**Healthy Ever After: Kids!**  
 Torrance Memorial Medical Center

and Torrance Unified School District

Prepared by Emily Parker, MS, RD

**Session 1c: “Munch, Crunch, Lunch!”  
 – Third through Fifth Grade**

I. **Objectives:** Following this session, students will be able to:

1. Identify at least two physiologically-relevant reasons we eat lunch.
2. Discuss consequences of eating an inadequate, excessive, unbalanced, or otherwise unhealthy lunch.
3. Name a health benefit of decreasing sodium intake.
4. Name a healthy benefit of decreasing added sugar intake.
5. Plan a nutritionally balanced lunch; link each food in the lunch to specific body parts, systems, and functions.
6. Describe how to decrease the risk of food borne illness when preparing and eating a packed lunch.

II. **Instructor:** Classroom teacher and/or parent docent

III. **Target Audience:** Torrance Unified School District elementary school students

IV. **Setting:** Classroom or Multi-Purpose Room

V. **Materials:**

1. “US Food Plate” poster (Grades 3-5)
2. “Healthy Eating from Head to Toe” (Large poster and 8.5”x11” tear offs – one per four students in the class, plus two for the teacher)
3. “Reasons for Lunch” cards
4. Visual Aid Sheets/PowerPoint Slides
5. Props from home:
   * 1. food packages/boxes with labels to compare for sodium and sugar
     2. insulated lunch box, ice pack
     3. thermos if you have one
6. Snack Items
   * 1. Consult with TUSD Dietitian – should contain at least two food groups and be a lunch-type food (Whole Wheat Tortilla, Cream Cheese, Sandwich Meat, Veggies?)
     2. Napkins (one per child)
     3. Vinyl gloves for teacher/docents

VI. **Total Session Time:** 45 minutes

1. **Lesson Time:**  20 minutes
2. **Activity Time:** 15 minutes
3. **Snack Time:** 10 minutes

VII. **Preparation**

1. Review notes, practice lesson
2. Collect/compile materials
3. Snack preparation
4. Docents/teachers/children need to wash their hands before handling food—docents/teachers must wear vinyl gloves when preparing food for the children
   * 1. Have napkins available for each child

VIII. **Lesson Outline**

1. Introduction
   * + 1. Instructor introduction(s) using fruit/vegetable name (i.e. “Mrs. Moore Mango” or “Linda Lemon”)
       2. “*Hope you all have had a nice summer. I’m so glad to be back* (or “*to be here*” if you are not a returning docent) *to teach Healthy Ever After lessons. This year’s first lesson is called, “Crunch, Munch, Lunch!”*
       3. *“Pretty much EVERYONE eats lunch - and whether we pack a lunch from home or purchase lunch here at school, we all can use some tips on healthy mid-day meals.”*
       4. *“To start, I have a question for you. I’m going to ask it, and then we will have some quiet time.”*
2. **PURPOSE OF LUNCH DISCUSSION:**“*So, here is the question* (Show slide with question)*:* ***“What is the purpose of lunch?”*** *Let’s take a minute to think about it on our own silently. Got your answer? Great. Then, everyone quiet while we each take one of these little cards. After we all get a card, we will have a discussion.”* (Pass out “Reasons for Lunch” cards – about 10 of each color, one per student. Note: If holding assembly, instead of passing out cards, ask for a volunteer to come up and read each card as the three reasons are discussed (three volunteers total)) *You can look at your card and decide if you agree with what the card says. Please follow along with me and raise your hand/card when you see and hear me share the words printed on your card.*

If you are in a classroom, have a teacher or other Healthy Ever After docent get ready to take notes on the board. As the discussion progresses you will write down key ideas/responses.

* + - 1. *“Let’s see. The first possible reason I have here is* (Move to corresponding slide)*:* ***“To trade food with friends so that we can get rid of stuff we don’t like and eat more chips and cookies.”*** *Who has a card with those words? Hmmm. What do you think? Please raise your hand and I will call on you to share.”*   
           
         “*Great ideas. You’re right. If a person trades for lots of less-healthy foods (think cookies, chips, fruit snacks), their body might have some problems. For example, do cookies have protein in them? Not usually. So, a person’s body would lose out, and they may get hungry pretty fast because they didn’t eat protein, not to mention a whole bunch of other things they missed if they only ate cookies or chips.”*

*“Besides, eating just cookies and chips would cause a person to take in lots of salt (also called* ***sodium****) and sugar.”* (Move to “Watch Out” slide) “*Not so good for us.”*

*“As you probably remember, taking in extra sugar is not so good for our bodies. In fact we should limit the added sugar in our foods (that is sugar that is not naturally found in fruit, vegetables and unflavored milk) to fewer than 12-36 grams (3-9 teaspoons of sugar) per day. Does anyone remember what can happen to us if we take in a lot of sugar?”* (Allow kids to respond; move to decaying teeth and stomach ache slide as appropriate – discuss).

