

Grocery Store Tours Program Manual

**Healthy Youth Program
Linus Pauling Institute
Oregon State University**



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Introduction

About the Linus Pauling Institute

The mission of the Linus Pauling Institute is to promote optimal health through cutting-edge nutrition research and trusted public outreach. To accomplish this we will:

- Discover basic mechanisms underlying the biology of aging and the causes of metabolic and age-related diseases
- Develop effective approaches to slow aging and postpone metabolic and age-related diseases through diet, micronutrients, and phytochemicals
- Advance the principles of healthy living and healthy aging in the public arena, thereby empowering people everywhere to add years of health and vitality to their lives

Advancing healthspan, not just lifespan, is our passion.

Healthy Youth Program Mission

Empowering youth and their families to achieve optimal health through hands-on education.

The Healthy Youth Program is a wellness and healthy lifestyle program for children (preschool through grade 12) and their families. Most of our programs are based on vegetable gardens, linking a healthy and active lifestyle with a healthy and sustainable environment and providing fresh produce for families in need. We engage children and families through participatory education, hands-on activities, and interactive dialogue. All of our programs are youth and family centered, tailored to their unique needs, and build on the strengths of the participating youth and families for long-term success.

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About the Healthy Youth Program

How it All Started

Providing public education on the role of diet, lifestyle, and micronutrients in promoting optimal health, preventing disease, and increasing healthspan has been a major commitment of the Linus Pauling Institute (LPI) since its inception at Oregon State University in 1996. As part of LPI's public outreach, the **Healthy Youth Program** was founded in 2009. Our goal is to educate children (preschool through grade 12) and families through evidence-based and hands-on activities. Our vision is for a community of healthy, happy and active children and families.

Our Program Philosophy

The **Healthy Youth Program** is a wellness and healthy lifestyle program. For us, wellness and a healthy lifestyle include physical, mental, and social well-being. It is our goal to help children and families improve their dietary intake and increase their level of physical activity. In addition, a central focus of our programs are family and peer relationships and interactions. We believe that children and families don't live in a vacuum – children are part of families and families are part of communities. Therefore, it is important for us to support children and their families, so they may develop healthy family and peer relationships and grow as individuals to reach their full potential.

Overview of Grocery Store Tours

Goal

Teach participants how to shop for healthy foods on a limited budget.

Objectives

Educate participants about:

- How a grocery store layout can affect their buying choices
- Reading and understanding food labels
- Shopping for seasonal produce
- Unit pricing and shopping in the bulk food section
- Simple and affordable alternatives to common processed foods
- The importance of a daily multivitamin

Site Selection

- Things to consider when selecting a site:
 - Who is your target audience? Where do they typically shop?
 - Is the store affordable?
 - Does the store accept WIC dollars and SNAP benefits?
 - Is the store frequently busy? You want to be able to easily move a group through the aisles and communicate with ease.
 - Is the site easy to access? Can people walk, bike, or take the bus there if they do not have a personal vehicle?
- Identifying the ideal site has been one of our main challenges for our grocery store tours. In our community, the primary low-income area does not have a grocery store; the most affordable store available is on the opposite side of town and is frequently busy. Other affordable stores either have a limited selection or don't accept WIC benefits. Our solution has been to try different stores throughout the year in order to meet the unique needs of different families in our community.

Recruitment of participants

- Tours tend to work best for groups of six to ten participants. (This assumes people may bring a significant other or a child with them. If too many people attend, it might be difficult for participants to hear the tour leader and may get too crowded in the aisles. Limiting the number of participants also helps prevent people from straying from the group during the tour.
- We offer grocery store tours at different times of the day in order to reach more people. For example, for some parents it is much easier to go to a tour early in the day (i.e.

around 10:00 or 11:00 am) while their children are in school. For people who work full-time, a tour in the evening (i.e. around 7:00 pm) is more convenient.

- Offer an incentive for people to participate such as a grocery store gift card. Make sure to explain that participants must arrive on time and be present for the entire tour in order to receive gift card.

