National Eat Better; Eat Together month

October is National Eat Better; Eat Together month. It is a time for adults to eat meals with children and teens and to celebrate family meals. Youth report that they like the mealtime conversations – having time to share, find out what others have been doing, and to laugh together. For roll call, have each member report how many meals he/she ate together as a family in the last two days or last week.

Here are ten tips for quality family meals:
- Aim for four or more meals a week.
- Make family meals a priority.
- Keep a sense of humor and laugh a lot.
- Cook it quick and eat it slow.
- Work toward happy, relaxing conversations at meals.
- If time is an issue, make meals quick and easy.
- Shop for food and cook together.
- Take telephone calls later.
- Turn the television off.
- Respect each individual's right to decide how much to eat.

In addition to encouraging family meals, families also need to figure out how to fit in some family activity time as well. This might involve taking a walk around the block after dinner, riding bicycles in the neighborhood, playing catch, or raking leaves in the backyard. Try to take a 20- to 30-minute activity break together after watching television or working on the computer.

Physical Activity Calendars

Collect the September Physical Activity Calendars from each participant. Record each individual's total number of activity minutes on the Get Up and Move! Club Chart.

Have a short discussion to review the Physical Activity Pyramid and reflect on their activity for the past month. Have each individual look closely at his or her calendar to see how his/her activity matches the advice from the Physical Activity Pyramid.

Reflection Questions:
- Did you get at least 30 minutes of moderate activity each day?
- Did you get at least 15 minutes of more intense activity, 3 times a week?
- How can you fit more regular physical activity into your life?
- What are some activities you can do only in the fall?
- What types of physical activities might you do with your family?

October Physical Activity Calendars are now on the web site at www.4-h.uiuc.edu/opps/move. Please download these and make copies for your members (and leaders).
Please be sure to use the **Get Up and Move! Club Chart** each month to record the individual tallies.

**Educational Activity**

**Moving into Nature** is the title of the physical activity featured this month. Clubs/groups are encouraged to plan and participate in a nature hike. The activity guide gives suggestions for planning a hike. Several 4-H publications are also listed as additional resources. The alternative activity is the game “**Oh Deer.**” This can be done outdoors or in a large room.

**Recipes/Snacks**

Homemade granola is the recipe for this month’s snack. It is posted at [www.4-h.uiuc.edu/opps/move](http://www.4-h.uiuc.edu/opps/move). Try it with a variety of dried fruit mixed in at the end.

**Ties to 4-H Projects**

4-H clubs/groups might take advantage of the nature hike to learn more about leaves. In the **Forestry** project, members are encouraged to create a collection of ten or more leaves. While the collections will need to be gathered in the spring or summer months, fall would be a great time to collect colored leaves.

To collect and press fall leaves:
- Collect colorful leaves that are free of mold or rot.
- Be sure to have permission to pick leaves off of private property.
- Press leaves between two sheets of newspaper and place heavy books on top.
- Allow to flatten and dry for 24 hours. Remove from the newspaper.
- Using your dried, flat leaves, waxed paper, a hot iron and an ironing surface, place the leaves between sheets of waxed paper. Gently press the waxed paper with a medium hot iron moving slowly over the leaves for about ten seconds. Keep your hands away from the hot surface. The waxed paper will be hot after pressing. Allowed pressed leaves to cool before using. You can trim around the edges of the wax paper when cool. Use as sun catchers, fall decorations, or to create cards to send to seniors in your neighborhood as part of your **Visual Arts** – Nature project.

For a club/group community service project, consider raking leaves for others on the fourth Saturday in October for **Make A Difference Day**. Sponsored by the **USA Weekend Magazine** and the Points of Light Foundation, **Make a Difference Day** encourages individuals, families, and groups to make this a day of celebration of neighbors helping neighbors. For more ideas, visit [http://usaweekend.com/diffday/index.html](http://usaweekend.com/diffday/index.html).

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Get Up and Move!

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