



# 2025 Life Challenge STUDY PACKET for Juniors & Seniors



## 4-H Life Challenge Contest

Thursday, May 29 • 8:30 a.m.–Noon

Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County conference rooms  
444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A, Lincoln

**Register by May 19 by calling 402-441-7180  
or email Kristin at [kristin.geisert@unl.edu](mailto:kristin.geisert@unl.edu)**

# STUDY PACKET CONTENTS

At the contest, the hands-on learning stations, multiple choice quiz and oral reasoning sections will be based on the information in this packet. All materials listed below are for both Juniors (ages 8–11) and Seniors (ages 12–18) except as noted.\*

**Well-Being** (source: *Nebraska Extension's Wake Up 2 Well-being*)

- Wake Up 2 Well-being Activities

**Fitness** (source: *Nebraska Extension's Youth in Motion 4-H manual*)

- Let's Stretch

**Art** (source: *Ohio State University Extension's Get Started in Art 4-H manual*)

- Balance/Rhythm/Harmony/Unity Activity: On Balance (2 pages)

**Public Speaking** (source: *National 4-H's Picking Up the Pieces 4-H manual*)

- Speak Up!

**Wardrobe Planning** (source: *Nebraska Extension's Shopping in Style 4-H manual*)

- Clothing Inventory (3 pages)

**Sewing** (source: <https://treasure.com>)

- How to Sew Snaps (3 pages)

**Personal Finance**

- Steps to Count Change (developed by Extension Associate Kristin Geisert)
- Big Change - Practice the Skill (source: [EasyTeacherWorksheets.com](https://www.easyteacherworksheets.com))
- Turning Cents into Dollars [**\*note: for Seniors only**] (2 pages) (source: *National 4-H's Financial Champions: Money Moves 4-H manual*)

**Personal Safety**

- Netiquette (source: *4-H Tech Changemakers*)
- Strong Passwords (source: *4-H Tech Changemakers*)
- Emergency Information (developed by Extension Associate Kristin Geisert)

**Childcare** (source: *4-H/Army Child & Youth Services' Babysitting Student Guide 4-H manual*)

- Am I the Right Person to be a Babysitter?
- Babysitter's Magic Bag

**Nutrition**

- Nebraska - Top Producer of Popcorn (2 pages) (developed by Extension Associate Kristin Geisert)
- Food Labels — Ingredient Lists (source: *Leah's Pantry Food Smarts Adult Workbook*)
- Superstar Ingredients [**\*note: for Seniors only**] (source: *Leah's Pantry Food Smarts Adult Workbook*)
- Save a Place for Me [**\*note: for Juniors only**] (source: *Nebraska Extension's Making Food for Me 4-H manual*)
- Tablesetting — Informal and Formal Styles (source: *Lancaster County 4-H's Table Setting Contest - Procedures & Guidelines* handout)

# Wake Up 2 Well-being Activities



## Connection Challenge

**Social**-Ask students to make small talk with someone they don't know at least once/day for the following week. This can be done while walking to class, walking to the parking lot, walking in your neighborhood, waiting in line at the grocery store or coffee shop, or waiting for an elevator or bus.



## Get Rid of the Negative!

**Emotional, Intellectual**-Give each student a piece of paper and ask them to write the last negative thought that they had about themselves. Ask them to wad up the paper and toss it in the trashcan. Then ask them how it felt. We innately think of the negatives first, but we can train ourselves to focus on the good stuff instead.



## Morning Motivation

**Emotional, Intellectual**-Give students each a Post-it note big enough for them to write a positive quote about themselves like "You are Kind" or "You are amazing!" Provide them with markers if they want to get creative. Encourage them to post them on their mirror and to look at them each morning.



## What's Happening Today?

**Intellectual**-Bring a current event with you to class and ask students to take 3-4 minutes to research it with their workbooks and share their opinions of what went on in the current event.



## How Are You Feeling?

**Emotional, Social**-Distribute fruit snacks in individual packages to all students. Ask the students to pick the color or shape of the snack that best describes how they are feeling and why. Ask students to share why they picked what they did and to rate the intensity of that feeling from 1-10.



## Needs vs Wants

**Financial**-Distribute a piece of paper to students and ask them to divide the sheet in half with a line. Label one side-Wants and the other side Needs. Then have them get up and walk around the room and look at each other's sheet. Ask for their perspective on what they saw.

# Let's Stretch

Try each of the stretches shown below. On the line under each photograph, write the part of your body that you feel the stretch.



Arms behind back, chest stretch

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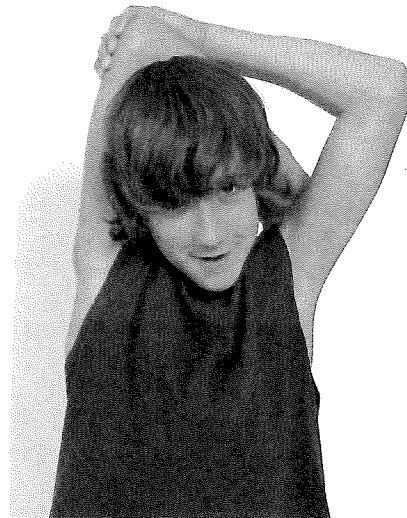
Straight-legged hamstring stretch

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Spinal twist stretch

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Tricep stretch

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**PROJECT AREA:**  
**BALANCE/RHYTHM/  
HARMONY/UNITY**

**Activity 7: On Balance**

**INTRODUCTION**

When you ride a bicycle or stand on top of a narrow beam, you work to keep your balance and to not fall over. In art, **balance** means how you arrange the elements of your piece (such as lines, shapes, colors, etc.) so that your design looks like it weighs the same on both sides.