Staffing

Typically, one staff member per tour will suffice. If you want to be able to answer more specific questions, having an additional staff member along can help address that need.

Tour Structure

Introduction

Welcome participants and have them to sign-in. Thank them for taking the time to be here. Inform them of the main goals of the shopping tour. Let them know that this experience is about shopping for nutritious food on a budget and encourage them to ask questions along the way. If participants ask to bring a cart along to shop for groceries, discourage them from doing so as the tour will feel overly crowded with people and carts.

Pass out materials:

- Clipboards
- Paper
- Pens
- Handouts (links included in the appendix): Eating in Season, Reading Nutrition Labels, and Limiting Sugars
- Optional: If you have tour attendees participating in the WIC program, you may provide the WIC Allowable Foods document (link in appendix)

Before you start the tour, ask participants about the strategies they are already using to purchase healthy foods on a budget. Take note of those who give useful tips and invite them to share their strategies with the group during that “stop”.

Stop 1: Impulse Buying at the Front of the Store

- Inform participants about the importance of making lists before coming to the store (i.e. sticking to a list saves money).
- Deals at the front of the store are often the same in the aisle. Usually, these deals are unhealthy choices.
- The “impulse section” is meant to distract shoppers

Stop 2: Fresh Produce (compared with canned or frozen)

- Show participants the seasonal produce in the store.
- Identify how to check for ripeness and freshness.
- Explain how to compare unit prices.
- Point out produce that keeps longer in the refrigerator.
- Review the “Eating in Season” handout with participants and explain that seasonal produce is usually available in abundance and at the best price.
- Compare the pros and cons of canned versus fresh versus frozen produce.
 - Vitamin content, salt content, additives, chemical processing, etc.

Activities for Participants:

- Compare unpackaged and packaged unit prices for the same fruit or vegetable (e.g. the price of a head of lettuce versus the price of packaged lettuce).
- Compare unit costs of different sized cans or frozen bags of the same fruit or vegetable. (This comparison may have to wait until you make it to the canned and frozen aisles, so you may want to write down a couple of prices or common fruits and vegetables for reference later.)

Questions for Participants:

- Do you prefer fruits and vegetables fresh, frozen, and canned? Why? What are the pros and cons?
- What fruits and vegetables are quick and easy to prepare as part of a meal?
- Which fruits and vegetables do you avoid buying because you don't know how to prepare or eat them?
- Optional WIC Specific Question/Activity: Are you familiar with the WIC restrictions for fruit and vegetable purchases?

Information and Talking Points for the Guide

- Fresh, frozen, and canned fruits and vegetables all have their pros and cons.
 - A. Try to steam, roast or microwave vegetables rather than boiling them to minimize the loss of water-soluble vitamins.
 - B. When vegetables are in season, try to buy them fresh and ripe. When they are not in season, buy them frozen and you will get a high concentration of nutrients; these vegetables were picked at the peak of ripeness, then flash frozen to remove bacteria and to lock in essential vitamins and nutrients.
 - C. Canned vegetables tend to lose some of their nutrients during the preservation process, but can also be the most budget-friendly.
 - D. Fresh vegetables have a lifespan of one to two weeks; frozen vegetables can last much longer.
 - E. When you buy canned vegetables, look for “low sodium” labeling on cans. When you open any canned vegetable rinse off the contents to help wash away some of the sodium and other additives.
 - F. Avoid buying canned fruit in heavy syrup; instead, look for fruits canned in fruit juice without added sugar.
- Try purchasing fresh produce in season for a better deal. (Refer to the “Eating in Season” handout.)
- Fresh seasonal produce is often sold in larger pre-bagged quantities (i.e. a 3-pound bag of apples), and often have a better unit price than selecting individual pieces.
- Frozen/canned fruits and vegetables sold in larger sized packages are often cheaper.

