What is Choose Health?

Choose Health is a New York State 4-H initiative to put more emphasis on the Health-H in 4-H Clubs, 4-H Camps, after-school programs, and statewide 4-H events. Choose Health also addresses the National 4-H priority of Healthy Living – eating healthy foods in appropriate amounts and engaging in regular physical activity.

Why Choose Health?

Choose Health came about because of concern about the increase in childhood obesity. However, research shows that even kids who are not now overweight are developing habits that can lead to overweight in the future. Therefore, Choose Health is aimed at all kids because all kids need to learn how to be healthy.

Choose Health Behavior Goals

Aiming toward these goals will help all kids be healthy and maintain a healthy weight.

- Replace sweetened drinks with low-fat milk and water
- Play actively 60 minutes a day
- Eat more vegetables and fruits
- Eat fewer high-fat and high-sugar foods and more nutrient-rich and high-fiber foods
- Eat only as often and as much as needed to satisfy hunger
- Limit screen time to two hours or less a day
- Promote healthy behaviors
How does my club do Choose Health?

Choose Health isn’t a 4-H Project or a 4-H Activity like Public Presentations. Instead, Choose Health is more like the 4-H Pledge - a way of thinking and being as a 4-H member.

With the new office of Choose Health Officer, your club will do many things to put the Health-H - and especially the behavior goal of active play – front and center in your members’ minds. Each month the Choose Health Officer will lead (or ask another member to lead):

- **Roll Call for Health** – an active way for members to show they’re at the meeting
- **The Health-H Challenge** – a goal to build in more physical activity into kids’ lives
- **Health-H Tips** – to help meet the Health-H Challenge
- **The Health-H Challenge Check** – where members will stand to show how they met the previous month’s Health-Challenge
- **Let’s Move Activity** – to supplement the game(s) your Recreation Leader has planned to get kids moving
- **Extra Ideas** – to do if your club wants to do more with Choose Health

Each of these activities should take no more than 5 minutes and many will take less. Choose Health shouldn’t add much time to your meetings, but it can add meaning!

For an overview of Choose Health Officer activities, see the following page.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Roll Call</th>
<th>Monthly Health Challenge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Introduce Choose Health Move More Month</td>
<td>Act out a favorite way to be active</td>
<td>Play actively 60 Minutes a day</td>
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<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>Stretch Yourself</td>
<td>Lead a 15 second stretch</td>
<td>Stretch before and after active play – and whenever you feel tense</td>
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<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Unplugged Fun</td>
<td>Name 1 way to have unplugged fun</td>
<td>Have Un-plugged fun by limiting screen time!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Outdoor Fun</td>
<td>1 Winter fun activity</td>
<td>Enjoy winter fun by playing outside at least once a week</td>
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<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>Walk with a Spring in Your Step</td>
<td>Walk with a Spring in Your Step</td>
<td>Take a walk with a buddy every week</td>
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<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Take a hike!</td>
<td>Balance while reporting on outdoor fun</td>
<td>Hike for an hour or more twice a month</td>
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<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Safe on Wheels</td>
<td>Bike Places</td>
<td>Go for a 30-minute bike ride 3 times a week! And remember to wear your helmet!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>A Lifetime of Activity</td>
<td>Jumping Jacks: name 1 person you know who lives actively</td>
<td>Try out 2 new Lifetime Activities – things we can do no matter how old we are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly Challenge Check</td>
<td>Let’s Move Activity</td>
<td>Healthy Snack Idea</td>
<td>Health Tips on Family Calendar</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Link Up Tag</td>
<td>Apple Slices, sunflower and pumpkin seeds, ice water</td>
<td>Ideas for Active Families to Play Together</td>
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<tr>
<td>☑ 3 x /wk</td>
<td>Animal Stretches</td>
<td>Veggie slices with low-fat dip or dressing</td>
<td>Stretches for the whole body</td>
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<tr>
<td>☑ 5 x /wk</td>
<td>Follow the Dancer (Jim Cain)</td>
<td>Baked tortilla chips and salsa</td>
<td>Limit Screen Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>☑ most days</td>
<td>Bobsleds (Jim Cain)</td>
<td>Hot cocoa and popcorn</td>
<td>Winter Fun Ideas</td>
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<tr>
<td>☑ Half days</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ Most days</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>☑ Activity breaks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>☑ Once</td>
<td>Walk Like This</td>
<td>Cereal trail mix with dried fruit</td>
<td>Walking shoes, where to walk, safety, fun</td>
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<tr>
<td>☑ 3 x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Planning a hike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ 1 x /wk</td>
<td>Balance Tag</td>
<td>Dried fruit with low-fat cheese</td>
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<tr>
<td>☑ most days</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>☑ Once</td>
<td>Egg Toss</td>
<td>Fruit pizza</td>
<td>Follow rules of road, build in biking, wear a safety helmet</td>
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<td>☑ Twice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>☑ More</td>
<td>Vegetable / Fruit Toss</td>
<td>Low-fat yogurt fruit parfaits</td>
<td>Lifetime activities to try as a family</td>
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<tr>
<td>☑ 1 x /wk</td>
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<tr>
<td>☑ 2 x /wk</td>
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<td>☑ 3 x /wk</td>
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How You Can Support Your Choose Health Officer

