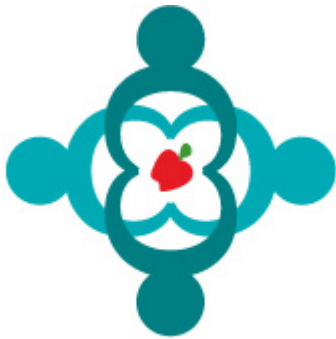


# THE HEALTHY MEETING PLANNING GUIDE

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CHILDREN IN BALANCE



# The Healthy Meeting Planning Guide

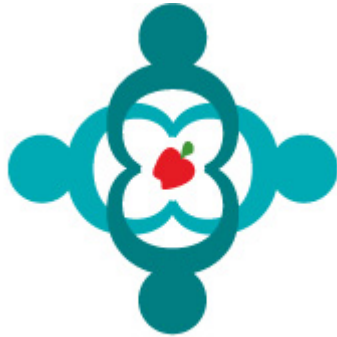
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This meeting guide originated as part of Shape Up Somerville. Initiated at the John Hancock Center for Physical Activity and Nutrition at the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University, Shape Up Somerville is now a citywide campaign aimed at creating involvement and environmental changes to increase access to healthy food options and physical activity.

This meeting guide was created in response to requests from the community to advise people on how to create a healthier environment for meetings amongst themselves and with children. This guide, highlights healthy food and beverage options and provides general tips and reminders for setting up healthy meetings and events.

# Healthy Meeting Planning Guide



CHILDREN IN BALANCE



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# GUIDELINES FOR A HEALTHIER MEETING ENVIRONMENT

## 1. Offer healthier food options.

- Choose foods that are lower in fat and calories
- Offer fruits or vegetables that are culturally appropriate
- Present foods in smaller portion sizes

--- See the *Food and Beverages* section for some ideas ---

## 2. Avoid offering food at every meeting.

- Decide whether or not food is necessary at your meeting
- Offering food does **not** have to be the norm
- Avoid offering food between meal times
- Offer healthful beverages instead of food when possible
- **Use incentives other than food to motivate attendance at meetings (such as raffle prizes, product donations, etc.)**
- Involve others in decision-making regarding healthy food for events/meetings
- Include question on satisfaction of food if evaluation is used at the end of event/meetings

## 3. Get everyone moving.

- Try active icebreakers at the beginning of meetings and movement breaks throughout long meetings

---See the *“Meeting Movements”* for fun ideas---

Provide interpreters when necessary (i.e. community meetings).

# FOOD AND BEVERAGES

## Beverages

Here are some great ideas for healthy beverages. If you feel that it is necessary to provide nourishment at your meeting, consider offering beverages instead of full meals or snacks.

- Water
  - Ice water
  - Bottled spring, sparkling, or flavored water (calorie-free)
- Juice
  - 100% fruit juice \*
  - 100% vegetable juice \*
- Milk
  - Skim or low-fat milk \*
  - Low-fat soy milk (try vanilla or chocolate flavored) \*
- Coffee
  - Flavored/unflavored
  - Regular/decaffeinated
  - Creamers (skim or low fat milk, or fat free half & half)
- Tea
  - Regular, herbal, and green teas (hot or cold)
  - Regular and decaffeinated
  - Creamers (Skim or low-fat milk, or fat-free half & half)
- Other
  - If you must provide soda, choose diet soda \*
  - Sugar free hot chocolate \*

\* Choose smaller containers or cup sizes when serving low fat milk, 100% juice, diet soda, or sugar free hot chocolate.

## Breakfast Foods

Early morning meetings often provide breakfast foods. Breakfast is an important meal, so make sure your early meetings start the day in a healthy way!

- Fruit
  - Fresh fruit trays
  - Fruit baskets
  - Dried or canned fruit
  
- Breads
  - Low-fat, whole grain muffins (mini or cut in half)
  - Low-fat whole grain breads
  - Mini, whole grain bagels
  - Serve with low-fat cream cheese or jelly/jam (avoid butter or margarine)
  
- Cereals
  - Look for cereals with at least 4 grams of fiber per serving. Whole grain, cereal (such as raisin bran, low-fat granola, Cheerios, Whole Wheat Total, or Shredded Wheat).
  - Oatmeal
  - Low-fat granola bars (5g of fat or less)

### Protein Sources

- Scrambled or Hard-Boiled Eggs
- Peanut Butter
- Yogurt
  - Fat-free or low-fat

## Lunch & Dinner

It is possible to find many healthy options at the grocery store. Here are some healthy lunch and dinner suggestions:

- Sandwiches
  - Whole grain bread/wraps or tortillas (request it from your caterer, or look for the words “whole grain” or “whole wheat” in the ingredients)
  - Veggies (lettuce, tomatoes, onions, pickles, cucumbers, peppers, sprouts, avocados, artichoke hearts - all veggies are great!)
  - Lean meats (fish, turkey, roast beef, or chicken)
  - Low-fat cheese
  - Tuna and chicken salads made with light or fat-free mayonnaise
  - Light mayonnaise, mustard, or low-fat dressing
  - Peanut butter and jelly (A good option for kids. If peanut allergies are a concern, try other nut butters—i.e. almond butter )
  
- Salads
  - Use mixed greens, not just Iceberg lettuce and add any other vegetables
  - Serve low-fat or fat-free salad dressings on the side
  - Pasta salad or coleslaw (made with light or low-fat mayonnaise, or simple oil and vinegar)
  - Fruit salads (can be fresh, canned, or frozen)
  - Platters of fresh vegetables with low-fat dip
  
- Side Dishes
  - Brown rice
  - Beans
  - Low-fat soups (avoid cream-based)
  - Potato dishes (sweet or white, mashed or roasted)
  
- Pizza
  - If serving pizza choose vegetables, chicken, or fruit toppings (avoid other meat toppings)
  
- Snacks
  - Pretzels, baked or reduced fat potato chips, baked tortilla chips with salsa, rice cakes, fruit, vegetables, granola bars, trail mix, dried fruit or low-fat yogurt

## Healthful Alternatives to Traditional Foods

<b>Instead of:</b>	<b>Try:</b>
Soda	Water
Fruit flavored drinks	100% fruit or vegetable juices
Regular bagels	Small or “mini” whole grain bagels
Regular muffins, croissants, doughnuts, sweet pastries	Small muffins (low-fat, whole grain)
Butter	Light margarine or olive oil
Regular cream cheese	Low-fat cream cheese
Regular cheese	Low-fat cheese
Regular crackers	Whole grain crackers
Regular chips	Baked or low fat chips and pretzels
Mayonnaise or sour cream based dips	Salsa, low fat cottage cheese or low-fat salad dressing dips
Chips or cookies	Fruit and vegetable trays
Fruit pies or tarts	Fresh fruit
Salads with dressing	Salads with dressing on the side
Regular dressings	Low fat or fat free dressings and vinaigrettes
Mayonnaise-based pasta salads	Pasta salads made with low-fat dressings or oil & vinegar
Sandwiches on white bread or croissants	Sandwiches on whole grain breads/wraps
White rice	Brown rice
High fat cold cuts and fried meats	Lean deli meats, skinless poultry, fish or tofu
Cooked vegetables in cream sauces or oil	Steamed vegetables

(From: *Food for Thought* guide, University of Minnesota)

# RESTAURANTS & CATERING

## Approved Restaurants:

In some communities, residents and local restaurants have come together to create healthy food options, which include low fat dairy products, smaller portion sized entrees, fruits and vegetables. If your community is one such community, contact your local restaurants to find out if they participate. If you are planning to meet over lunch, consider a meeting at one of the many “Approved” restaurants around town.

If your community does not participate in such efforts, there are ways you can start. Talk to your Department of Public Health and see if you can initiate a healthy restaurant campaign. Reach out to the local restaurants to see if they are willing to offer healthy portion sizes; entrees including fruits, vegetables, and whole grains; nutritional information; and “half to go” options. Finally, you can make the conscious decision to order and eat healthy options off any menu! For example, if you are catering, order vegetables instead of French fries, fresh fruit instead of a sugary dessert.

# MEETING MOVEMENTS & ICEBREAKERS

**Group walk:** Take the whole group on a walk through or around the building. If possible try to take every one outside to a park or grassy area to do the exercises.

**Knots of Fun:** Divide the group into teams of 6 or more, depending on how difficult you would like to make the exercise. Have each person join right hands with another person in the group, but it has to be someone who is NOT standing immediately to their left or right. Then have each person join left hands with another person in a group, but it has to be someone who is NOT standing immediately to the left or right and someone other than before. Now the groups have to untangle themselves without letting go of hands. They may have to loosen their grips a little to allow for twisting and turning. They may also have to step over or under other people. The first group to untangle their knot is the winner. There are four possible solutions to the knot (One large circle, two interlocking circles, a figure eight, or a circle within a circle).

**\*Muscle Madness:** Holding water bottles or cans in either their right or left hand, have the participants do 10 or more “curls,” then switch to the other hand. Repeat several times.

**\*Ostrich Stretch:** Standing next to their desks, have the participants bend over and try to touch their toes and then stay in that position for 5 seconds. Repeat several times.

**\*Tied Hands Stretch:** Have participants clasp their hands behind their backs and lift them up towards the ceiling as they bend over. Have them also clasp their hands in front and lift up and bend back slowly. Repeat several times.