**WHAT TO DO**

Using the butterfly shapes below, decorate the wings of one to demonstrate formal, symmetrical balance. Decorate the wings of the other to demonstrate informal, asymmetrical balance. Use shapes, colors, and other design elements. If you repeat this project, make new decorations each time.



## TALKING IT OVER

**SHARE** Which butterfly did you enjoy designing more, the symmetrical or the asymmetrical one? Why?

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**REFLECT** Some people like formal balance, while others like informal balance. Do you have a preference? Explain.

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**GENERALIZE** What's the difference between something that is out of balance and something that is informally balanced?

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**APPLY** How does the expression "Moderation in all things" relate to the concept of balance?

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## LEARNING OUTCOMES

**Project skill:** Creating images that feature formal and informal balance

**Life skill:** Practicing creativity

**Educational standard:** NA-YA.5-8.2: Using knowledge of structures and functions

**Success indicator:** Creates images that feature formal and informal balance

## BACKGROUND

Balance can be created not only by shapes, but by color, light, perspective, movement, and other artistic elements.

**Formal balance** is symmetrical, meaning that you can draw an imaginary line through the middle of your design, and the elements take the same amount of space on each side of it.

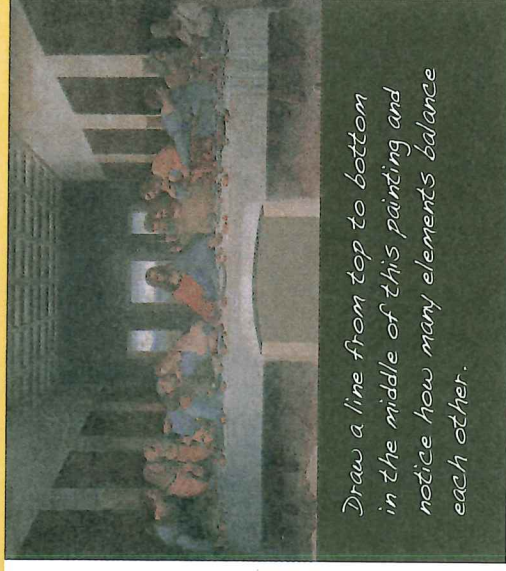
**Informal balance** is asymmetrical, meaning you can draw an imaginary



## DID YOU KNOW?

A **mandala**, from the Sanskrit word meaning **circle**, is a good example of radial balance.

*Draw a line from top to bottom in the middle of this painting and notice how many elements balance each other.*



line down the middle of your design and the sides look balanced but are not exactly the same.

**Radial balance** means all elements radiate from a center point in a circular fashion. The petals of many flowers grow this way, for instance.

## MORE CHALLENGES

Collect images of related objects (fruit, toys, dinnerware, etc.) and make two copies of each image.

Use the sets of images to create two arrangements, one that demonstrates formal, symmetrical balance, and one that demonstrates informal, asymmetrical balance.

Glue your finished collages to paper, and explain their significance to your project helper.

# Speak Up!

**Communication Skill:**  
Presenting a personal opinion and defend it with statements of evidence

**Life Skill:** Communicating with others – debate issues

**Educational Standard:**  
NL-ENG.K-12.12: Using spoken language to accomplish their own purposes

**Success Indicator:**  
Chooses an opinion and defends it with details.

**H**ow you feel about an issue is important. But more important, is being able to defend your **opinion** or point of view. In this activity, you will have a chance to think about how you feel about something and then defend your point of view with your helper.

## Making CONTACT

First, think of an issue or opinion that you feel strongly about. Discuss some ideas with your helper or another adult. Use the chart below to organize your thoughts about that opinion or point of view that you have recorded on the chart. Then, list statements that defend your opinion. Present a talk on this opinion to your club or class.



### Speak Up!

Opinion or Point of View	Support Statements
In my opinion _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	One reason I feel this way is _____ _____ _____ In addition, _____ _____ _____ My final reason is _____ _____ _____
I conclude that _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____

### Defending My Opinion Checklist

- Is my opinion easy to understand?
- Do I need more *evidence* to defend my opinion?
- Are my statements different from each other but still directly related to my opinion?
- Did I list my most convincing statements for my opinion?
- Is this clear, complete and ready to present to an audience?



# Clothing Inventory

## success indicator:

you will be able to conduct a clothing inventory and be able to identify clothing needs

## life skills practiced:

planning, organization, keeping records, critical thinking, problem solving, decision making

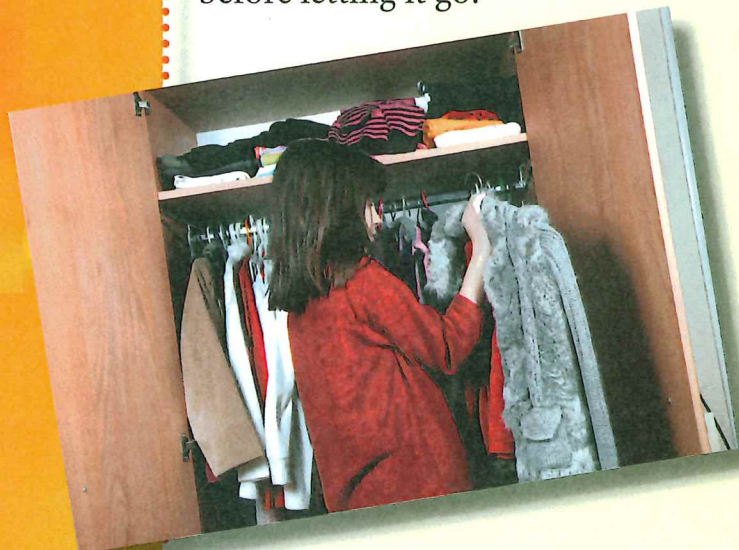
## project skills practiced:

wardrobe planning

**A**t one time or another, you have probably stared at a closet full of clothes and complained, “I have nothing to wear.” Maybe you thought your clothes were not right for the occasion or didn’t fit your mood. However, you can collect clothes and accessories over time when you develop a wardrobe plan. A good plan has three steps — first, take a current inventory; second, remove clothes you don’t wear; and third, add items you need to complete your wardrobe.

