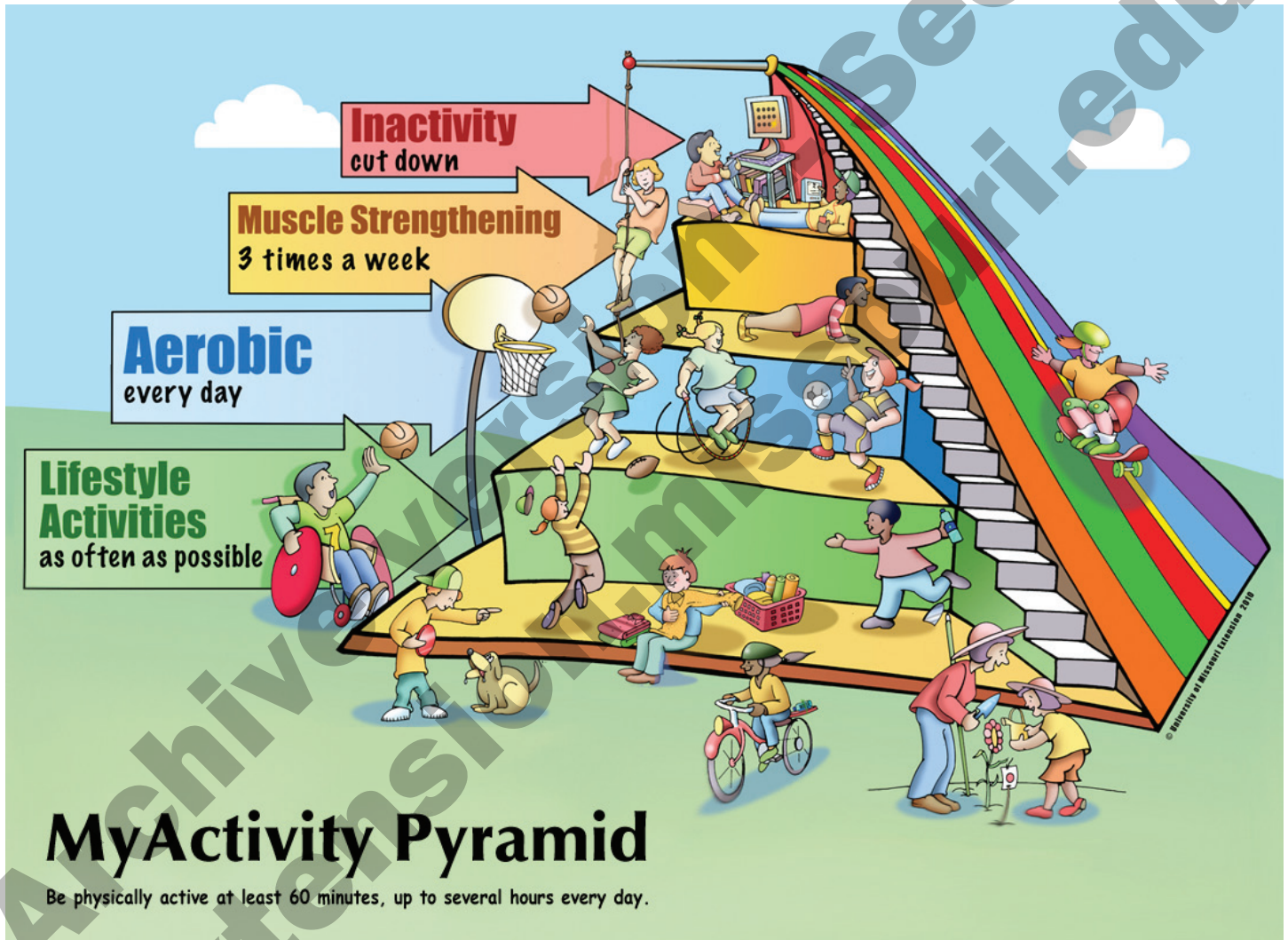




Exploring the Food Groups

Being active = having a healthy body image



Although we can't change our genes, there are many things we can do to influence how we look and feel. Being active can help us feel good about ourselves. Many teens are concerned about their appearance. Girls tend to be weight-conscious. Teen boys are concerned about their appearance and want to develop their muscles.



Stay active!

Use the MyActivity Pyramid to help your child get all the benefits of being active, such as:

- Staying fit
 - Reducing stress and anxiety
 - Keeping bones and muscles strong and healthy
 - Building endurance and strong muscles
- Improving posture
 - Feeling better about ourselves
 - Maintaining a healthy weight
 - Warding off health problems like high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes and some cancers

What can you do to help your child have a healthy body image and be active?

- Encourage your child to be physically active for 60 minutes, up to several hours a day.
- Create an activity box and put it by the door. The activity box can include jump ropes, balls and everyone's athletic shoes. This reminds everyone to be active. Make active time, family time – walk to the park, bike together or visit your local farmers market.
- Include physical activity as part of family events or celebrations. Get together to go on walks, hikes or bike rides. As a family, write a list of things to do other than watch TV or engage in other screen time activities. Post these ideas on the refrigerator.
- Plant a garden and get active by maintaining it.
- Plan indoor activity, such as balloon volleyball. Try to keep the balloon in the air.



Reduce screen time

Too much screen time, such as watching TV, playing video games and spending time on the computer, contributes to increasing youth obesity. Youths spend too much time being inactive when time would be better spent being active. A 2010 Henry J. Kaiser Foundation survey found that children 8 - 18 years old spent about 7 ½ hours each day using entertainment media, 4 ½ hours watching TV, 1 ½ hours on the computer and more than an hour playing video games. It's a challenge to get our children down to the 2 hours or less a day of screen time. Keep daily screen time (TV watching, video games) to a minimum. Consider removing the TV from your child's room.

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