*“We have not talked much about sodium before – the important thing to remember about sodium is that if a person has high blood pressure, taking in too much sodium can lead to problems with their heart and kidneys (kidneys are organs that filter our blood for us and make urine to help clean our blood). The most sodium we should have in a day is 2,300 mg. So, in general, we want to eat fewer high-sodium foods and not use much salt.”* (Move to slide with kids jumping)

*“Be sure to compare labels and choose lower sodium foods. If one serving of a food has more than 500 mg of sodium, you may want to try to find a different food to eat or reduce the sodium in your other foods…”* (You can bring in a few food packages to point out sodium on the label if you would like to.)  *“Also, try not to add salt to your food. That way your heart and kidneys will stay healthy and happy and your body will be strong and able! So, when you’re choosing your lunch, think less sugar and less sodium.”* (You can also mention that the school nutrition services is working hard to keep sugar and sodium low in school meals.)

* + - 1. *“Let’s move on to the next possible reason for lunch* (Move to corresponding slide)*:* ***“To eat as fast as possible so that I can play for as long as possible.”*** *Who has a card with those words? And, what do you think? Please raise your hand and I will call on you to share.”* (Call on kids and listen to their thoughts.) *“Now, playing is great. But, if we eat in a hurry, we may not eat enough, or we could eat too much. We might end up with a stomachache besides.”* (Move to “Enjoy Your Food” slide) *“Taking time to enjoy our food and eat the right amount is important.* (If your school has kids play before eating you can mention that it’s great that the students get to play and then eat so that they are able to enjoy their meals.)
      2. “*Next possible reason* (Move to corresponding slide)*:* ***“To have a brain break, move around and refuel my body.”*** *Who has a card with those words? And, what do you think? Please raise your hand and I will call on you to share.”* (Call on kids and listen to their thoughts.)
      3. *“Absolutely. This statement lists really good reason to have a lunch recess. Does anyone remember how many minutes per day we should move our bodies?* (60 minutes) *That’s right. So, running around and playing at lunch is a super healthy (and fun!) thing to do. And, of course, eating gives new fuel to our bodies. Does anyone have any other ideas about the purpose of lunch? What is missing from our list?”* (Allow students to share (as time permits) what they think the purpose of lunch is. Keep a running list on the board, categorize if appropriate. Collect cards from students.)

1. **HEALTHY EATING FROM HEAD TO TOE POSTER***“Great discussion everyone. The next thing we are going to do is take a look at how different foods help specific parts of our bodies. Check out this awesome poster. Let’s take a minute to look it over.”* (Pause to let kids look at “Healthy Eating from Head to Toe” poster) *“What stands out to you? Could any of these foods be part of a lunch?”* (Allow kids to respond.) *“Great observations and ideas.”*
2. **PLANNING A HEALTHY LUNCH – GROUP ACTIVITY**
   * + 1. *“Now we are going to challenge ourselves a little. We are going to have a bit of a competition – so we need to break up into teams of three, four, or five people. Each group should have a “Healthy Eating from Head to Toe” handout, and each person should have a “Munch, Crunch, Lunch” worksheet to fill in. Okay. Let’s get into groups.”* (Work with other docent(s) and teacher(s) to break kids up and distribute handouts and worksheets – if in assembly, may be difficult, you may want to just call on kids for ideas and not do this as a group activity.)
       2. *“Each team is* (Or “*We are”*) *going to try to plan a lunch that contains foods to help each part of our bodies AND that fits the MyPlate model* (move to MyPlate slide)  *– remember this poster?”* (Show US Food Plate poster recall guidelines: half of our plates should be filled with vegetables and fruits, lean and plant proteins make up about ¼, whole grains/starches ¼, calcium rich foods, healthy oils and fats, drink water, less added sugar/salt*.*)

*“You might have also seen the “Five Star Meal” information here at school. For a healthy lunch, we should have foods from at least three categories and one fruit or vegetable…”* (Discuss as appropriate and kids are interested, show Five Star slide, move back to MyPlate slide) *“For our activity today, our lunches need to have a vegetable, a fruit, a starch or whole grain, a protein food, a calcium-rich (dairy) food, and maybe even some healthy fats. A beverage (water or milk) is a good idea too. Whoa. This is going to be a little tough. But, since you’ve been learning about nutrition for a while I am sure you all will be able to come up with some great meals. As you fill in your lunch menu, draw a line to the one or more body part(s) that the food helps. Once you finish, have one person in your group raise their hand. And, GO!”*  
(Assist students with spelling, etc. as needed.)

