



## **Wise Eating for Youth** Overview

**K·STATE**  
Research and Extension

## Module 1: Wise Eating Overview

### Purpose

- This module will introduce concepts of Wise Eating to youth and explain how Wise Eating can help them develop a healthy relationship with food.

### Learners' General Goal

- Develop an increased understanding of Wise Eating by the end of this module.

### Learners' Objectives

- Define Wise Eating.
- Describe values associated with Wise Eating.
- Practice positive thinking related to Wise Eating.
- Identify behaviors related to Wise Eating.
- Apply Wise Eating methods when selecting foods.

### Activities

- The Last Orange on Earth
- True or False — Test the knowledge



### Discussion

Start the session by having youth participate in Activity 1 — The Last Orange on Earth.

- This activity will teach youth mindful eating.
- Note: It is nice to demonstrate mindful eating; however, if the classroom setting does not allow for the activity, just start the session by introducing youth to the concept of Wise Eating.

After finishing the discussion for Activity 1, introduce youth to the concept of Wise Eating.

- Wise Eating teaches you techniques to help identify your body's hunger and satiety signals.
- Wise Eating encourages you to enjoy the foods you like with moderation.
- Wise Eating promotes behaviors that support you in establishing a healthy relationship with foods.

Ask youth to share their thoughts about positive or negative challenges related to the Wise Eating concepts at this point.

#### Possible positive answers:

- Eat what you like.
- Build a good relationship with eating.

#### Possible negative answers:

- Hard to feel the body's hunger and fullness signals.
- Possibility to overeat because of choosing favorite food.

After having youth share their opinions related to Wise Eating, introduce the general values of Wise Eating.

**Value 1: Say “No!” to Restrictive Eating**

- Get rid of the feeling that you “should” avoid certain foods, since restrictive eating will only prevent you from having a healthy relationship with food. Youth may feel pressured to control their weight; however, improving your eating habits and exercising will help develop a more positive body image.

**Value 2: Respect Your Hunger**

- Hunger makes it difficult to focus and concentrate in school, studying, playing sports, or being physically active. Eating breakfast is a great way to start the school day. Kids who eat breakfast are more alert and make better grades than kids who skip breakfast. Also, eating a snack before sporting events improves your energy level, performance, and endurance. It is not true that you are “good” for eating low-calorie foods or “bad” because you ate a piece of chocolate cake. However, the foods you eat can affect your energy level; therefore, choose foods that provide ample nutrients (boiled or baked potatoes, blueberries, dark chocolate, yogurt, nuts) for the amount of calories in it.

**Value 3: Discover the Satisfaction Factor**

- Eating foods that you want to eat helps you feel satisfied faster. Ignoring cravings could cause you to overeat on other foods.

**Value 4: Take Charge of Your Emotions without Using Food**

- Food may provide comfort for a short while, but whatever causes you to want to eat when you are not physically hungry will still be there. Eating when you are happy, excited, angry, sad, bored, disappointed, lonely, or simply to avoid doing homework will only make you feel worse in the long run. Do not use food to feed your emotions.

**Value 5: Be Active! — Feel the Difference**

- Get active and feel the difference. Being active is about finding physical activities that you enjoy doing most days of the week.

**Value 6: Pick the Right Fuel for Your Body**

- Picking the right foods to eat can make a big difference in how you feel. Some foods provide more nutrients than others and therefore can help your body stay healthy. Remember that you do not have to eat a perfect diet to be healthy. It is what you eat consistently over time that matters.

Wise Eating is about building a good relationship with food. Practice switching the “half empty” thinking to “half full” thinking about food.

**Half Empty**

**Half Full**

1. I overeat a lot.

1. I only ate when I was hungry several times this week.

2. I finished a whole bag of chips!

2. I ate lots of chips, but I had other foods, too.

3. I like to supersize my meals.

3. I may have supersized my meal, but I stopped eating when I felt full.

4. I don't like fruits and vegetables.

4. I do like oranges and salads.

5. I drink a bottle of pop every day.

5. I drink a bottle of pop every other day.

Have youth participate in Activity 2 — True or False to identify eating behaviors related to Wise Eating.

