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Pyramid Pizzazz: An Educational Tool for Tracking Food Intake

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Pyramid Pizzazz: An Educational Tool for Tracking Food Intake

Abstract

Do your nutrition class participants need to pizzazz up their lives? If so, we have the teaching tool for you--Pyramid Pizzazz. Pyramid Pizzazz is a teaching tool designed to assist in tracking the daily intake of food. The teaching packet includes a lesson plan, food guide fact sheets, an erasable magnetic board, and a notepad to track daily food consumption. Pyramid Pizzazz helps clients take steps to a healthy way of eating.

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Putting Some Pizzazz in Your Life

How do we put pizzazz into people's lives? How do we jazz up diets? Do our clients know how many fruits they eat every day? Pyramid Pizzazz may be the tool your clients need to put some pizzazz in their lives.

Pyramid Pizzazz is a teaching tool developed for adults and older youth. Based on the USDA Food Guide Pyramid, the objectives of the materials are to:

1. Teach proper use of the food guide pyramid and nutrition,
2. Provide an easy method for clientele to track the number of servings eaten daily,
3. Provide visual reminders of proper nutrition, and
4. Encourage lifelong healthy eating habits.

Tool Development

Pyramid Pizzazz was a collaborative effort of two Ohio counties that shared a similar vision of a nutrition tool. Both counties applied for an innovative grant through Ohio State University Extension to complete similar projects. The funding source granted the dollars to both entities to

combine their thoughts into one teaching tool. The two counties teamed up and pulled together, even though they were 150 miles apart.

Pyramid Pizzazz helps individuals take steps to a healthy way of eating. The teaching tool consists of a set of food group fact sheets, a Pyramid Pizzazz erasable board, a Pyramid Pizzazz notepad, and a lesson plan. The materials are user friendly for all audiences. They have been used to teach nutrition and the Food Guide Pyramid to teenagers, older adults, young children, low literacy individuals, males, females, and working and non-working individuals.

Fact sheets

The set of six fact sheets is based on the Food Guide Pyramid and also provides support information on serving sizes, general nutrition, and healthy lifestyles. These fact sheets provide the participants with information about the number of servings needed each day and why it is important to eat food from each food group, and suggestions on how to make healthy choices within each food group.

Erasable Board

The erasable board is a write-on/wipe-off food guide pyramid magnetic board that can be used to keep track of the number of servings and types of foods eaten. The participants circle a food item in the proper food group, as that food is consumed during the day. The board is designed to be a convenient tracking tool that helps participants remember what food has been eaten as well as what foods still need to be eaten to have a balanced diet for the day. This tool also encourages participants to eat foods from all the food groups, in the proper serving size.

Tear Pad

The food guide pyramid tear pad is similar to the erasable board except it is a convenient, portable size that allows the participants to record food intake when away from home. The tear pad also allows participants to keep a daily record of intake, while the food guide pyramid board is erased and each day begins with a clean slate.

Lesson Plan

The lesson plan is designed to assist educators with the presentation of a lesson. The lesson incorporates all the teaching tools and provides activities the educator can use with different audiences.

Evaluation Results

The Pyramid Pizzazz program was evaluated using a Likert scale based on a scale of 1-5, with 5 = strongly agree and 1 = strongly disagree. Participants completed the evaluation after using the Pyramid Pizzazz for 7 days. Evaluation results indicated an average of 4.62 learned about food and nutrition. 4.21 were able to keep track of food consumption. 4.05 were able to eat a balanced diet.

Pyramid Pizzazz was designed to make healthy eating a part of clients' daily routine. Eating a variety of the proper foods and the correct serving sizes will help them feel better, look better, and live longer. For additional and/or ordering information, contact: Mary Longo, Ohio State University Extension, Marion County, 1100 E. Center Street, Marion, OH 43302, E-mail: longo.6@osu.edu.

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