

THE DIETITIAN'S DESK

WELCOME TO THE DIETITIAN'S DESK!

This newsletter is committed to providing insightful nutritional information to promote a healthy lifestyle in school and at home.

This month's newsletter was developed by Sodexo's Deanna St. Pierre, MS, RD from Holyoke Public Schools in Massachusetts.

January 2022 Issue

BEATING THE WINTER BLUES

FOODS FOR MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

SEEN IN YOUR SCHOOL LUNCH

School meals are designed for your health with wellness in mind. School meals are balanced with appropriate amount of calories, macronutrients, such as protein with a variety of fruits and vegetable options to provide a healthy array of micronutrients based on the growing student's age range. These recommendations are provided by from the most US Dietary Guidelines and USDA's MyPlate Model. School Meals are encouraged to be served alongside healthy exercise to support overall wellness.

MENTAL HEALTH FACTS

- 1.) Food and Drinks we consume are fuel for our bodies. They determine the types of nutrients in our systems and how well our mind and bodies can function. Eating regularly and not skipping any meals ensures we control our blood sugar.
- 2.) Increased Folate intake is associated with a decrease in depression. If we consume foods high in folic acid such as leafy green vegetables, fruits, nuts, beans, and whole grains we will find benefits such as healthy skin, eyes and mood.
- 3.) Vitamin D consumption plays an important role in Depression and Seasonal Affective Disorder. Ensuring we have adequate Vitamin D levels is important in decreasing the risk for developing Depression or Seasonal Affective Disorder.

HEALTHFUL HINTS

Try this 5 minute meditation if you need a wellness break:
The Count Down: Find a comfortable position to lay or sit. Identify 5 colors you can see and breathe for 3 deep breaths. Identify 4 things you can hear and breathe for 3 deep breaths. Identify 3 things you can feel and breathe for 3 deep breaths. Identify 2 things you can smell and breathe for 3 deep breaths. Pause until relaxed then enjoy 1 final deep breath.

FROM YOUR FARMER

During the month of January items like Mushrooms, Parsnips, Beets, Leeks, Pears, Winter Squash and Cranberries are in season and can be locally sourced! You can support your community by buying local!

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Do-It-Yourself Brain Energy Bars

Ingredients:

- 2 cups old-fashioned rolled oats
- 1 cup unsweetened shredded coconut
- 1 cup raw, unsalted nuts of your choosing
- 1/2 cup sesame seeds
- 1/2 cup chopped raisins
- 1 1/2 cups peanut butter
- 1 cup honey
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract



Directions:

- 1.) Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Line a 10 x 15 inch rimmed baking sheet.
- 2.) In large bowl, toss together the oats, coconut, nuts, sesame seeds, and raisins.
- 3.) In a microwave bowl, add the peanut butter and honey. Heat on high for about 1 minute, until melted and combined. Add vanilla extract and stir to combine.
- 4.) Pour the peanut butter mixture over the oat mixture in the large bowl, and stir to combine.
- 5.) Bake for 15 minutes until the edges start to turn golden brown. They will firm up as they cool. You can place the pan in the refrigerator before cutting.
- 6.) Drizzle with extra honey if you would like!