- Iceberg lettuce, while inexpensive, does not contain a lot of nutrients. Try replacing it with leafy greens like spinach or just leaf lettuces. The darker the color, the more nutrient-rich the leaves are.
- Optional WIC Specific Information: WIC provides cash-value vouchers only for fresh fruits and vegetables or frozen fruits and vegetables with no added sugars, fats, oils or salt. Potatoes are not allowed at all, fresh or frozen.

Stop 3: Meats and Fish Section

- Explain that trans-fats and saturated fats are unhealthy fats and compare nutrition fact labels on frozen meat patties.
- Show participants how much meat costs and how much they could save if they cut out or cut-down on meat in their diet.
- Discuss healthier meat choices: lean meat (turkey, chicken, fish) and meat that is low in saturated fat.

Questions for Participants:

- What kind of protein does your family consume?

Information and Talking Points for the Guide

- Meatless sources of protein include whole grains, oatmeal, beans, peanut butter, peas, lentils, tofu, soy milk, nuts, and seeds.
- Leaner beef (90% lean meat to 10% fat) is more expensive, but contains less unhealthy fat.
- If you are using ground meat in a recipe and it can be cooked separately, you can cut down on fat further by rinsing cooked meat in a colander with hot water.
- Protein is important for kids' health, but many protein foods are high in fat. It is important to choose lean proteins to help kids stay energized and prevent health problems as they grow.
- Advise participants that meat products like bacon or hotdogs are not encouraged as part of a daily diet, as they are full of unhealthy fats, additives and sodium. Inform participants that a healthy balanced diet contains limited amounts of unhealthy meat products. Instead of telling participants to stop eating these meat products altogether, emphasize that they should be limited.
- Advise participants to buy frozen fish instead of fish that has been thawed since thawed fish should not be re-frozen at home.

Stop 4: Dairy Section

- Explain the difference between healthy (unsaturated) and unhealthy (saturated and trans) fats. Compare the fat content and calcium content in dairy products made with whole milk versus nonfat or reduced-fat milk. Include milk, cheese, yogurt, sour cream.
- Compare nutrition facts labels of yogurts and discuss the amount of added sugar.
- Optional WIC Specific Question/Activity - Identify allowable WIC milk and milk alternatives.

Questions for Participants:

- If you don't already drink low-fat milk, do you think you and your family could transition to low-fat milk?

Information and Talking Points for the Guide

- Are any of the participants dairy free? Other great sources of calcium include broccoli, beans, almonds, soy milk, tofu, calcium-fortified orange juice, and many leafy green vegetables.
- Low-fat milk has the same amount of calcium per serving like whole milk, but a lot less fat. Offer low-fat or fat-free milk and water as the regular beverage option for kids ages two years and older.
- Make sure to look at the amount of sugar added into yogurt.
- Eggs are a budget-friendly source of protein and rarely spoil. They can last for about three weeks in the refrigerator and are very easy to prepare.

Stop 5: Breads Section

- Show participants how to identify whole grains on the list of ingredients.
- Go over nutrition facts labels and the handout on reading nutrition facts labels (link in appendix)

Activities for Participants:

- Choose a packaged loaf of bread and determine whether or not it is whole grain.
- Compare ingredient lists of different breads and explain the labeling terminology:
 - Made with Whole Grains
 - 100% Whole Grain/Wheat
 - Whole Wheat Bread
 - White Whole Wheat Bread
- Look for fiber content on the nutrition label.
- Optional WIC Specific Question/Activity - Identify allowable WIC whole grains.

Questions for Participants:

- What do you know about whole grains? Do you currently eat any foods containing whole grains?
- How can you tell if a food item (e.g. bread, rice, pasta, etc.) is a whole grain food?

Information and Talking Points for the Guide

- Whole grains provide many important nutrients that keep kids healthy. When grains are refined, many of these nutrients are removed.
- Look for good sources of fiber in breads.
- Look for labels that say “whole wheat” as the first ingredient.
 - A. Don’t be fooled by labels that say “stone-ground” or “100% wheat” or “cracked wheat” or “multigrain”.
 - B. Words to look for are: whole grain, whole wheat, whole oats, etc.
- Nutrition labels: Daily Value (DV) rule of 5%, 10%, 20%.
 - 5% of the Daily Value is considered low
 - 10% of the Daily Value is considered a “Good” Source
 - 20% of the Daily Value is considered an “Excellent” Source

Stop 6: Mature Legumes Section

- Explain to participants what legumes are and show examples.
- Show participants dry vs. canned for comparisons below.

