



# Sprouts

## Growing Healthy Habits

The development of healthy habits in early life is key for families and children to set the stage for a lifetime of health and wellness. Schools and early care settings can play an important role in educating children about nutrition, their bodies, and food sources.

The FRC's research team has developed Sprouts: Growing Healthy Habits, an 8 lesson interactive curriculum which seeks to increase awareness and knowledge of healthy routines—like healthy eating habits or sleeping patterns—that can be implemented in daily life.

This curriculum targets children ages 4 to 6 and can be implemented in classroom settings, afterschool/community-based programs, and in childcare settings. We believe that early adoption of healthy practices can have a major impact later in life on healthy routines and food choices. By teaching children practical skills and knowledge early on, negative health outcomes can be prevented.

Sprouts includes 8 lessons with facilitator guides, interactive activities, and a story-telling component as well as parent newsletters and family take-home activities to encourage parental involvement. The curriculum is meant to be adapted in ways that best suit your population and resources. All 8 lessons can be taught in succession but that is not necessary, individual lessons or activities can be used separately to encourage healthy habits for young children.

This project is supported by the Christopher Family Foundation Food and Family Program.



### RESEARCH TEAM

- Barbara Fiese, PhD, Director, Family Resiliency Center, Human Development and Family Studies
- Brenda Koester, MS, Assistant Director, Family Resiliency Center, Human Development and Family Studies

### CONTACT

Brenda Koester  
Assistant Director  
Family Resiliency Center  
Phone: 217-244-6486  
Email: [bkoester@illinois.edu](mailto:bkoester@illinois.edu)



# Sprouts: 8 Lessons

## Growing Healthy Habits

**Farm to Table**— Children will learn where our food comes from, understanding each step from farming to ending up on the table. Activities include an interactive crafting layout and planting radish seeds.

**Cooking and Family Meals**— Children will talk about the importance of family mealtimes and learn how they can help out with dinner preparation at home. Lesson includes participation in making a dinner and sharing a family style meal.

**Food Groups and Grocery Shopping**— Children will understand what types of food fall under each food group and will learn how to make a balanced meal. Activities include a shopping experience in which children get to go shopping in play store to make a balanced meal.

**Picky Eating: Eat a Rainbow**— Children will learn about different types of fruits and vegetables and the importance of trying new things for health. Lesson includes opportunity to try a rainbow of fruit options to experience what a variety of fruit tastes like.

**Snacks and Beverages**— Children will learn the difference between snacks and meals. Children will also explore the differences in sugar content in a variety of beverages. Activities include a guessing game where children will separate sugar cubes to estimate the amount in each drink.

**Healthy Sleep Habits**— Children will learn about healthy bedtime routines and the importance of these routines. Lesson includes crafts and a worksheet based on bedtime habits.

**Energy Balance**— Children will be able to determine which activities use more energy and how food intake needs to be balanced by energy expenditure. Lesson includes drawing and coloring foods consumed and favorite activities for energy expenditure.

**Healthy Screen Time**— Children will comprehend how screen time is related to health outcomes. Activities include creating a personalized book for ideas of activities to do besides screen time.



### RESEARCH TEAM

- Barbara Fiese, PhD, Director, Family Resiliency Center, Human Development and Family Studies
- Brenda Koester, MS, Assistant Director, Family Resiliency Center, Human Development and Family Studies

### CONTACT

Brenda Koester  
Assistant Director  
Family Resiliency Center  
Phone: 217-244-6486  
Email: [bkoester@illinois.edu](mailto:bkoester@illinois.edu)