Clearing out clothes you no longer wear, need, or want is one purpose of doing an inventory. Take time to launder, repair, or alter the clothes that need attention so you can wear them again.

Clear out the clothes you don’t or can’t wear anymore. You can donate slightly used clothing to charity organizations, church clothing drives, or individuals. Your donations could be great additions to someone else’s wardrobe. You also might be able to restyle an unwanted garment, so look at it carefully before letting it go!





## activity: clothing inventory



Use the Clothing Inventory included in this unit to create an inventory list of all your clothes, shoes, and accessories. Determine the condition of each item, and note it on the sheet. You may need to make several copies so that you can be sure to list everything in your wardrobe. If you do this on a computer, you can sort your clothes into categories (e.g., jeans, T-shirts, sweaters, etc.).

After listing each garment, and its condition, analyze use patterns for each garment based on the season. Analyze the versatility of the garment based on other things you might wear with it.

By doing this exercise each season, you can decide what you need for every occasion. The best part of this process is never being done! You can change your ward-

robe plan as you change sizes or as your personal preferences for clothes change. Be sure to add new purchases, and delete garments from the list as you delete them from your wardrobe!

### My Clothing Inventory (Sample)

My name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Clothing category and description	Condition	Season for wear	Mix and match with what?
Shirt – white cotton T-shirt	New	Spring - Fall	All skirts, pants, jeans
Shirt – short sleeve cotton shirt – red plaid	Good	Spring - Fall	All skirts, pants, jeans
Shirt – black cotton flannel, long sleeve	Good	Fall - Winter	Jeans, corduroy pants
Shirts – cotton fleece sweatshirt – red	Fair – many washings	Fall - Winter	Jeans, corduroy pants

## My Clothing Inventory

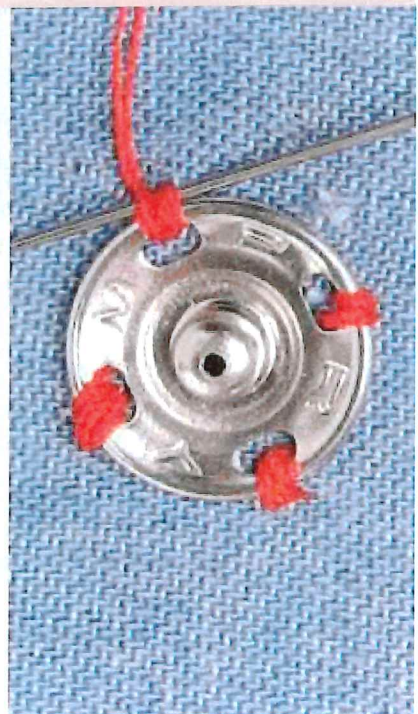
My name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Clothing category and description	Condition	Season for wear	Mix and match with what?



# *How to Sew* SNAPS



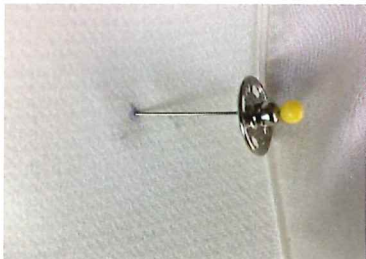
## Parts of a Snap

All sew-on snaps come with two parts that 'snap' together. One side of the snap is called the **ball** and has a little-rounded knob sticking up. The other side is the socket, and the ball fits into the **socket**. Snap! When they fit together, they connect and join up to fasten your garment.

The ball side of the snap button is sewn on the overlap side (inside of the top flap) of the fabric and then matched up with the socket on the underside of the garment.

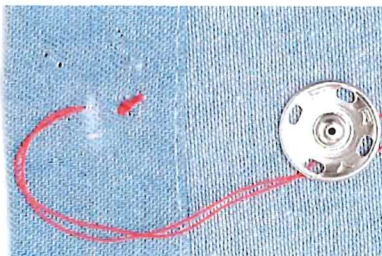
### Step 1 – Separate and Mark

Separate the halves of the snap and grab the ball side first. Using a pin, mark the position of your ball snap on the underside of the top flap.

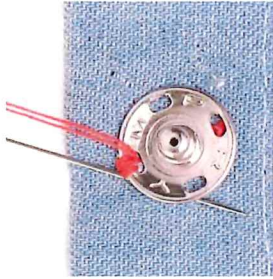


### Step 2 – Sew Through Holes

Thread a needle and make a knot at the end of a double thread.

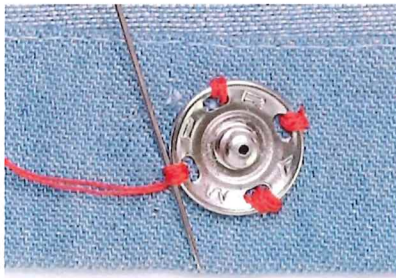


Using a normal overstitch, pull your needle through the fabric and through one of the holes at the edge of the snap. Pull the thread through that hole 2-3 more times.



Move to the next hole by pushing the needle across through the top layer of fabric. Make sure your thread does not show on the right side of the garment.

Then work through each hole using 2-3 stitches to secure it.



Make a loop and send your needle through the loop to create a knot.

