

Kids Korner



Fourth and fifth graders from the special needs class at Washington Elementary School dressed as clowns to the delight of the audience.



"It's easy," Todd insists as he twists balloons into animal shapes.

Clowns, Games Fascinate Children At Nutrition Fair



Laura Henry, right, shows a participant how the strength of the body is affected by simply having candy on the tip of her tongue.



After making a necklace from cereal, this little girl compiled her own cookbook.

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Lancaster Farming Staff
LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.)
— You are never too young to learn to choose healthy foods. Eating the right foods builds strong bones and healthy bodies, but eating too much of the wrong foods can make you weak and ill.

Kids who attended the Nutrition Fair held last week in Lancaster discovered that learning about nutrition can be fun. Games, prizes, and clowns were part of the action planned by the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), which is part of the Penn State Extension program.

The fair included activities for adults and children. Tickets were given for participating in the different events and prizes were distributed.

One booth showed participants how to select snacks wisely. By playing a match game, participants learned to select foods with nutritional value.

Participants learned that by eating only one meal a day, they could gain unwanted pounds and not have a healthy diet. Consuming a Big Mac, French fries, and an apple pie means 69 grams of fat were eaten in only one meal.

Eating foods rich in calcium is like putting money in the bank, according to Nancy Wiker, who had a display of bags showing that the adult skeleton should have 11 cups of calcium.

Those who don't eat enough calcium when they are younger end up with only 6.5 cups of calcium or less when they become adults. This means they have osteoporosis, and their bones are weak and break easily.

Nurses from local hospitals were there. Laura Henry showed how the strength of the body is

affected by simply having the wrong food against the tip of the tongue. To demonstrate this a participant chewed on a carrot and held out her arm. Henry tried to push her arm down but couldn't. When the same participant put a caramel candy in her mouth, her arm became weak and Henry could easily push it down.

Recipes and nutritional information in Spanish and English were distributed for participants to take home and study.

At one table, children were making their own cookbooks with easy-to-do recipes to make when their moms and dads are too busy to cook for them.

Not all the events at the fair taught nutrition. Some were just plain fun. Clowns intermingled with the crowd to paint characters on the faces and hands of kids.

The clowns were fourth and fifth graders from the special needs class at Washington Elementary School. Teacher Mary Lou Cook said that she had been a clown for nine years, and realized that clowning could be a good motivational tool for students.

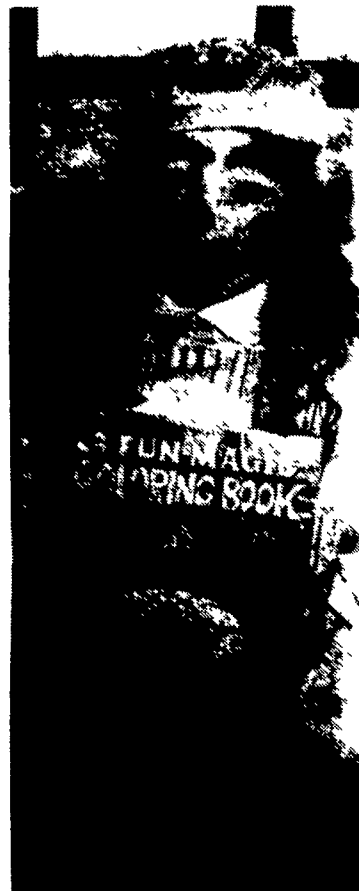
She tells her students if they work hard in school, they can become involved in clowning.

From 14-17 students participate in clown presentations. Mrs. Cook said that students choose a clown name and decide what kind of personality they want their clown to portray. Costumes are handmade or put together piece by piece.

It takes about 30-45 minutes to put the make up on the clowns. The students smear on the white makeup. Teachers and helpers paint on the large lips, high eyebrows, and rosy cheeks typical of clowns.

Some clowns form animals from balloons.

"It's easy," 10-year-old Todd said as he twisted a balloon. "All



Marissa performs magic tricks with a coloring book.

you need to do is twist the balloon six times."

It looked easy watching Todd as he twisted balloons into animal shapes to the delight of children attending the fair.

Eddie, better known as Socky the Clown, painted a face on the hand of a squirming toddler.

Marissa, known as Rosie the Clown, delighted guests by performing tricks with her magic coloring book. With a swipe of the hand she could color the whole book, another swipe and the pages were free of all colors.

"I love being a clown," Cupcake said as she made cereal disappear and then reappear in a tin-covered container.