MyPyramid
This month we are going to take a close look at MyPyramid for Kids. There is a step-by-step explanation of the key concepts of the MyPyramid. The handout is available at www.mypyramid.gov/kids/index.html under A Close Look at MyPyramid For Kids or at http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/resources/mpk_close.pdf. The six key concepts include:

- Be Physically Active Every Day
- Choose Healthier Foods From Each Food Group
- Make Choices That are Right for You
- Eat More From Some Food Groups Than Others
- Every Color Every Day
- Take One Step at a Time

The very narrow yellow stripe on MyPyramid is for Oils. Oils are not really a food group, but we still need some for good health. We should get oils from nuts, salad dressings, and liquid oils such as corn oil, soybean oil, canola oil, or olive oil. We should limit solid fats like butter, margarine, shortening, and lard. Oils and solid fats contain about 120 calories per tablespoon. Therefore, the amount of oil consumed needs to be limited to balance total calorie intake. For most boys and girls ages 9-13, in addition to the healthy choices you make from the five food groups, you may also consume approximately 5 teaspoons or less than two tablespoons per day of fat from nuts, salad dressings, and liquid oils. These amounts are appropriate for individuals who get less than 30 minutes of moderate physical activity, beyond normal daily activities.

For roll call, ask each youth to name his or her favorite winter sport.

Physical Activity Calendars
Collect the November 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?
Do you think you're getting enough physical activity? Why?
What precautions do you need to take when exercising in cold weather?
How can you fit more regular indoor physical activity into your life?
December 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. Remember during the busy holiday season, it is important to keep physically active, especially since there are many opportunities to consume extra calories at parties and gatherings. Many households have lots of extra treats on hand.

Educational Activity
“Snowman Fun!” is the theme of the physical activity for December. Three activities are provided for club/group participation. The Snowman Race, the Build-a-Snowman Contest, and the Snowman Stuffing are short physical activities that can be completed during your club recreation or program time. Physical activity can still take place during cold weather but it takes a little more preparation and a few more clothing items.

Recipes/Snacks
Two recipes are included for the month of December. One is Hot and Sweet Tidbits, which would need to be prepared ahead of time to serve at the meeting. The Peppermint Cocoa recipe could be made for the club/group meeting. It also could be mixed and packaged into decorated containers as gifts for seniors or shut ins in the community. Be sure to attach a tag with the preparation instructions.

Ties to 4-H Projects
As a December community service project, 4-H clubs/groups might collect mittens, hats, socks, and scarves to donate to needy children. There are often many children who do not have appropriate clothing for the cold weather. Teachers, religious staff members, and social service agency personnel may know of children who need these warm items and could help in the distribution of these items to the appropriate families.

Members enrolled in the Visual Arts project might lead the club/group in making holiday greeting cards for seniors in the community. They might also make gift tags and decorate quart jars to fill with the Peppermint Cocoa mix that could be given seniors and shut ins. This would be a good project for the cold weather months of January and February too.