Push the needle under the snap so thread end is concealed and the excess thread can be cut off.

### Step 3 – Repeat

Now repeat the above steps for the socket side of the sew-on button snap. The socket side will be sewn on the top of the underside of the flap. See below for tips to perfectly align the other side of the snap.

### How to Line Up A Snap

You can mark and measure the position of the second side with a pin, or you can rub tailor's chalk on the tip of the ball and press it over to the place where it will meet the socket. The chalk that rubs off will mark the exact spot for the sewing of the other half. Then, you will have a perfect match for your sew-on snap fasteners.





## Steps to Count Change

1. Start with the pennies to reach a multiple of 5 or 10.
2. Next use a nickel or a dime as you get to a multiple of 25.
3. Use quarters until you reach a dollar.
4. Use one-dollar bills until you reach a multiple of 5 or 10.
5. Use five-dollar bills until you reach 10 or ten-dollar bills until you reach 20.

## Examples

The purchase amount is \$7.39. The customer gives the store clerk a \$20 bill. The goal is to add in the fewest number of coins and bills as possible to reach \$20.00 starting with the lowest value coin. Use the coins to bring the value to a whole number.

- The clerk takes one **penny** and says \$7.40.
- She takes a **dime** and says \$7.50
- She takes 2 **quarters** and says \$8.00.
- She takes 2 **one dollar bills** and says 9.00, 10.00.
- She takes a **ten dollar bill** and says 20.00.

Rather than offering the customer \$12.62, she should count it back from the total. The tricky part is grabbing the right coins in order to give the least amount of coins back to the customer. Nobody wants to walk away with a bunch of dimes and nickels and no quarters.

Let's try a harder one:








The purchase amount is \$5.61 and the customer gives the clerk \$10.01. In this case, the customer wants to avoid getting any pennies back, so the clerk should put the penny in the cash drawer and consider the sale amount is now \$5.60. Now the clerk will count to herself, 5.70, as she takes a dime. 5.75, as she takes a nickel. 6.00, as she takes a quarter. 7.00, 8.00, 9.00, 10.00, as she takes 4 one dollar bills.

# Big Change – Practice the Skill

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Find the change.

		<b>Cost of item</b>	<b>Customer gives</b>	<b>The change is</b>
1		\$4.52	\$5	_____
2		\$1.25	\$5	_____
3		\$0.84	\$1	_____
4		\$7.03	\$10	_____
5		\$2.51	\$5	_____
6		\$5.36	\$10	_____
7		\$6.07	\$10	_____
8		\$2.98	\$5	_____
9		\$0.15	\$1	_____
10		\$2.16	\$5	_____

# TURNING CENTS INTO DOLLARS

**YOUR BOTTOM LINE:** You'll learn how interest is calculated on savings and savings options.

## WHAT MAKES CENTS?

Can you greatly increase your money without winning a lottery or inheriting money? You sure can. You can save some of the money you earn or are given. When you save money regularly it can double over time. You will then have money for future needs and goals that may include a class trip and other priorities.

Doubling your money and turning cents into dollars means you should start saving now. Call it Pay Yourself First — P.Y.F. Before you spend any of your money for food, movies, music or other wants, put your money into an interest-earning account. Money put into a **savings account**, **money market account**, **savings bond** or a **mutual fund** will earn interest or a dividend. Interest is a payment for the use of your money. Dividend is a share of profits received by owning **stocks** in a company or mutual fund.

“He who will not keep a penny,  
will not have many.”

– Proverb

## Let's See How Interest Is Determined



It's not difficult to calculate interest but it does mean using a math formula.  
The formula is:

### **P x R x T = Interest**

**P** is the **principal**, the amount of money you are saving.

**R** is the **rate**, the amount of money paid to you by a financial institution for saving.

**T** is the amount of time the principal is saved (days, months, years)

Let's say you saved \$1,000 in a savings account earning five percent for each year you leave it in the bank. Using the above formula, this is how much you will have earned at the end of the first year!

$$\$1000 \text{ (principal)} \times .05 \text{ (5\% rate)} \times 1 \text{ (time, one year)} = \$50$$

Add \$50 to your principal of \$1,000 and you'll have \$1,050 at the end of the year. You have received \$50 of simple interest.



# MONEY MATH

What is the simple interest and total amount saved in a savings account at the end of one year for each of the following:

1. \$600 at 4 percent interest \_\_\_\_\_
2. \$750 at 6 percent interest \_\_\_\_\_
3. \$900 at 3.5 percent interest \_\_\_\_\_

Compounding occurs when the interest earned remains in your account. You will earn interest on the original amount deposited (principal) and on the accumulated interest. In the example of \$1,000 earning 5 percent interest, you will be paid \$50 of interest the first year. In the second year, you will earn interest on \$1050.

$\$1050 (\text{principal} \times .05 (5\% \text{ rate}) \times 1 (\text{time})) = \$52.50 \text{ interest.}$

Year	Beginning Amount Principal	Interest Rate (5%)	Annual Interest	Year-end Savings Principal/Interest
1	\$1,000	0.05	\$50.00	\$1,050.00
2	\$1,050	0.05	\$52.50	\$1,102.50
3				
4				
5				

## RULE OF 72

A quick method to determine how long it takes for your money to double in value is the Rule of 72. It's based on compounding concept. You divide 72 by the interest rate to get the number of years it will take for your savings to double. Here is the simple Rule of 72:

$$72 \div \text{interest} = \text{years}$$

Let's go back to the original \$1,000 that was deposited in a bank at 5 percent interest. It would take how many years to double the \$1,000? 72 divided by 5 percent equals 14.4 years.

If you could find another type of saving option that paid 8 percent, then your money would double in how many years?

