

A large, vertical photograph of a waterfall cascading down a rocky cliff in a lush, green forest. The water is white and frothy as it falls, creating a misty spray at the bottom. The surrounding trees are dense and vibrant green, with sunlight filtering through the canopy.

Healthy Living - Healthy Planet

Ecosystem Restoration Education (ERE)



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What is the ERE project? The Ecosystems Restoration Education (ERE) project, implemented within the LEAF (Learning about Ecosystems and Forests) programme (www.leaf.global), connects educators and students with nature through experiential projects.

LEAF Learning about Ecosystems and Forests (LEAF) advocates for outdoor learning and hands-on experiences, allowing students to connect with nature and develop a deeper understanding of the natural world.

In Cyprus the National operator is CYMEPA with strategic Partners the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth and the Cyprus Electricity Authority



17 Sustainable Development Goals for a Healthier Planet



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Food and Crops

Why do we eat?

We eat to provide our bodies with energy and nutritional building blocks that are essential for survival and proper functioning of the body.

Food is the main source of energy that the body needs to perform its basic functions, such as breathing, blood circulation, brain function, and muscle movements.

Food provides essential nutrients such as proteins, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, water and minerals, which are necessary for:

- Growth and repair of cells and tissues.
- Support of the immune system.
- Maintaining homeostasis (stable internal balance of the body).
- Regulation of the body's biochemical processes.

In addition, food plays a role in our social and psychological well-being, as it is linked to sociability, culture and enjoyment.

FOOD CULTIVATION

Food cultivation is the process of caring for and growing plants or animals for food production. It includes selecting the right seeds, planting, irrigation, fertilization, and protection from pests and diseases. It can involve agricultural practices, such as growing cereals, fruits and vegetables as well as livestock farming practices for raising animals.

Growing food can be done on a small scale, such as in home gardens, or on a larger scale, such as on farms. Each type of farming has its own requirements and challenges, from choosing the right soil and climate conditions to managing natural resources



THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF FOOD

Which foods are healthy?

Healthy foods are those that provide the body with the necessary nutrients without containing excessive amounts of sugar, salt or saturated fats. The following are the main categories of healthy foods and examples for each category.

The Food Groups

a. Fruits and Vegetables:

They are full of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and fiber that help your body function properly.

Examples: Apples, bananas, oranges, berries, spinach, broccoli, carrots, peppers



b. Cereals:

Cereals give you energy to play, learn and grow.

They contain fiber, B vitamins and other nutrients.

Examples: Bread, rice, pasta and oats.

Whole grains are even better because they have more fiber.

Examples: Brown rice, quinoa, oats, whole wheat bread and pasta



c. Protein Sources:

Protein helps build muscle, repair tissues, and keep you strong.

Examples: Meat, legumes, nuts, and eggs.

Not all protein comes from animals - beans and nuts are great too!



Low-Fat Protein Sources

Necessary for the growth and repair of muscles and tissues.

Examples: Fish (salmon, sardines), skinless chicken, turkey, legumes (lentils, beans), tofu



d. Dairy:

Dairy products are rich in calcium, which is essential for strong bones and teeth.

Examples: Milk, cheese, and yogurt.

Some people drink plant-based milks, such as almond milk or soy milk, which can also be good for you!



e. Fats and Oils:

Fats give you energy and help your brain develop.

Examples: Olive oil, avocado, and butter.

Some fats, like those in fish and nuts, are very healthy!



CLIMATE CHANGE (CRISIS) AND CROPS

Climate change means that weather conditions are changing and our planet is warming, which can make it harder to grow food. This is because plants need the right temperature and weather to grow properly.

Why It Matters:

If the planet gets too warm, (climate crisis) farmers may not be able to grow enough food. That could mean less food for everyone, including you!

How We Can Help:

Eat Seasonal Foods: Foods that are in season are easier to grow and better for the environment.

Reduce Food Waste: Only eat what you can eat, and save the leftovers for later. Waste of food wastes all the energy that went into producing it.

Reduce food kilometres: As we read on the WWF website, this is the distance that food travels from its place of production to its point of final consumption.

This includes the transportation of food between the various stages of its life cycle, i.e. from the point of production to processing and to the final point of retail sale.

If we want to reduce food miles in our diet, the basic advice is twofold:

We prefer seasonal vegetables and fruits.
We prefer local products



MEDITERRANEAN DIET

The Mediterranean Food Pyramid is a dietary pattern that promotes health and longevity, based on the diet traditionally followed in Mediterranean countries.

