



HEALTHY LIVING MATTERS

Connecting Policy to the Future

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A Houston/Harris County Childhood Obesity Prevention Collaborative

Early Care & Education/Out-of-School Time Sector Edition December 2016



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SPOTLIGHT FROM THE FIELD

Holy Comforter Lutheran School in Kingwood, TX recently went through a two-year process to become recognized as a Center for Wellness within the Evangelical Lutheran Church. This recognition is given to those who come up with innovative ways to help families be healthy.

As a result of this process they created a [Pinterest page](#) that contains boards for healthy breakfast, lunch, and snack ideas. Because this school does not offer meals, Ms. Colleen Engel, the school's director, promotes the Pinterest page during parent orientation so they know the importance of preparing and sending healthy food with their children. In addition to the Pinterest page they developed a Healthy Lunch Award, which is given daily to the child who brings the healthiest lunch. Ms. Engel does this each day and uses this opportunity to talk about healthy food choices with the children.

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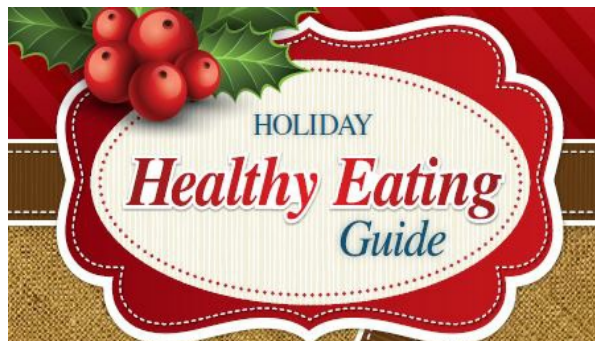
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According to Ms. Engel, "The change has been amazing! No more Lunchables and more healthy fruits and veggies." She also mentioned that staff and kids are more engaged in talking about their food choices and why they are (or aren't) healthy.

We applaud the efforts that centers like Holy Comforter Lutheran School are making to improve the health of our young ones and hope that others feel motivated to do so as well. If your facility or program is doing great things around nutrition and/or physical activity, and would like us to share your story, please [contact us](#).

EAT



Whether planning a staff holiday party or preparing holiday treats for the children in your care, the holidays are a great time to think about ways to eat healthy. The [American Heart Association](#) developed a great guide full of tips and recipes that make it easy to stick with your healthy eating habits throughout the holiday season. [Click here](#) to download the *Holiday Healthy Eating Guide*.

PLAY



Make the resolution to get your kids active in 2017! Head Start Body Start developed the *Get Moving Today!* activity calendar for early care and education programs. This calendar lists an activity per day to help get kids moving and stay healthy. To download the free calendar, [click here](#).

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The [Texas Workforce Commission](#), in collaboration with the [Governor's Office](#) and [Texas Education Agency](#), is hosting the 2017 *Texas Early Childhood Learning Summit* in Dallas and Houston. They are currently seeking presentations that will give early childhood teachers the tools they need to effectively lead their classrooms and provide high quality programming.

We greatly encourage those of you with expertise in and a passion for health to submit a proposal and share your knowledge with others in the field. If you need assistance with the proposal process or training materials, please reach out to us at info@healthylivingmatters.net. We have sample proposals, handouts, and slide decks on obesity prevention that you can use. The deadline for proposals is January 9, 2017. To

download the Call for Proposals, [click here](#).

FOR PARENTS & FAMILIES



sesameworkshop™

Sesame Workshop has developed a bilingual, multimedia program called *Eating Well on a Budget*. This program is designed to help support families who have children between the ages of 2 and 8 and are coping with uncertain or limited access to affordable nutritious food. [Click here](#) to explore the tools in the kit, which include quick facts, resource guides, and more!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Preschool Teachers Adventure Conference

Saturday, January 28, 2017 from 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

10555 Spring-Cypress Rd, Houston TX, 77070

[More information](#)

R.T. Garcia Early Childhood Winter Conference

Saturday, January 28, 2016 from 8:30 AM - 3:30 PM

Harris County Department of Education, 6300 Irvington Blvd, Houston, TX 77022

[More information](#)

To view more events, visit our [Calendar of Events webpage](#).