Have youth set one individual goal to practice some of the Wise Eating values over the next week.

**Explain to youth that a goal:**

- is something you plan to accomplish,
- is a challenge you set for yourself, and
- can be either short-term or long-term.

**Also, guide youth to set goals that meet SMART goal criteria:**

- Specific — answers six W's (who, what, where, when, which, why).
- Measurable — defines how you will know when it is accomplished.
- Attainable — small and under your control.
- Realistic — believable.
- Time-defined — grounded within a time frame.



## Activities

### The Last Orange on Earth

This activity can help educators teach youth to become more mindful when eating. As a result of this experience and taking time to actively see, smell, feel, and taste an orange while they eat it, participants will:

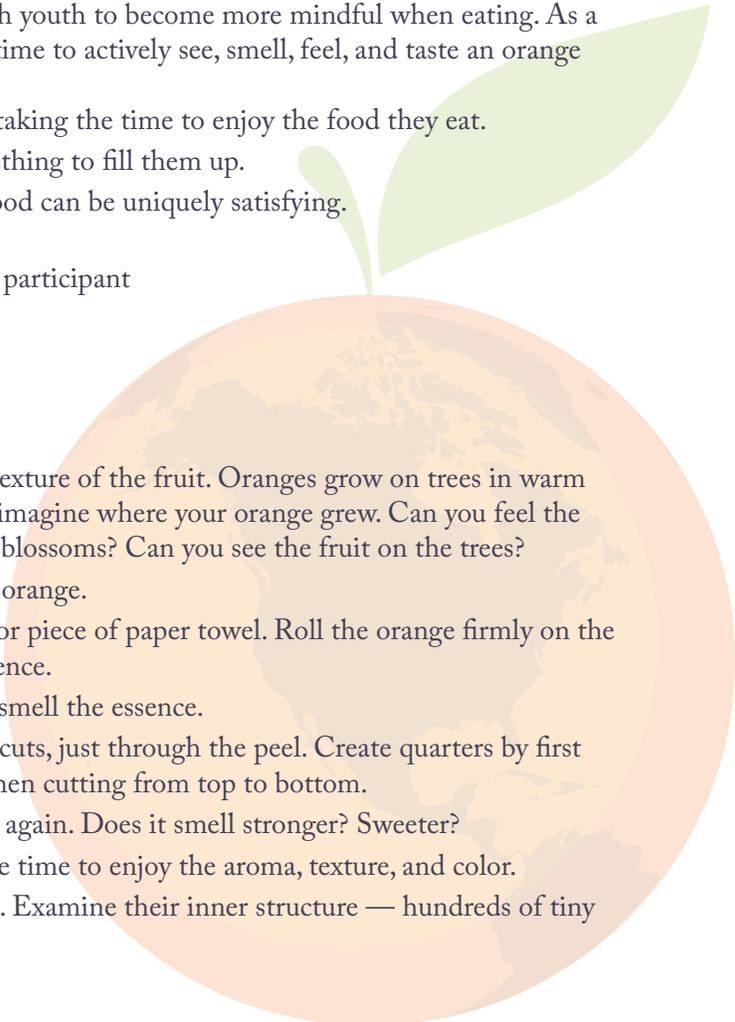
- Recognize the importance of taking the time to enjoy the food they eat.
- Value food as more than something to fill them up.
- Appreciate that an ordinary food can be uniquely satisfying.

**Materials:**

- Washed oranges, one for each participant
- Paper towels or napkins
- Sturdy plastic knives

**Participant Steps:**

- Wash your hands.
- Admire the color, shape, and texture of the fruit. Oranges grow on trees in warm climates. Close your eyes and imagine where your orange grew. Can you feel the warm sun? Can you smell the blossoms? Can you see the fruit on the trees?
- Open your eyes and smell the orange.
- Place the orange on a napkin or piece of paper towel. Roll the orange firmly on the table to release the orange essence.
- Pick up the orange again and smell the essence.
- Use the knife to make several cuts, just through the peel. Create quarters by first cutting around the fruit and then cutting from top to bottom.
- Take time to smell the orange again. Does it smell stronger? Sweeter?
- Peel the fruit slowly, taking the time to enjoy the aroma, texture, and color.
- Separate a couple of segments. Examine their inner structure — hundreds of tiny juice-filled sacs.