\_\_\_\_\_





# NETIQUETTE

Created by combining the words  
internet and etiquette.

## NETIQUETTE GO



**Be Brief!** Keep the message to the point, provide context, and don't skimp on details. An ideal length would be between a short single paragraph and (at the most) two paragraphs. A lengthy message will lose its audience.

## NETIQUETTE GO



**Emoticons & Emojis!** Use emoticons sparingly to enhance the message - don't overuse them. 😊

## NETIQUETTE NO



**Do Not Reply All!** Use the Reply All feature with good judgment. Do not include recipients who are not concerned with the message.

## NETIQUETTE GO



**Have a Subject!** Including a concise and clear subject line will get people's attention and elicit an appropriate response.

## NETIQUETTE GO



**Read It Twice!** Check the message for misspellings, punctuations, and grammatical errors. Many operating systems have these features built into their programs.

## NETIQUETTE NO



**Don't Send Large Attachments!** Check with the recipients before sending any attachments larger than 5MB. Use alternative storage options like cloud systems such as OneDrive.

## NETIQUETTE GO



**Be Yourself!** Write your messages in your own unique style; don't try to pretend to be someone else.

## NETIQUETTE NO



**Don't use CAPITALS!** Do not capitalize words; this is considered shouting at someone. If your intention is to emphasize, state it clearly.

## NETIQUETTE NO



**Don't be a Flame!** Do not create controversies, spread rumors, or slander individuals. Refrain from excessive complaining and annoying others.



# STRONG PASSWORDS



**Length:** most platforms require a password to be at least 8 characters, but many security experts recommend passwords to be at least 12 to 14 characters in length.



**Unpredictability:** passwords should not include names, dates, street addresses, birth cities, common words (like the word password), etc. A mixture of numbers, symbols, capital letters, and lowercase letters is recommended. Capital letters should be in the middle of the password, not reserved for the beginning or end.



**Keyboard Patterns:** using a special pattern on a keyboard to create a password should be avoided. This was once considered a way to create random passwords, but it is no longer effective.



**Phrases:** Security experts are now recommending that phrases be incorporated into a password, but the phrases should not be famous/well-known. They should be abbreviated and not be word-for-word. For example, "I ate mashed potatoes for dinner" could be "eye8M@SHEDpot@toe\$4d!nner".



The same password should **not** be used for multiple accounts.



It is also recommended to **not** share passwords **in-person, over the phone, in a text message, or by e-mail**. Legitimate companies will not ask for a password.



## Important Emergency Information

**Mom/Guardian Cell Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dad/Guardian Cell Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Relative or Friend – Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Cell Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Neighbor Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Cell Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Zip Code** \_\_\_\_\_

**Police – 911, Non-emergency for Lincoln area 402-441-6000**

**Fire – 911**

**Ambulance – 911**

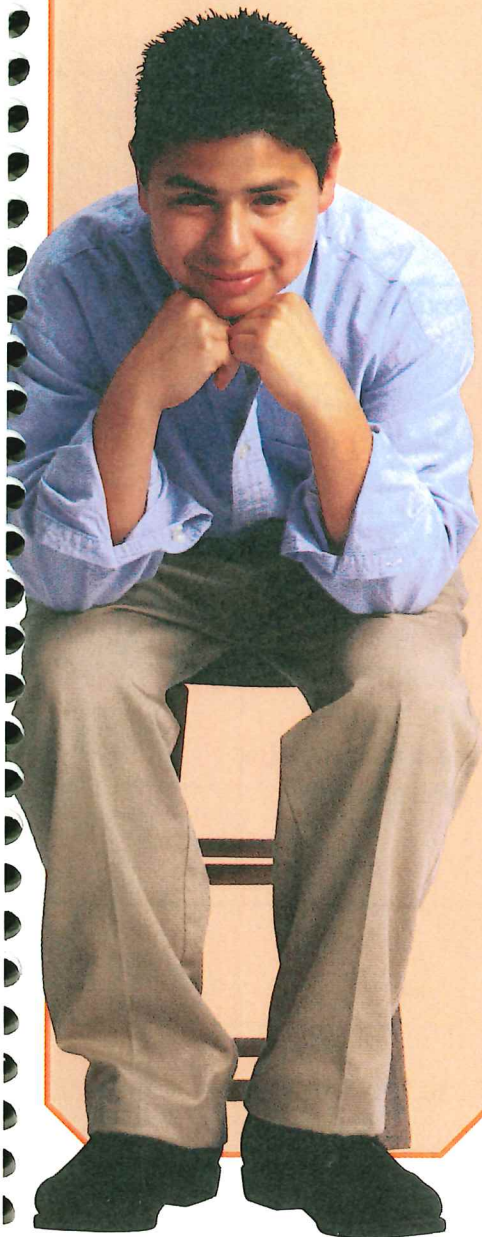
**Poison Control – 800-222-1222**



# Am I the **Right Person** to be a **Babysitter?**



Being a babysitter may be the first paying job you will have. It can be fun as well as rewarding. However, it is a big responsibility. Before you decide to take that first babysitting job, think about the following points. Knowing what your strengths are is the first step to understanding what kind of a babysitter you will be.

