

**Teaching Children about Food Safety
Concepts and Activities, July 2004
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Safe food handling methods are learned through modeling and practice. As a young child helps wash vegetables for the dinner salad the parent describes why clean hands, a vegetable brush and running water will remove dirt and bacteria from our hands and the vegetables. Helping children understand that invisible germs can make us sick is a challenge for parents and teachers. The following concepts and activities were chosen to encourage the development of healthy and safe food habits.

Food Safety Concepts

Fight BAC! (Fight Bacteria) is a food safety education program developed by government agencies and private businesses concerned with health issues and the quality and safety of our food supply. The food safety concepts have been reviewed and agreed upon as priority messages. Most food safety activities will support these basic food safety concepts.

Clean

- Wash hands often, especially before handling food or beverage. Use soap and running water, rubbing your hands together for 20 seconds or longer. Singing the birthday song or the alphabet song will help children understand how long 20 seconds takes.
- Wash surfaces often, keep counters and sink areas clean, use clean cooking and serving utensils.
- Wash fruits and vegetables with clean running water before eating. Use a vegetable brush to wash the surface of melons before they are cut.
- Anyone who is ill should avoid handling and preparing food for others.

Separate

- Do not cross contaminate. Keep raw meat, poultry, fish and eggs away from foods that will not be cooked before they are eaten. Use separate cutting boards and cooking tools.

Cook

- Cooking destroys illness causing bacteria (E-coli, salmonella, etc.). Safe cooking temperatures have been established for most foods. Using a thermometer is the best way to determine if a food is safely cooked.
- Keep hot foods hot throughout cooking and serving.

Chill

- Keep cold foods cold. Cold foods need to be back in the refrigerator in two hours or less. Packed lunches and picnics need careful planning to keep foods safe (hot or cold).

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First Grade	Second Grade	Third Grade	Fourth Grade	Fifth Grade	Sixth Grade
Fight BAC! Rules Clean, Separate, Cook, Chill	Fight BAC! Rules Clean, Separate, Cook, Chill	Fight BAC! Rules Clean, Separate, Cook, Chill	Fight BAC! Rules Clean, Separate, Cook, Chill	Fight BAC! Clean, Separate, Cook, Chill	Fight BAC! Clean, Separate, Cook, Chill
Handwashing, sing the birthday song, soap and water demonstration	Handwashing sing a song, spray hands with vegetable oil, sprinkle with cinnamon, wash.	Handwashing, Spray hands with vegetable oil, sprinkle with cinnamon, wash. Or use Glo-Germ.	Handwashing, Glo-Germ	Handwashing: Soapy Solutions (H)	Handwashing Word Search (H)
Separate	What Belongs?	Going on a Picnic (chill)	Bag It (Chill)	Chill Out (H)	Separate – Don't Cross-Contaminate (H)
Cleaning Fruits and Vegetables	Temperature Zones	Cleaning Fruits and Vegetables	How to Clean Game	Perishable Foods Match (storage)	Is it Done Yet? (H)
Safe and Unsafe Picnic Foods	Keep Foods Apart	Be Smart. Keep Foods Apart (H)	Keep It Cool	Cook it Safely (H)	Cool It (H)
Making Food Unsafe	Pack a Lunch	Tic Tac Germ	Keep or Trash (H)	Perils at the Picnic (H)	Home Food Safety Checkup (H)

Source: Exploring the Food Pyramid with Professor Popcorn (CD-ID-276), curriculum on CD from Purdue University, www.cfs.purdue.edu/extension/html/efnep_pp.htm.

Resources for Educators

1. *Fight BAC!* www.fightbac.org.
2. *FDA Kids Home Page.* www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/kids/ food safety, health, and other information for kids ages 9-12 from the Food and Drug Administration.
3. *Food Safety Education and Consumer Information.* www.fsis.usda.gov/OA/consedu.htm.
4. *Gateway to Food Safety Information.* <http://www.foodsafety.gov/> Quick link to information and resources available through government agencies. Links to kids pages and on-line food safety activities.
5. Hand washing posters and artwork for elementary ages. <http://www.henrythehand.com>
6. Food Safety Table Tents and a variety of free food safety and nutrition resources for educators and consumers. Developed by University of Nebraska Extension Service. <http://lancaster.unl.edu/food>
7. North Dakota State University Extension Service Food Safety information and resources. <http://www.ag.ndsu.nodak.edu/food.htm>
8. Glow germ lights and resources for teaching handwashing techniques. Phone: 800-842-6622. www.glogerm.com.
9. Exploring the Food Pyramid with Professor Popcorn. Nutrition and food safety information for young people in grades 1-6. A curriculum on a cd developed at Purdue University. www.cfs.purdue.edu/extension/html/efnep_pp.htm
10. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Meat and Poultry Hotline at (800) 535-4555.
11. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Food Information Line at (888) SAFE FOOD.