, medication, insurance, personal care items, gym memberships
- Entertainment- events, subscriptions, music, games, cell phones
- Miscellaneous- gifts, pet food, pet care, other supplies
- Anything you're already saving for- retirement, emergency fund, child's education, etc.

When you subtract monthly expenses and monthly savings from your average monthly income, you find the dollar amount left over and available to put towards the new savings goal. By

taking the total amount of your savings goal and dividing it by the amount of money you hope to save each month, you'll find how many months it will take to accumulate the total dollars.

If you don't work best on paper, set up an automatic transfer from your checking to savings account after determining the average amount you can realistically spend. Be consistent to create your own "pot of gold."

Upcoming HHS Programming

Date	When	Where	What
March 6	8:30 am	Fulton County Fairgrounds	ServSafe Manager's Training
March 7	10:00 am	Miami County Fairgrounds	Spring Leader Lessons- EH
March 20	11:00 am	Kewanna Public Library	Heart Health Part 2
April 4	8:30 am	Wabash, Indiana	ServSafe Manager's Training
April 17	11:00 am	Kewanna Public Library	TBD
April 29- May 2		Kendallville, Indiana	Master Home Food Preservation

Mastering Home Food Preservation Workshop

Community Learning Center
401 E. Diamond St.
Kendallville, IN 46755

Training

April 30 - May 3, 2024
 9 AM - 5 PM EST

Online
 Registration

<https://cvent.me/yywPm2>

Valuable Resources, In-depth Lectures, Interactive Discussions,
 Hands-on Practice, Take Home Products

USDA Home Food Preservation recommended procedures are taught.
 Instructors will provide instructional course work and preservation labs.

TOPICS COVERED

- Food Safety
- Boiling Water Canning
- Pressure Canning
- Pickling & Fermenting
- Freezing & Dehydrating
- Jams and Jellies

REGISTER EARLY!

Register Online: <https://cvent.me/yywPm2>

Cost: \$275.00

**Mastering Home Food Preservation
 Notebook Included.**

Contact: *Abigail Creigh*

260-636-2111; creigh@purdue.edu
 for additional details.



Extension - Health and
 Human Sciences

FOOD PRESERVATION

An Equal Access/Equal Opportunity University

Dialogic Reading

Do you have small children around? Have you thought about volunteering at your local library or with youth groups? You may have an opportunity to help kids expand their reading and language skills!

We know reading is beneficial from an early age, but did you know there are multiple styles of reading? Dialogic Reading simply means using children's books in interactive ways to have a "dialogue" or conversations with young children. Research confirms this technique encourages and supports a variety of children's school readiness skills. There are four types of questions that help build dialogue and conversations.

1. **Specific questions** are often word questions using what, where, when, and how. A simple place to start is to focus on colors, numbers, and shapes for preschoolers. How many ducks are in the pond? What color is the barn? Be conscious to ask questions that encourage kids to produce words. Yes and no answers could be provided by moving their heads and where questions could be answered by pointing at the page.
2. **Open ended questions** help us learn what the child is interested in and what they want to focus on. What do you see here? What's your favorite part? What is happening here? These types of questions help build interest in reading. It can also begin building leadership and ownership as they spend time talking about what they find interesting. Chances are, children are going to notice something that we don't as adults. Embrace where the conversation leads.
3. **Remember and predict questions** focus on beginning, middle, and end. They help children recognize patterns and understand what stories are about. What do you think this book is going to be about? What happened earlier in the story? How did we get here? What do you think is going to happen? These questions can even be asked before opening the book for the first time. Read the title, look at the cover illustration, and begin making predictions. Your response should be positive, encouraging a "let's find out" mentality! This gives an impression that books are a place where we can find things out and learn something new.
4. **Linking questions** help make connections between the book we are reading to the child's life. They help to find points of relevance, build perspective, and form comparisons. How does it connect to their world? If this was you, what would you do? Do you ever draw with crayons? Where do you use them? Do you share them with anyone? What do you like to draw with crayons? Learning happens when we can make things relevant and concrete and its best when we can work off their experiences.



As you begin to practice and feel more confident in dialogic reading, work to expand on what the child says and their answers to questions. Ask additional questions or make a statement that is one step beyond what they already know. For example, when asked "what do you see?", a child may respond with "I see a bug." We can build off that by then stating, "yes, that is a spider" and "it has 8 legs." Expanding by adding one word, descriptive or new word, is great for language base knowledge. Lastly, don't forget to praise and encourage! Learning is a kid's job, let them know if you liked how they gently turned the pages of the book, how accurately they counted or identified colors, or for sharing their story.