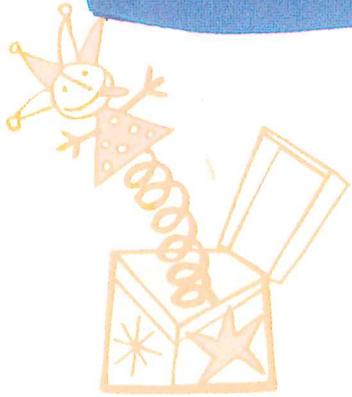


## Babysitter Questionnaire

TRUE

FALSE

- |  |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. I like children.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I know lots of games to play with children.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I am willing to learn what I need to know.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. I try to be calm and understanding in arguments.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. People tell me I am good with children.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. As a babysitter, I realize keeping the child safe and happy is my first priority and that what I want to do comes second. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. I like to read aloud.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. I know some first aid and am willing to learn more.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. I am responsible.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. I am confident in talking with adults.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. I am in good physical health.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. I realize that all families are different and I can be flexible.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. I know it is important to write down all instructions from parents.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. I know I should not gossip about the family I babysit for.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



**As** a babysitter, your job is to keep the children safe and happy. This means watching them closely and playing with them. Bringing a "magic bag" full of fun things along with you when you babysit makes this task easier for you and exciting for the children. The bag can be a pillow case, or a shoe box, an old backpack, whatever is available as long as it is sturdy. It should contain a collection of inexpensive, safe, age-appropriate items found at home or purchased at a yard sale or thrift shop.

## Possible items are:



Colorful adhesive bandages or Boo-Boo Bunny to soothe an upset child



Flashlight for emergency lighting or shadow wall games



Children's movies (check with parent/guardian) for rainy day/quiet time



Story books, music, board games for quiet play



Deck of cards for simple games



Rubber or plastic ball for stimulating activity



Notebook to record information



Pencil, pen, washable, non-toxic markers

Puppets

Colored paper, non-toxic crayons, tape

Disposable (vinyl or plastic) gloves

Stickers - assorted stickers for the children to use in their art projects

Stickers - "reward" stickers that read "Great job", "Thanks!", "You're terrific", etc. to be used as surprise "rewards" for positive behavior

Stuffed animals

Miniature vehicles

It is best not to include food items.



# Nebraska – Top producer of Popcorn



## **Mushroom Popcorn**



Mushroom popcorn, as the name suggests, boasts a round and compact shape that closely resembles a mushroom cap. Its key feature is its ability to pop into a dense, large, and rounded ball with fewer hulls compared to other popcorn varieties. This unique shape makes mushroom popcorn ideal for coating with a variety of flavors, such as caramel, chocolate, or savory seasonings, as it holds up well under coatings. Its robust structure allows for an even distribution of flavors, delivering an exquisite taste with every bite.

## **Butterfly Popcorn**



In contrast, butterfly popcorn is known for its characteristic butterfly-like shape when it pops. As the kernels heat up, the moisture inside causes the popcorn to burst open, forming irregularly shaped pieces with "wings" that give it its name. These wings provide a larger surface area, perfect for catching toppings like butter, salt, or other seasonings. Butterfly popcorn is commonly found at cinemas and is a staple for snacking enthusiasts who enjoy the traditional popcorn experience.

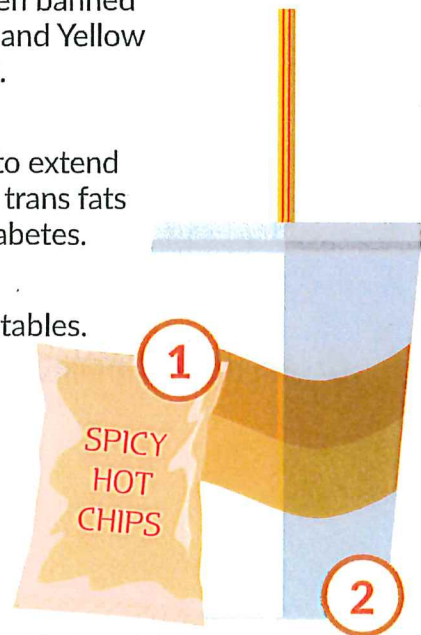


## Food Labels—Ingredient Lists

### ■ Have you ever seen a strange item on an ingredient list?

Some of these are just new names for ingredients you already know. But others may be chemicals or allergens you don't want to consume. Your best bet when shopping: Choose foods with a short list of ingredients you recognize!

- Food dyes** can be natural or artificial. Several food dyes have been banned in the United States. Others, such as Blue #1, Blue #2, Red #40, and Yellow #6, are banned in other countries but are still available in the US.
- Hydrogenated and Partially Hydrogenated** fats and oils are used to extend the shelf life of baked goods. However, these can contain harmful trans fats that can increase your risk for heart disease, stroke, and Type 2 diabetes.
- Fructose** is a type of natural sugar found in fruits and some vegetables.
- High fructose corn syrup** is a sweetener made by concentrating the fructose from corn. Manufacturers use it—especially in soft drinks—because it is cheaper and sweeter than white sugar. But because the sugar in high fructose corn syrup is so concentrated, it's easy to eat too much.
- Carrageenan, xanthan gum, guar gum, and locust bean gum** are added to thicken and improve texture. Eating them too often can affect digestive health.
- Sucrose** is the same as white table sugar.
- Monosodium glutamate (MSG)** is a flavor enhancer. It is used to “stretch” meaty flavors in cheap, processed foods without much natural taste. **Yeast extract** and **hydrolyzed proteins** are used the same way.
- Aspartame, saccharin, acesulfame, and sucralose** are artificial sweeteners with few or no calories. These are controversial because they may increase your appetite for sweet foods.
- Natural flavors** do not add nutrients to food. They may come from any natural source, even strange ones like tree bark or bugs!
- Citric acid** comes from citrus fruits. It is used to give foods a sour flavor or as a natural preservative.



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## Superstar Ingredients

Do you like to cook? Which of these healthy ingredients would you like to add to your menu?

### Olive Oil

- » **Benefits:** Olive oil helps control blood sugar and reduces inflammation.
- » **Uses:** Daily! Best for lower-heat cooking. Coat veggies and meat for sautéing or baking. Make salad dressing: mix 3 parts olive oil with 1 part citrus juice or vinegar.

