

Head Start prepares for new school year, needs volunteers

By Lori Jay-Linstrom, Parent Involvement Coordinator

There is still time to send in your Head Start application. Siletz Tribal Head Start continues to accept applications for the 2014-2015 school year.

We have Head Start centers in Siletz, Salem, Portland and Lincoln City. For an application, please call 800-922-1399 or 541-444-2532.

We are looking forward to an exciting new school year with our new and returning students and families.

Our parents have an array of volunteer opportunities. They can volunteer in classrooms by participating during class time. They can help with building and lawn maintenance. Parents can volunteer their time by serving on the Parent Committees, Policy Council and our Health Services Committee.

We need volunteers every year, not only parents but community members too. It is easy to become a volunteer. Once the required packet is completed and returned, you will be on your way.

If you would like to volunteer for the Head Start program in your area, please do so. Your help is needed in a variety of ways. Please call the numbers above for more information or contact the classroom directly.

Orientation for all Head Start sites took place in August. Head Start staff returned to the classrooms to get them ready for our students and parents.

This year, we will work on School Readiness Goals; family fun nights; Policy Council; parent meetings; volunteer training; heights and weights; dental screens; developmental testing; mom, dad and grandparents breakfasts; plus much more. As you can see, we are going to have a busy year.

Embracing Greens

By Nancy Ludwig, MS, RD, LD, Siletz Tribal Head Start Nutritionist

As part of my role as a consultant nutritionist to Siletz Tribal Head Start, I offer information for families. This segment focuses on green leafy vegetables and ways to teach children to explore them as you integrate green leafy vegetables into your family meals.

Getting to know dark leafy greens

Attributes: Dark leafy vegetables range from earthy to peppery in flavor. Though we group greens together for their texture, pronounced flavor and general uses, they actually come from several vegetable families. Some are cabbage-like while others are simply the tops of root vegetables such as beets and turnips.

Nutrition: Greens are low in calories and loaded with vitamins and minerals. Greens are high in Vitamins A and C, iron, calcium and potassium. Milligrams of calcium per half cup cooked greens is 90 for kale, 75 for mustard, 125 for turnip and 178 for collard (calcium in Swiss chard, beet greens and spinach may be less available because of oxylates).

Choices: Beet greens, collards, dandelion, kale, mustard, turnip, chard or Swiss chard (to name a few) greens can be purchased fresh in bunches, cut and washed fresh in bags, frozen or canned.

Seasons: January through April for collards, dandelion greens, kale and mustard greens; June through October for beet greens; October through March for turnip greens.

Selection: Look for fresh tender deep green leaves that are free of blemishes. Avoid bunches with thick coarse-veined leaves.

Amount: Allow about half pound per person (remember that greens cook down to one-fourth to one-eighth of their original volume, depending on type).

Storage: Store in the refrigerator and use as soon as possible. Generally, remove and discard damaged, yellowed or wilted

leaves. Rinse greens well (both sides) under cold running water and pat dry. Hidden dirt often clings to the undersides of the leaves. Greens often last longer if they are not washed until you plan to use them.

Preparation: Tear out and discard tough stems and center ribs. Use leaves whole, cut/tear into bite-sized pieces or shred.

Cooking methods

Boiling: Coarsely chop or shred greens (such as collards, kale, mustard greens or turnip). Place about 1 pound greens in 4- to 5-quart pan with 1 inch water and boil covered until tender to bite (5-15 minutes). Drain.

Microwave: Rinse and chop greens. Place 1¼ pounds (with water that clings to leaves) in a 3-quart non-metallic baking dish. Cover. Microwave in high for 7-10 minutes, stirring after 3 minutes. Let stand, covered, for 2 minutes. Greens should be tender to bite.

Stir-Fry: Add to other vegetables for stir-fries. Stir fry in hot oil (such as sesame or olive) until tender to bite (3-5 minutes).

Serving Ideas: Add to soups. Either use leftover cooked greens or add them fresh to soup and heat until the greens are tender. Season with butter, oregano, lemon juice, vinegar or tamari – excellent as a side dish with almost any entrée.

Engage your children in the learning process

You don't actually need to know all about nutrition to know that leafy greens are good for you. If you include them daily, you and your family will benefit. People who eat more greens tend to be healthier in general (and have fewer cravings for sweets).

Children may need to see you eat greens and see them served at the table many times before embracing them. They might not even eat them until they are adults. They will know about them, however, and be more likely to include them in their meals later in life. If they

are not exposed to greens, they may never experience the health benefits.

When children grow up in families, they learn from "what they see" not "what they are told." If they are not exposed to healthy eating, they may – or may not – learn about it.

When children don't learn about nutritious foods, they continue the cycle and another generation is lost to the benefits of nutrient-dense greens. Head Start teaches about nutrition and supports families.

Include your children in activities. Invite them to help you plant and harvest greens. Engage their senses in the store or farmers market to help pick them out. Talk about how the green colors are different.

Touch the leaves and talk about textures. Mustard greens look and feel very different from kale or collard greens. Some leaves are large and thick or waxy. Some are curly. Some have purple or red colors in them. Some mustard green leaves have little fuzzy hairs to feel (that disappear in cooking).

In the kitchen, let your children wash and tear the leaves, which can be rinsed in the colander after the children have their sensory experience. While you are "playing" with the greens (or preparing them), you can talk about how they have vitamins and minerals that make us strong and help our eyes.

Simple Greens

- 1 bunch fresh greens, chopped (can be a variety of greens)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil, butter or margarine
- 1-2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar or lemon juice

Clean and chop fresh greens.* Add approximately 1 inch of water to a large stockpot. Add the greens. Bring the water to a boil and watch the greens shrink. Reduce heat and simmer until tender to the bite (varies 5-15 minutes).

Drain nutrient-rich water and reserve (in the freezer for soup stock). Add oil, butter or margarine to the warm greens. Add apple cider vinegar or lemon to taste. Season with salt and pepper, if desired, and serve.

It is amazing what a little acid from vinegar or lemon does to improve the flavor of greens! Serve hot or cold. If serving cold, liquid oil would be the best choice.

* Greens can be wild, grown in your garden or purchased from the store. Select from the many choices, such as dandelion, nettles, lamb's quarter, sorrel (wood or sheep), kale (many varieties), beet greens, collards, mustard, turnip, spinach, Swiss chard, bok choy or cabbage (to name just a few).

Please let me know what you think of these tips and recipes. Siletz Tribal Head Start offers my time at no cost to you to support family nutrition over the telephone at 503-588-5446. Please contact me if you have nutrition concerns about your Head Start child.



Siletz River Festival • Aug. 2, 2014 • Siletz, Oregon
Sponsored by the Siletz Valley Firefighters Association

Photos by Jazmyn Metcalf

Larry Annunzio of the Siletz Valley Firefighters Association helps several youngsters operate a fire hose during the festival. The event also included live music, food and games. A poker tournament held July 5 helped raise funds for the association.