To help your club’s Choose Health Officer succeed, you can:

✔️ Attend the Officers Training Program offered by your county along with your Choose Health Officer.

✔️ Be familiar with each month’s theme and activities.

✔️ Do activities your Choose Health Officer leads right along with your club. Your enthusiasm is contagious!

✔️ Help distribute Choose Health Family Calendars to all members’ families and encourage them to use them to help meet each month’s challenge and to remember important dates like when your meetings are scheduled.

Make it easy for your members to make healthy choices at meetings by:

✔️ Asking families to follow these guidelines when they bring refreshments for your club

✔️ Offering healthy drinks like low-fat milk or water

✔️ Providing time and space for kids to engage in active play before and after your meeting. Go outdoors whenever you can because kids are naturally more active outside than they are indoors.

✔️ Always including a vegetable or fruit with a snack

✔️ Avoiding high-sugar and high-fat foods and offering nutrient-rich and high-fiber foods like whole grain crackers instead

✔️ Promoting healthy choices whenever and wherever you can!
Choose Health in 4-H Projects and Activities

Choose Health can also be a way to put greater emphasis on the Health-H in all your 4-H Projects and Activities such as:

- **Foods and nutrition projects** – talk about health benefits of the foods you prepare, especially vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and low-fat dairy.
- **Community Service** – help with local fun-runs,
- **Clothing Projects** – help 4-H members make toss-able toys or clothing that’s appropriate for active play
- **Animal Projects** – suggest that members wear a pedometer while caring for their animals to see how much activity they’re getting.
- **Gardening Projects** – focus on health benefits of food grown and on physical activity involved in growing it.

With a little imagination, you can incorporate learning about health into everything your 4-H Club does. That’s Choose Health!
Because Choose Health is new for 4-H Clubs in 2010-2011 year, we need your feedback. Please collect the Choose Health Officers Report and return that with this form to your 4-H Office by July 1, 2011.

1. Please indicate how well you think each component of your Choose Health Officer’s role worked in your club. 1 means it did not work at all well; 5 means it worked very well.

- **Roll Call for Health**: 1 2 3 4 5
  Comments:

- **The Health-Challenge**: 1 2 3 4 5
  Comments:

- **Health-H Tips**: 1 2 3 4 5
  Comments:

- **The Health-H Challenge Check**: 1 2 3 4 5
  Comments:

Please circle the one response that seems most true for your club.

- **Let’s Move Activity**: 1 2 3 4 5
  Comments:
2. Did your club use any of the Extra Ideas offered in the Choose Health Officers Guide?

Which ones?

3. What were your club’s favorite parts of Choose Health?

4. What helped Choose Health succeed in your club?

5. What made Choose Health difficult in your club?

6. Do you believe Choose Health raised awareness about being healthy among your club’s 4-H members?

7. Do you believe that families used the Choose Health Calendar?

8. What changes would you suggest in Choose Health to make it more successful in your club?
... I pledge my health to better living for my club, my community, my country, and my world.

Look for more opportunities to become involved with 4-H Choose Health Programs:

Choose Health at 4-H Camp
Cook up some fun at camp in a healthy eating class. As a Counselor-In-Training, find ways to make it easier for campers to choose healthy!

Choose Health Ambassadors
Teens teach younger children to Eat and Play Well in after-school and summer programs!

Choose Health with 4-H!
Activities at statewide and county 4-H events like Career Explorations, State Fair, and more!

Cornell University Cooperative Extension
4-H Youth Development

Cornell Cooperative Extension provides equal program and employment opportunities.