

Project Ideas

There are many different projects that fulfill the goals of Student Body. The projects that follow are ideas only. Members do not need to limit themselves to the projects on this list.

“Make Healthy Choices” Project Ideas

1. Encourage families to eat a variety of healthy foods (one key to good nutrition!) by distributing a grocery shopping list organized within the [USDA Food Guide Pyramid](#). Start with the [Healthy Shopping List Template](#), and then fill in specific items.
2. Encourage young people to drink water as a way to control weight, maintain healthy skin, and stay well. Make sure school vending machines offer bottled water as a choice. Encourage the athletic department to install a water cooler or drinking fountain in the exercise room. Post information about water’s health benefits nearby.
3. Hold a "Tastes Great–Eat Right" nutritious snacks contest. Invite young people to submit the recipe for their favorite nutritious snack. Identify the 10 most nutritious entries, then have those youth prepare their snacks for judges to select the three most tasty choices. Announce the winners at a "tasting event" for all students, complete with samples of the winning snacks. Distribute the top 10 recipes, along with tips for nutritious snacking.
4. Teach upper elementary children the basics of food safety, like washing hands, rinsing fruits and vegetables, cleaning work surfaces, etc. Demonstrate problem situations and good practices and give the kids a chance to practice while preparing a simple snack. Encourage the youngsters to follow food safety procedures when preparing snacks and helping with meals at home.
5. Inform athletes that good nutrition can improve their performance. Start by distributing questionnaires asking the current season’s athletes about their eating habits. Explore what nutrition myths they have picked up. Schedule a series of sessions, just before sports practices, that explain how to eat right for that sport. Arrange for a health professional to talk with the players. Provide nutritious snacks and drinks after practice once a week.
6. Start a "Never Say No to Breakfast" campaign. Set up displays inside the school’s entrance highlighting the many breakfast food possibilities. Hold food tastings and some short cooking lessons. Have a nutritionist explain the importance of breakfast. Distribute the [Never Say No to Breakfast! Handout](#). End the campaign with a free breakfast celebration in the school cafeteria.
7. Educate young people about the dangers and warning signs of eating disorders. Distribute the [Warning Signs of Eating Disorders Flyer](#). Provide information about where young people can seek help if they believe they or a friend may have an eating disorder. Warn them about dangerous Web sites that actually encourage and promote eating disorders as a "lifestyle."

8. Have a "NutriDay" at school. Ask the cafeteria to serve no sweets or soft drinks. Close off "junk food" and soda vending machines. Offer a nutritious snack break at mid-morning. Ask students to donate the money they would have spent on low-nutrition snacks that day to a local agency that feeds hungry people, such as a food pantry or homeless shelter.
9. Publish a book of healthy recipes that use only ingredients that may be purchased with food stamps. Ask Cooperative Extension agents, social service agencies, and food pantries to distribute them to families in need. Also conduct a food drive to collect nutritious, nonperishable foods to stock a local food pantry.
10. Collect newspaper, newsletter, and magazine articles related to dietary supplements, like vitamins, herbal remedies, "energy boosters," etc. (Ask family and consumer sciences teachers, health professionals, and family members to help collect articles.) Organize the collection according to the specific type of supplement it covers. Use critical thinking skills to analyze the related articles. (The [Tips for Analyzing Information](#) and [Evaluating Information Worksheet](#) may help.) Do the articles agree? Which information comes from the most reliable sources? What do the articles recommend about using supplements? Create a bulletin board that shares accurate information about two or three supplements that might be most "tempting" to young people.
11. Sponsor a seminar for students who are following or considering a vegetarian diet. Provide the [Vegetarian Food Guide Pyramid](#) and tips for healthy eating as a vegetarian. Explain different kinds of vegetarianism—many vegetarians do eat fish, eggs, and dairy products. Invite participants to return for a "veggie potluck" two weeks later. Discuss the nutritional strengths and weaknesses of the foods participants bring to that lunch or dinner.
12. Promote the importance of consuming enough calcium, especially among young women. (Only 19% of adolescent girls consume enough calcium each day. That can lead to serious health problems, including osteoporosis.) Set up a morning snack bar that sells calcium-rich foods like milk, cheese, yogurt, fortified orange juice, etc. Offer free tastes of different kinds of calcium-rich foods. Distribute tips on how young people build bones with calcium and exercise.