For children, adapting to this pyramid is particularly important, as it contributes to proper development and the prevention of childhood obesity.

Basic Elements of the Mediterranean Diet Pyramid for Children:

1. Fruits and Vegetables (3-5 servings per day):

- Fruits and vegetables form the basis of the daily diet. They are rich in vitamins, minerals and fiber, essential for the development and proper functioning of the body.

2. Whole Grains (3-4 servings per day):

- Grains like whole wheat bread, brown rice, and oatmeal are important for providing energy and maintaining a healthy digestive system.

3. Olive Oil:

- Olive oil is the main source of fat in the Mediterranean diet. It is rich in monounsaturated fatty acids, which are beneficial for cardiovascular health.

4. Dairy Products (2-3 servings per day):

- Milk, yogurt and cheese are rich in calcium and vitamin D, which are necessary for bone growth.

5. Protein from Plant and Animal Sources (1-2 servings per day):

- Plant sources such as legumes (lentils, beans) and animal sources such as fish and chicken, provide essential amino acids and other nutrients.

6. Fish and Seafood (2-3 times a week):

- Fish is rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which are important for brain and heart health.

7. Red Meat (limited consumption):

- It is recommended that red meat consumption be limited to 1-2 times a week, with an emphasis on lean cuts.

8. Sweets and Processed Foods (rare):

- Consumption of sweet and processed foods should be limited. Children should learn to choose natural alternatives, such as fruit, for snacks.

Additional Tips:

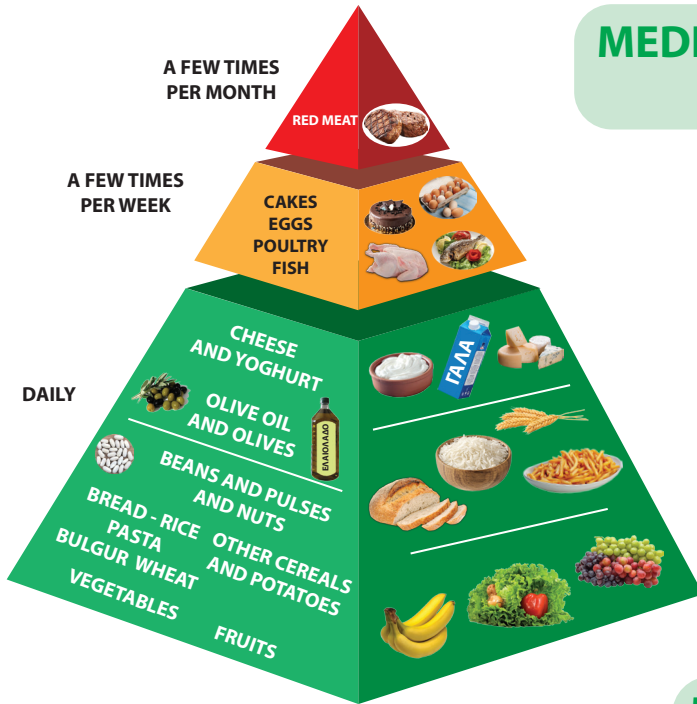
Daily Physical Activity and Hydration: As with adults, regular physical activity and drinking plenty of water are important. Physical activity is critical for children's development and helps maintain a healthy weight.

Variety and Balance: Encourage children to try different foods and eat balanced meals, in appropriate quantities.

Family Meals: Involving children in preparing and enjoying meals with the family can reinforce healthy eating habits.

Nutrition Education: Teach children the importance of healthy foods and variety in their diet.