### Salmon and Other Cold-Water Fish like Sardines and Mackerel

- » **Benefits:** Omega-3 fatty acids improve brain health and protect against inflammation and heart disease.
- » **Uses:** Bake or broil in the oven with a little olive oil, salt, and pepper. Note that canned fish is an easy, less-expensive option often with similar nutritional benefits to fresh fish.

### Spices like Cinnamon, Ginger, Chile

- » **Benefits:** Some spices have health-promoting qualities. Cinnamon can help lower cholesterol and blood sugar. Ginger can help with digestion.
- » **Uses:** Add to anything for a little extra spice, from baked apples to curry.

### Unsalted Nuts and Seeds

- » **Benefits:** Nuts provide healthy fats, vitamins, and minerals that decrease your risk of diabetes and help manage your blood sugar and weight.
- » **Uses:** Eat as a snack, top salads and stews, add to yogurt, or try with different nut or seed butters.

### Green Veggies like Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Kale, Collards

- » **Benefits:** Calcium, folic acid, and vitamin K help keep bones strong and protect against heart disease. They're full of fiber!
- » **Uses:** Steam and drizzle with olive oil or salad dressing. Chop and toss with olive oil and garlic, then sauté or roast at 425° for about 10 minutes or until soft.



### Garlic

- » **Benefits:** Garlic lowers cholesterol and helps regulate blood sugar and blood pressure. It also supports a strong immune system.
- » **Uses:** Add minced, fresh garlic to soups, stews, stir-fries, and sauce. Add powdered garlic (not garlic salt) with butter or oil to mashed potatoes, cooked noodles, or couscous.

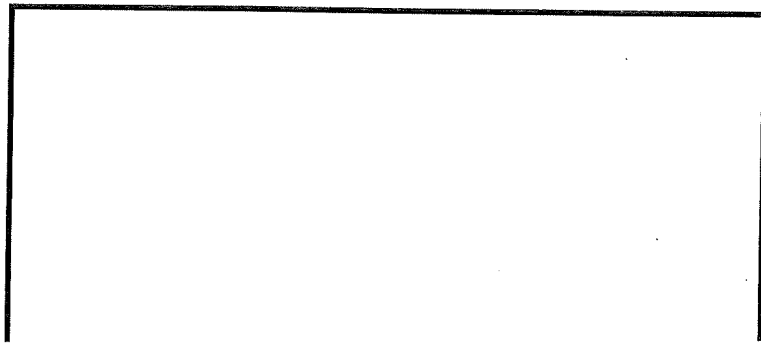
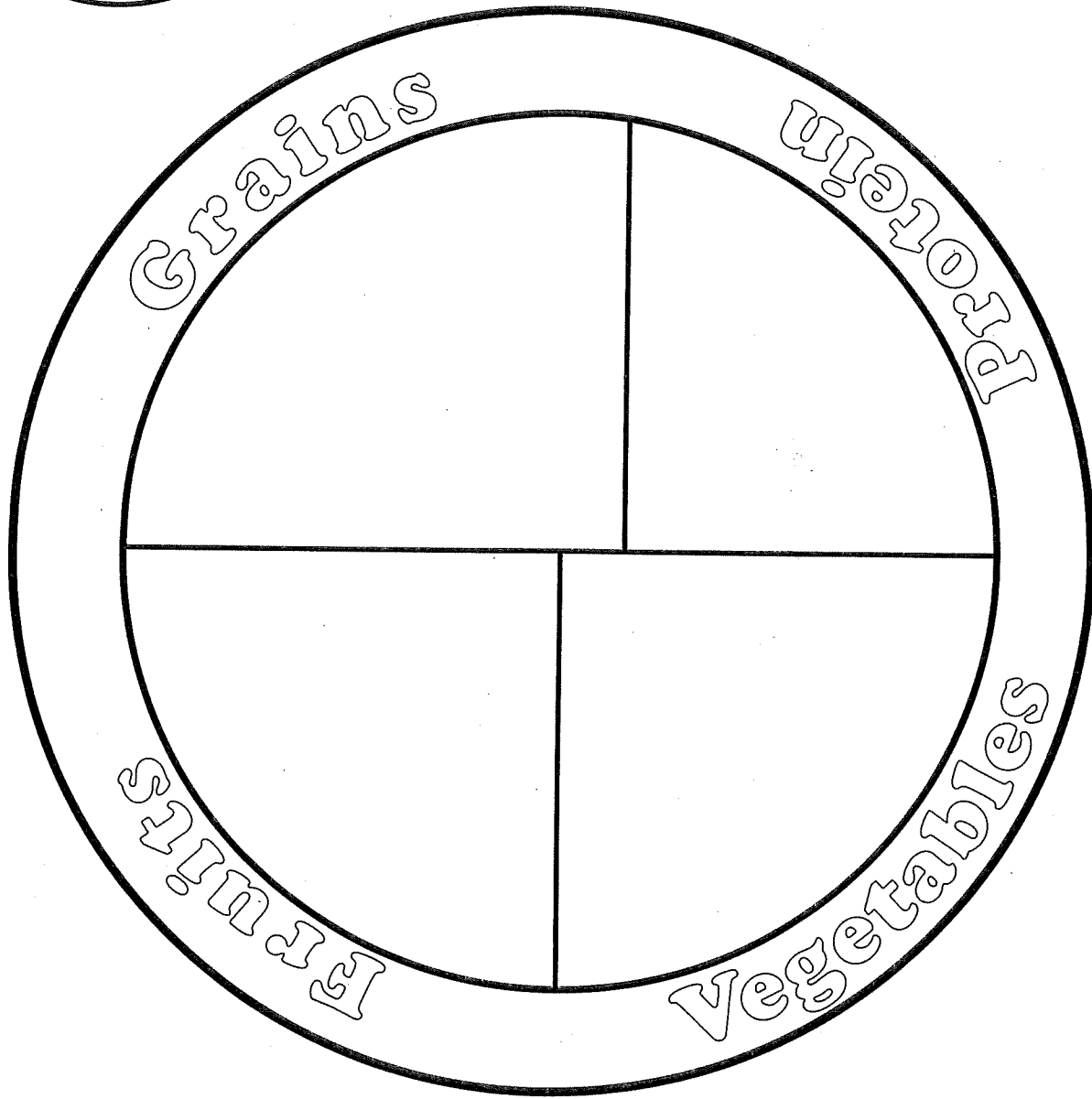
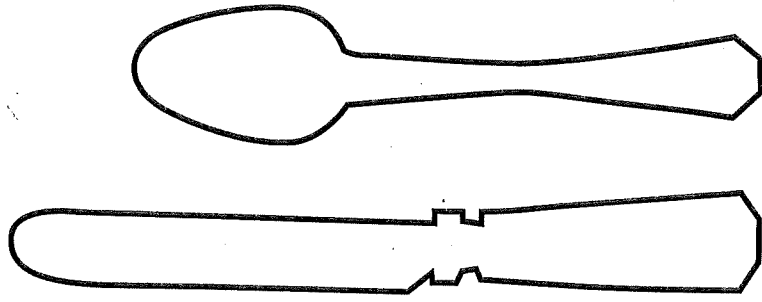
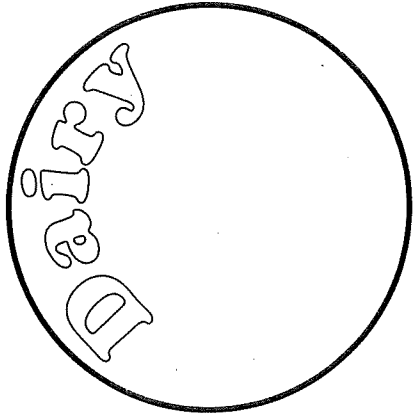
### Berries

