

## Brenda Borjas—January 2013—“Germs are EVERYWHERE!”

Even though we may not be able to see them, germs are hiding everywhere. Elementary students learn from Family Nutrition Program (FNP) lessons how important it is to wash their hands often (after many daily activities and especially before eating) to avoid spreading germs to classmates and family members.



Children in Pre-K and Kindergarten to 4<sup>th</sup> grade classes on the east side of Pasco County participated in the FNP food safety and handwashing program. By using a special cream and a black light, children learn where the germs like to hide and how important it is to pay even closer attention to scrubbing those areas with soap and water, properly rinsing and drying, too.



By participating in this hands-on experiment, they saw first-hand how important handwashing is to remove bacteria, and that even though their hands may look clean, they may not actually be, unless we follow the proper procedures. (It is a 20-second process: scrub well with soap and water, make lots of bubbles, rinse thoroughly to get the germs off our hands and down the drain, drying with a paper towel) Students were also reminded to keep their fingers away from their “T-Zone” (the triangle drawn from eyes-nose-mouth) so that germs don’t gain entry into our bodies and make us sick.

The older students were “grossed-out” to find out that the same kind of germs found in the bathroom can also be lurking in the kitchen and that by simply washing our hands properly, we can help prevent getting sick not only in cold/flu season but year-round!



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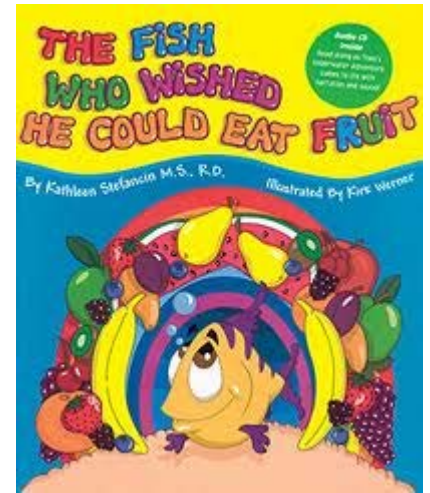
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# Brenda Borjas—February 2013—“Color YOUR Plate!”

Children in east Pasco public schools (Pre-K, Kindergarten to 5<sup>th</sup> grades) participated in the Family Nutrition Program (FNP) “Fun with Fruits and Vegetables” lessons and learned the importance of eating plenty of fruits and vegetables in a variety of colors every day to provide vitamins and minerals to improve their health.

Students learned the benefits to various parts of their bodies (hair, eyes, skin, nails, teeth, bones) as well as the overall impact to making sure that half of their plate is made up of fruits and vegetables.

By reading the enchanting story, *The Fish Who Wished He Could Eat Fruit*, by Kathleen Stefancin, MS, RD, the children heard how excited Theo the fish was to watch the children outside his fish bowl eat so many colorful fruits and how he wished to try them, too. Even though the students listening to the story knew that fish don't really eat fruit, they loved hearing about Theo's dream where he discovered a sea full of colorful fruits in the Rainbow Water Forest and Theo's five new friends, the colorful fish who ate them. Students learned by Theo's example that they, too, could improve their own health by eating a rainbow of colorful fruits.



Students were left with a challenge to ask the parents/caregivers to purchase a fruit or a vegetable that they had NEVER tasted before and take at least two bites of each to see if they liked it. It is always good to try something new. Just think, if you don't, you will be missing out on a tasty fruit or vegetable and all the vitamins and minerals it provides!



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