* + - 1. *“Okay. We have our first meal. I’ll come over and take a look. Other teams, keep working.”* (Look over team’s meal plan and critique as needed. If they have met all criteria, award each student a sticker. Repeat as teams complete their plans. Discuss as a class if appropriate.)
      2. *“Awesome meal planning. I think (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_) meal will taste awesome, and the (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_) would really fuel a person’s body well. And, remember, we all need to drink plenty of WATER too, right? So, a bottle of water would be a good thing to add if you don’t already have one listed on your work sheet. Great job, everyone.”*

1. **FOOD SAFETY**
   * + 1. *“Now, the final thing to think about here is, if you bring this lunch from home to school, does it need to stay cold? Does it need to stay hot? The reason I am asking is not just because cold foods like yogurt and deli sandwiches taste good cold and hot foods like soup or stir fry taste good hot. There is an even MORE important reason than that: if a cold food gets too warm, or a hot food cools down too much, it can grow BACTERIA. These bacteria are teeny, tiny, microscopic buggers.* (Show slide with bacteria.) *And they can make us SICK. YUCKO!”*
       2. *“Have you ever heard someone say they had food poisoning? Well, if they had food poisoning, actually it is officially called “food-borne illness” - it probably means they ate some of these nasty bacteria. The bacteria made them sick (vomiting, diarrhea, fever). No fun. We can help stop these bacteria from growing by cooking foods well, keeping cold foods cold and hot foods hot. If a food is going to be out of the refrigerator for more than 2 hours, it should be kept cold with some ice.”*
       3. *“That’s why I pack my lunches in an insulated lunch bag like this* (show your lunch bag/box, move to lunch box slide) *and I add a frozen ice pack like this* (show ice pack). *Does anyone else use one of these?”* (Allow kids to respond.) “*Thanks for sharing. Another idea is to add a frozen water bottle to your lunch so that it keeps everything cold as the ice melts, and then you have a nice cold bottle of water by the time lunch comes around.”*
       4. *“But what about the hot foods? Sometimes I pack leftover soup or pasta that has been in the fridge overnight. I pack the refrigerated leftovers in a container with an icepack, and warm them in the microwave before eating lunch. Heating them is really important. Bacteria die when they get too hot, so heating my leftovers until they are steaming hot is a good idea.”  
            
          “Also, there are these containers called “thermal containers” that have nice thick walls that seal up very tightly; they can be used to keep hot foods like soup hot for a long time. You just scoop the food (when it’s hot) into the container and seal it up. The food stays hot for a few hours. Does anyone use one of these?”* (Allow children to respond.)
       5. *“Now, we don’t always have to pack our food on ice or in a thermal container. Foods like crackers, cereal, trail mix, uncut fresh fruit, and plain water don’t have to stay cold or hot.”* (Respond to any questions that come up.)
       6. *“Some other things we can do to help prevent food poisoning are to wash our hands REALLY well before we cook or eat. We should use soap, water, and be sure to scrub our hands together for* ***20 seconds****.”*(Move to hand washing slide)*“An easy and fun way to make sure you’ve washed your hands for 20 seconds is to sing “Happy Birthday” twice while you wash. Let’s practice washing our hands and singing!”* (Pretend you are washing your hands with the students and sing the “Happy Birthday” song twice while you scrub.) “*Great job everyone! Now, you can sing the song silently in your head when you are washing your hands…”*
       7. *Another way to control bad bacteria in our food is to keep our lunch boxes, dishes, kitchens, and eating areas nice a clean. Have you ever noticed how hard our school staff works to keep our lunch area clean? They do that so no one gets sick. Pretty nice of them, huh? Maybe we can be sure to say thank you to our lunch monitors and staff today.”*
       8. *“Well, anyway, it’s important to be smart about food safety – keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold to keep bacteria from growing. Clean our hands, and anything that touches our food.”*

Source for Food Safety Guidelines: United States Department of Health and Human Services, www.foodsafety.gov

1. **CLOSING***“Phew! We have talked about a lot today. We talked about WHY we have lunch, what kinds of foods we can put into a healthy lunch that fuels all different parts of our bodies, and how to keep our food safe so that as little bad bacteria as possible grow. Now we are all ready to make awesome lunch choices this school year. Thanks everyone. Let’s enjoy our snack: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”*

X. **Snack:** Distribute and enjoy the snack! Discuss how each part of the snack helps different parts of our bodies, how the snack could fit into a healthy lunch.