**\*Baby Backbend:** Stand tall with your feet together. Breathe in through your nose as you raise your hands over head shoulder distance apart with your fingers spread. Breathe out through your nose, squeeze your legs tight standing tall and strong and reaching your fingers to the sky. As you breathe in again, slowly drop your head back moving your gaze up to the ceiling and keeping your legs strong. As you breathe steadily through your nose 3 times, keep your back gently arched and your legs strong to support you.

**\*Volcano:** Stand tall and open your legs wide. Bring your palms together in front of your heart with your fingers pointing upward. Take a deep breath in. Keeping your palms together, as you breathe out through your mouth making a “swoooooooshshshshing” sound, lift your arms all the way up and then release your palms fanning your arms down by your side and then bring your hands back the starting position. Repeat continuously 5-10 times. Encourage participants to release any frustration or anger and feel all the good within them rising up to the surface.

**\*Chair Twist:** Sit tall in your chair. Imagine your head lifting into the clouds and your bottom pressing down into the earth. Keeping your legs and hips facing forward, turn at your waist to your right placing your left arm over the back of the chair and holding the left side of the chair in your right hand to help you twist. Turn your head and eyes toward or even over your left shoulder. As you breathe in through your nose, lift your head higher into the clouds. As you breathe out, try to twist a little further. Maybe imagine that you are a twisting flower. Your head is the flower and your spine is the stem. Take 3-5 breaths and then switch to the other side.

**Simon Says:** One person designated as “Simon” calls out different active commands to get participants moving (for example, “Simon says.....” hop on your right foot, jump as high as you can without falling down, run in place, etc.). If someone follows a command without the “Simon Says” preface, they must sit down.

\* Yoga moves contributed by Laura Greer, [Growing Up Yoga](http://www.growingupyoga.com), <http://www.growingupyoga.com> )

# MEETING AREAS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Finding a place to hold your meetings may be daunting if your organization lacks a space of its own. The following list includes potential meeting locations. Be sure to inquire about availability, permit policies, room sizes, handicap access, and restrictions.

## **Local Public Schools**

## **Local Libraries**

## **Other Locations:**

- Surrounding Universities
- Learning Centers
- Family Centers
- Your “Approved” local restaurants

# **MEETING INTERPRETERS**

Because of the diverse population of US residents, interpreters are often essential for meetings where non-English speaking community members are present. Interpreters can be found through community agencies and hospitals.

Interpreting equipment can be ordered through these community agencies.

# SUGGESTION ON HOW TO GET PEOPLE TO ATTEND EVENTS

- Ask partners or collaborators to invite people that they know and to include a notice in their own newsletters about the meeting/event
- Personal invites work the best, preferably in person or over the phone
- Remind people just before the meeting
- Have incentives to attend. Think, “What’s in it for them?”
- Advertise/publicize everywhere – email, newsletters, media, fliers, etc.
- Effective meetings/events in the past are the best way to get people to attend a future meeting/event. Suggestions include: ending on time, make it interactive, serve healthy food, and include a cultural component (such as music) during or after the meeting.
- Give people you invite a specific role at the meeting, such as helping with set-up, sign-in, welcome, etc. People like to feel needed and useful; this will help inspire people to come. For more experienced participants, ask them to take on more challenging roles, such as helping with meeting facilitation.
- End meetings with small assignments to bring to the next meeting as a way to encourage continuity. Check in between meetings to see how people are doing with their assignment.

# MEETING CHECKLIST

Consider the following details when organizing a meeting:

- **Location**
  - Confirm space
  - Check chairs & tables
  - Ensure handicap access is available, if necessary
  - Provide space for child care (when needed)
  - Check parking availability (parking lot or city permit)
  - Provide map or directions to meeting location
  
- **Meeting Equipment and Materials**
  - Easel, easel paper, and markers
  - LCD projector
  - Laptop Computer
  - Extension cords
  - Duct tape to secure wires
  - Projection screen
  - Pointer/laser pointer
  - Note pads and pens
  - Signs to direct people to the meeting room & nearest restrooms
  - Copies of the agenda
  - Presentation and hand-outs
  - Name tags
  - Sign in sheet
  - Evaluation forms or surveys
  - Recording materials (tape recorder, video, designate a note-taker, etc.)
  
- **Promotional Materials**
  - Send out invitations (written, email, or phone calls)
  - Send reminders for attendees (written, email, or phone calls)
  - Distribute fliers for community meetings, advertise in local media
  
- **Translators**
  - Provide interpreters, if necessary
  - Provide translated materials if available
  
- **Food**
  - Necessities (flat wear, plates, cups, napkins, table cloths, serving utensils)
  - Trash can
  - Catering or prepared food (offer vegetarian or culturally appropriate options)
  
- **Beverages**
  - Water
  - 100% Juice
  - Low fat or skim milk (especially when children are present)
  - Culturally appropriate beverages
  
- **Child care (when planning meetings with parents and children)**
  - Child care provider (with appropriate space for child care)
  - Activities, games, and materials for play