MEDITERRANEAN DIET



MY PYRAMID

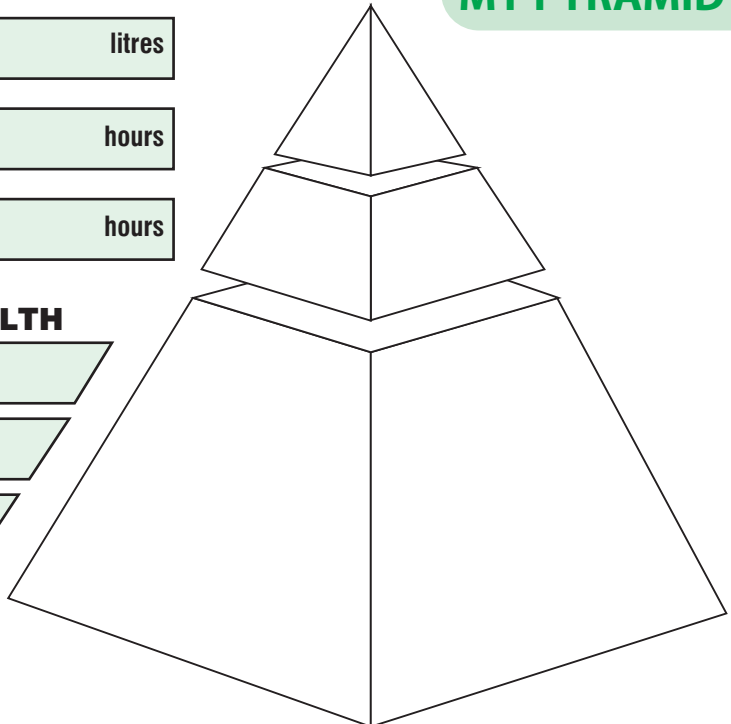
• **WATER** litres

• **EXERCISE** hours

• **SLEEP** hours

• **MENTAL HEALTH**

Activities





UNITED NATIONS DECADE ON **ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION** 2021-2030

THIS IS OUR MOMENT

There has never been a more urgent need to revive damaged ecosystems than now.

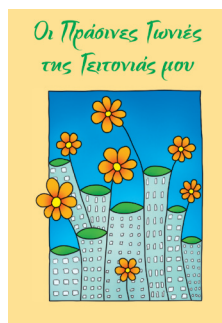
Ecosystems support all life on Earth. The healthier our ecosystems are, the healthier the planet - and its people. The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration aims to prevent, halt and reverse the degradation of ecosystems on every continent and in the ocean. It can help to end poverty, combat climate change and prevent a mass extinction. It will only succeed if everyone plays a part. <https://www.decadeonrestoration.org/about-un-decade>

As part of the LEAF Program, classes of schools take part in the competition Green Corners of My Neighborhood and the Magical World of Culture.

Green Corners of My Neighborhood is a competition that encourages schools to seek and adopt a green corner in the local area, within the school grounds or in its vicinity. Photographs before and after the school intervention must be taken to prove the impact on biodiversity preservation.

The Magical World of Culture consists of providing one thousand culture kits to about fifty schools for cultivation in the school/class/home by the students. The culture kit consists of a small pot, soil, and seeds of plants like spinach, lettuce, cabbage, or beetroot that the students will grow and consume.

The Magical World of Culture underpins the relation between agriculture, food and economic resilience, biodiversity fighting poverty and mitigating climate crisis. Agriculture traditions induce an appreciation of cultural and religious values through ancient traditions related to seeding/sowing and harvest, constituting a part of our intangible cultural heritage and encouraging stewardship to guide individuals towards an understanding and respect for nature and its processes.



HEALTHY PLANET

Children make the planet healthier by embodying future stewardship through sustainable habits, leading environmental action, and fostering a deeper connection to nature, with simple practices like recycling, conserving energy, planting trees, and choosing eco-friendly options contributing to a greener world, while also growing into adults who can drive systemic change for a liveable planet.



How children contribute to a healthier planet:

- **Leading by Example:** Young people are actively speaking up and demanding climate action, inspiring adults to follow their lead in creating a sustainable future.
- **Inspiring Action:** Teaching children about environmental responsibility through nature experiences fosters a lifelong love and care for the Earth.
- **Adopting Sustainable Habits:** Kids can easily adopt practices like recycling, reducing waste, saving energy (turning off lights), using reusable items, and choosing plant-based snacks, reducing their ecological footprint.
- **Driving Innovation:** A generation raised with environmental awareness is better equipped to develop and implement innovative solutions to global challenges.
- **Fostering Connection:** Spending time in nature builds empathy and a desire to protect ecosystems, making them powerful advocates for conservation.

Key actions for a healthy planet through children:

- **Education & Experience:** Provide hands-on experiences in nature to build understanding and love for the environment.
- **Empowerment:** Listen to children's environmental concerns and support their initiatives, as seen with Save the Children's efforts to amplify youth voices.
- **Resource Conservation:** Teach simple energy and water conservation at home, from turning off lights to reusing materials.
- **Eco-Friendly Choices:** Encourage plant-based diets, local food, and reducing meat consumption, which significantly cuts environmental impact.
- **Advocacy:** Support initiatives like UNICEF's focus on equipping children with skills for a green transition and creating a resilient, livable planet for all.



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