Activities for Participants:

- Compare unit prices of canned versus dried forms of the same legumes.
- Compare nutrition facts labels for low-sodium versus regular canned beans.
- Optional WIC Specific Question/Activity - Identify allowable WIC mature legumes.

Information for Guide:

- Beans, peas, and lentils are budget-friendly protein sources that can be used for a variety of meals.
- Compare dried beans to canned. Dry contain no added sodium and are usually a better value than canned beans; but they take longer to prepare.
- If using canned beans, choose low-sodium when possible and rinse before preparing.
- Examples of legumes:
 - A. Beans: Black, garbanzo, edamame (soy), green, lima, etc. are low in saturated fat, high in potassium, iron, and magnesium.
 - B. Peas: Rich in protein and contain healthy carbohydrates.
 - C. Lentils: Come in a variety of colors and all are rich in protein, fiber, many of the B-vitamins, potassium, zinc, magnesium.

- Hummus (garbanzo bean dip) is a good substitute for mayonnaise and is a good source of protein. Another great mayonnaise substitute is mashed avocado.

Stop 7: Cereal Section

- Examine marketing strategies used by food companies to advertise to children (colors, characters, candy-themed cereal) and other misleading advertising such as “healthy” cereals.
- Explain to participants what a serving size means and where it is listed on the package. Ask participants if they normally eat that recommended serving size or more.
- This is an ideal time to teach participants how to properly read food labels in regard to fiber.
 - Soluble Fiber – Absorb water to form dense gel. Makes you feel full and slows down digestion. Examples are oatmeal, flax, beans, lentils, nuts, some fruits and some vegetables.
 - Insoluble Fiber – Remain intact in the digestive tract and help “keep things moving.” Examples are most whole grains, most vegetables, some fruits.
- Point out that it is healthier to buy whole grain cereals that are lower in sugar.

Activities for Participants:

- Compare sugar content in cereals placed at eye level for children to those placed higher on shelves.
- Compare your family’s favorite cereals by checking ingredient lists for different sugars and whole grains (see examples below):
 - Sugars: “ose” words (like dextrose, maltose, sucrose), syrups, nectars, (evaporated) cane juice, sweetener, fruit juice concentrates, sorghum, honey, molasses, maltodextrin, dextrin, malt
 - Whole grains: whole wheat, brown rice, oats, oatmeal, wheatberries
 - Look for a cereal that has whole grains high on the ingredients list and various sugars lower on the list
- Optional WIC Specific Question/Activity - Identify allowable WIC cereals.
- Optional WIC Specific Question/Activity - Point out whether each allowable WIC cereal is a whole grain cereal or not.

Questions for Participants:

- What information do you pay attention to on nutrition facts labels?
- Why is it important to pay attention to the serving size and number of servings when reading nutrition facts labels?

Information for Guide:

- 4 grams of sugar is about 1 teaspoon
- Recommended amounts for daily sugar intake:
 - Adult females – 6 teaspoons/day or less
 - Adult males – 9 teaspoons/day or less

Stop 8: Fruit Juice, Sports Drinks, and Carbonated Drinks Section

- Show participants drinks that may look like fruit juice but are not actually 100% fruit juice.
- Inform participants of appropriate daily amounts of fruit juice.
 - 4 to 6 ounces of 100% fruit juice per day is the maximum amount recommended for children (ages 6 months and up)
 - 8 ounces of 100% fruit juice per day is the maximum amount recommended for adults
- Discuss the handout on sugars in different beverages (see link in appendix)

Activities for Participants:

- Read labels to correctly find fruit juices that are 100% fruit juice.
- Find out how much sugar is in soda and various sports and energy drinks.
- Optional WIC Specific Question/Activity - Identify allowable WIC fruit juices.