- Place a segment in your mouth, close your eyes, and bite down. Pay attention to how the juice bursts into your mouth and fills it with orange flavor.
- Chew slowly and experience the texture of the membrane. How is this different than drinking a glass of orange juice?
- As you chew slowly, pretend this is the last orange on earth. It's all yours!

**Discussion: Convey other important aspects of mindful eating:**

- Was the orange satisfying? Why or why not?
- Do you usually eat an orange in this way?
- What would happen if you ate food this way more often?
- How would you describe the experience so others could appreciate an orange?

**True or False**

*Even if I am craving cookies, I should resist eating them. Cookies and other sweets are not part of Wise Eating.*

- False — We all have cravings. Part of Wise Eating is respecting those cravings.

*Eating time should be for eating only, not for doing other activities such as watching TV or finishing homework.*

- True — Multitasking during mealtime makes it harder to recognize your body's fullness signal.

*Eating healthy food is going against the idea of eating whatever I want, so nutrition is not important.*

- False — Healthy foods such as whole-grain products, low-fat dairy, lean proteins, and fruits and vegetables can maintain health and prevent illnesses later in life. By practicing Wise Eating, you will learn that healthy foods and drinks can give your body what it needs and in return, you can enjoy more energy, stronger muscles, flexibility, and a whole lot more.

**Resources**

Intuitive Eating, 2012, Tribole, E. And Resch, E.

"The Last Orange on Earth" [http://www.uwyo.edu/winwyoming/last%20orange/1aorangelessonplan\\_2.pdf](http://www.uwyo.edu/winwyoming/last%20orange/1aorangelessonplan_2.pdf)

## Resources Sheet

Try the following easy-to-make orange recipes either in class or at home.

### Fruit Salad (4 servings)

#### Ingredients

- 1 orange, peeled and cut into bite-size pieces
- 1 can of pineapple chunks (8 ounces)
- ½ apple, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 10 seedless grapes, halved
- 2 cups low-fat strawberry yogurt

#### Preparation

- Stir orange, pineapple, apple, and grapes together in a bowl.
- Pour yogurt over the top and stir to coat evenly.



### Orange Smoothie (2 servings)

#### Ingredients

- 4 fresh oranges, peeled
- 2 cups of ice
- ⅓ cup low-fat or fat-free milk
- 1 to 2 tablespoons honey, if needed
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract.

#### Preparation

- Pour all ingredients in a blender, press “start,” and there you go!



## **Worksheet**

1. **What is Wise Eating?**

Wise Eating means enjoying the foods you like in moderation. It is not about restrictive eating or saying that foods are “good” or “bad.” It is about respecting your hunger and picking foods that will give your body the nutrients it needs.

2. **Are you a Wise Eater? Why?**

3. **List some Wise Eating values that you like.**

4. **Write down anything that confuses you about Wise Eating, if any.**



*Authors:*

*Yijing Li, M.S., doctoral student, Food, Nutrition, Dietetics and Health, Kansas State University  
Tandalayo Kidd, Ph.D., R.D., LPN, associate professor and extension specialist, Kansas State University*

*This material is based upon work that is supported by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, under award number 2012-68001-19619.*

*Co-Principle Investigators were:*

*Kendra Kattelman, Ph.D., R.D., South Dakota State University  
Susan Zies, M.Ed, The Ohio State University  
Nancy Muturi, Ph.D., Kansas State University  
Koushik Adhikari, Ph.D., University of Georgia (formerly of Kansas State University)*

# K-STATE

## Research and Extension



**Publications from Kansas State University are available at:**  
[www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu](http://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu)

Date shown is that of publication or last revision. Contents of this publication may be freely reproduced for educational purposes. All other rights reserved. In each case, credit Yijing Li and Tandalayo Kidd, *Wise Eating for Youth: Overview*, Kansas State University, December 2017.

**Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service**

K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, as amended. Kansas State University, County Extension Councils, Extension Districts, and United States Department of Agriculture Cooperating, John D. Floros, Director.