



Introducing basic health topics into your session

A key element to the Soccer in Schools program is the nutritional component. While including these topics in your session may seem daunting, many of the same skills that you use to coach soccer apply to introduce the nutritional information located in the sample curriculum and Resource section.

Washington Youth Soccer has compiled this sample outline using the Grade 3 **Session One: Dribbling and Agility/MyPyramid** on how to blend the two concepts into a successful school session. Use this example to integrate the suggested nutritional information in each section into your session. A general tip is to look for similarities between the two topics and emphasize the importance of eating healthy in order to be a strong, successful player.

Session One: Dribbling and Agility/MyPyramid

Introduction:

Introduce yourself, your club, your soccer topic and the nutritional or health topic that you will be covering. Finish your introduction by explaining how eating healthy is key to playing strong and to becoming a top player. Ask the kids what are the key areas of a balanced meal and introduce the forgotten elements (grains/vegetables/fruits/milk/meat and beans).

Warm Up:

After the warm up discuss the importance of warming up your whole body. Highlight that the same way you stretch to warm up your muscles, you warm up your body with a healthy snack. Use this time to give and ask for examples of healthy balanced snacks.

Individual/Small Group Activity:

After the individual activity, introduce the individual elements of a balanced meal: grains, vegetables, fruits, milk, meat and beans. Ask the kids what foods they like vs. do not like, what foods are healthy vs. not healthy, what they ate for lunch and the importance of balanced meals. As you transition to the small group activity, bridge the two ideas: players make a team and grains/vegetables/fruits/milk/meat and beans make a meal.

Small-Sided Game:

As part of your wrap up, have an expanded conversation on the nutritional topic. Discuss the importance of eating a healthy balanced meal before, during and after your practice or game and solicit ideas of healthy snacks. Close with the importance of eating healthy to play strong and a review of the sessions' skills.

Depending on the day, this format may not be possible as kids are unpredictable! Other possibilities are to hold the nutritional discussion before/after your soccer session, after your introduction or after the warm up and activities, but before the game.