



# Rate Your Plate

## Why we need to rate what is on our plates:

1. Increased portion sizes promote excessive intake at meals. Most portions served are larger than recommended amounts. People respond to larger portion size by eating more!
2. We need to pay attention to internal hunger cues. Studies show that regardless of appetite, adults and kids usually eat what's on their plates. We often eat larger portions than our bodies need just because that is what is served.
3. Kids, regardless of weight, are not making balanced eating choices. This impacts their overall well-being and their performance in school.

## Rate Your Plate Activity

*Before the activity.* Make 1 copy per student of the following *Rate Your Plate Guide*.

### Rate Your Plate Guide

- Fill one quarter of your plate with a protein food such as lean ground beef, sliced turkey breast, baked chicken or fish, eggs, beans, or low fat cheese.
- Fill half of your plate with colorful vegetable and fruit options like red tomatoes, green lettuce, orange carrots, and purple grapes.
- Fill one quarter of your plate with whole grains such as brown rice, whole grain pasta or whole grain bread.

1. Each student needs a blank sheet of paper. Have them draw a large circle to represent a plate. If you have paper plates, you can pass them out instead.
2. Instruct students in the following:
  - Divide your plate in half. Draw a line from the top of the plate to the bottom.
  - Write the words Vegetables and Fruits on one half.
  - On the empty half, draw a horizontal line from the center to the outside of the circle. This line will split the half into two equal quarters.
  - Label one quarter Lean Protein, and the other quarter Whole Grains.
3. While passing out the Rate Your Plate Guide, begin a discussion about why we need to rate what is on our plates. You can use the tips at the top of this sheet or the following:
  - What guides your decisions when you eat a meal away from home? Many of us only think about what "sounds good" to eat, not necessarily what is healthy. Learn to help yourself and your family choose great tasting AND healthy food by rating your plate.
  - Have you ever LOOKED at what is on your plate for meals? Discuss the LOOK of meals at home, meals at school, and meals in restaurants. How much space does the meat take up? How much space do veggies take? What about grain foods? Are any of these missing all together? Where do you eat that makes it easier or more challenging to create a healthy plate and why? (For example, easier at school, restaurants with salads or salad bars, fruits as dessert options)
4. Using the Rate Your Plate Guide, ask students, individually or in groups, to make a lunch menu using the examples from the guide. For example, sliced turkey breast on whole grain bread, lettuce leaves, tomato slices, orange carrots, and purple grapes. Next ask students to create a healthy plate using today's school lunch menu.

Rate Your Plate! Practice this method at home with your family to help guide you when eating out.



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