- » **Benefits:** Berries are full of cancer-fighting nutrients, and lower the risk of heart disease and cancer.
- » **Uses:** Eat as a snack, add to yogurt or cereal. Note that frozen berries are an inexpensive, easy way to enjoy berries all year round.

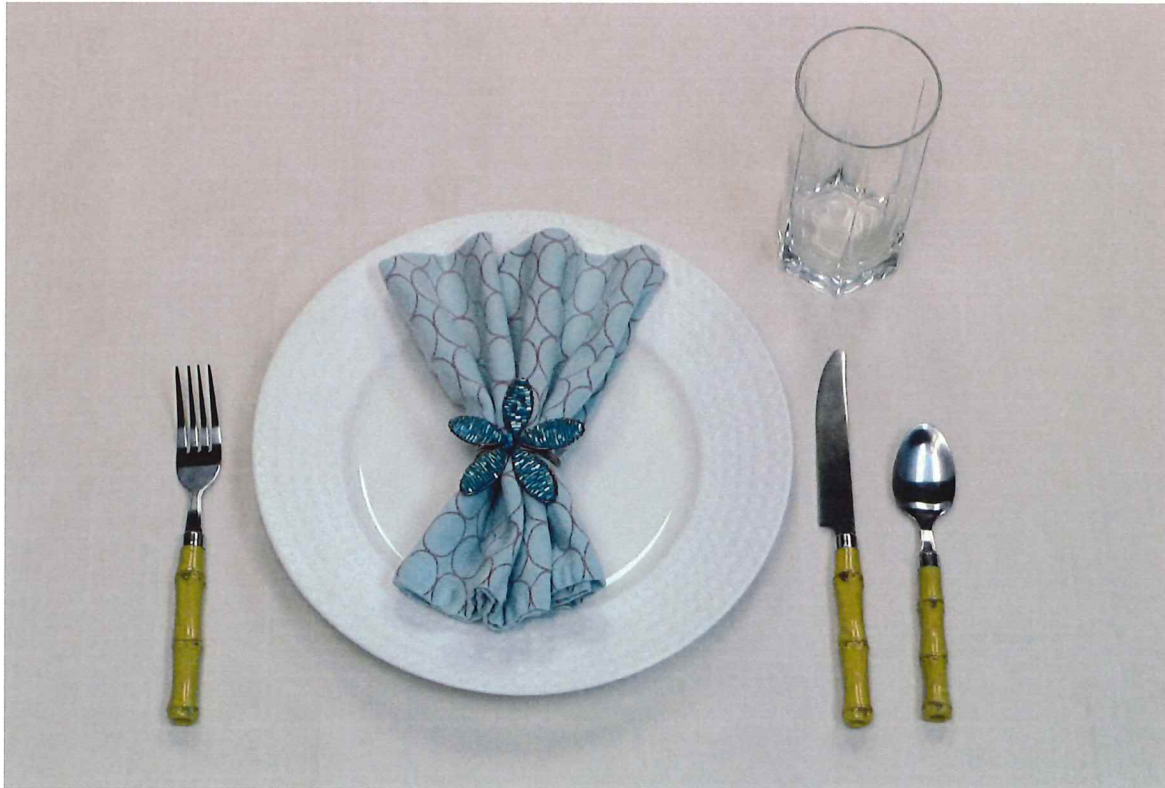
**eatFresh** 

EatFresh.org contains hundreds of recipes using the above ingredients.

# SAVE A PLACE FOR ME



## Informal Tablesetting



## Formal Tablesetting