Information for Guide

- Preschool children should get no more than 4-6 ounces of juice per day.
- Sports drinks like Gatorade are not good substitutes for fruit juice.

Topics to discuss throughout the tour**Boxed Snack Foods (Processed Foods)**

- These are generally not healthy and often not filling because they contain little nutritional value (referred to as empty calories).
- Replace potato chips with corn chips, unsalted nuts or air-popped popcorn.
- Replace fruit snacks with real fruit or dried fruit.
- Low-fat cheese sticks are a good source of calcium and protein.

Canned Soup

- Check for the amounts of sodium.
- Suggest to make a homemade soup (in a slow cooker) which tastes better, has more nutritional value, has less sodium, and can be tailored to personal preferences.

Tuna

- Purchase tuna canned in water, not oil.

- Tuna is a good source of protein and is useful when you need to make a fast meal.
- Chunk light tuna is likely to have less mercury than albacore.
- Children shouldn't consume tuna more than once per week.

Canned Fruit and Vegetables

- Purchase canned fruit in light syrup or fruit juice only.
- To reduce sodium levels in canned vegetables, rinse the vegetables off before cooking.

Frozen Meals

- Frozen meals are sometimes cheaper, but not as filling; and often contain high levels of saturated fats, sodium, and preservatives.

Vitamin Supplements

- The Linus Pauling Institute recommendations for adults are:
 - Take a daily multivitamin/mineral that contains no more than 2500 IU's or 750mcg of vitamin A
 - Aim for at least 400mg of vitamin C daily from food or supplements
 - Aim for 2000 IU's of vitamin D daily from food or supplements
 - Aim for 120mcg (men) or 90mcg (women) of vitamin K of vitamin D daily from food or supplements
 - Aim for 1000mg of calcium daily from food or supplements
 - Look for USP Verified sign on label
- The Linus Pauling Institute recommendations for children are:
 - Give your child a children's multivitamin
 - Ensure your child gets 600-1000 IU's of vitamin D daily from food or supplements
 - Ensure your child gets 1000-1300mg of calcium daily from food or supplements
 - Look for USP Verified sign on label

APPENDIX

Sample Flier



New sessions available!

Budget Friendly Shopping Tours
 hosted by
The Healthy Youth Program
Linus Pauling Institute

The Healthy Youth Program invites you to join us on a **free**, guided grocery store tour at Safeway. This tour will help you learn to stretch your food dollars further, read food labels, and plan healthy, balanced meals for your family.

Each household will receive a **\$20 gift certificate**. Sessions are limited to 10 participants each.

Please register early!

2 sessions are available:

- Monday, April 29 from 11 am to 12 pm
- Wednesday, May 1 from 7 to 8 pm

Location:
 Safeway—Downtown Corvallis
 450 SW 3rd Avenue
 Corvallis, OR 97333

To Register:
 Call 541-737-8014 *or*
 Email:
 hyp@oregonstate.edu *or*
 Linus Pauling Institute
 Healthy Youth Program
 307 Linus Pauling Science Center
 Corvallis, OR 97331

Registration

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

I will attend: ___ Wednesday, April 24
 ___ Monday, April 29

How did you hear about us?

Community Outreach PEP Benton County Health Dept. Friend

Helpful Links:

Eating in Season Handout

<http://lpi.oregonstate.edu/sites/lpi.oregonstate.edu/files/pdf/hyp/eating-in-season.pdf>

Reading Nutrition Labels Handout

<http://lpi.oregonstate.edu/sites/lpi.oregonstate.edu/files/pdf/hyp/how-to-read-food-labels.pdf>

Limiting Sugars Handout

<http://lpi.oregonstate.edu/sites/lpi.oregonstate.edu/files/pdf/hyp/limiting-sugars.pdf>

WIC Allowable Foods Link – Available in multiple languages

<http://public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyPeopleFamilies/wic/Pages/foods.aspx>