



## **Overview**

*Nutrition Detectives™* is a 90-minute program that teaches elementary school students how to make healthful food choices by using food labels and ingredient lists. The program has been taught in schools throughout the country, and is best used with students in grades 3 or 4. It includes a presentation, food demonstration, and hands-on activity in which children examine food products. To present the program, instructors can choose between a PowerPoint that lets them interact directly with their audiences, or a video demonstration of the program being taught to students in a “magical classroom.”

## **Goals**

- Teach children how to make healthful food choices and detect marketing deceptions
- Give them the opportunity to practice what they have learned
- Empower them to share their “detective skills” with other family members

## **Description**

*Nutrition Detectives™* offers a novel, engaging, and efficient way to impart crucial information in minimal time. The entire program can be taught during one 90-minute session, two 45-minute sessions, or three 30-minute sessions to meet the needs of each program provider.

The program uses colorful cartoons and images to convey the concept of healthful eating and how it can be challenging in our modern environment. It shows children how food packages can be deceptive, and how “Nutrition Facts” labels can be used to make better choices. It provides 5 clues to make healthful food choices by using food labels and ingredient lists on packaged foods.

After learning the clues, the children are assigned to teams that take part in a hands-on “spying on food labels” game. Each team searches through a bag of groceries filled with packaged foods. Each bag contains both “clued-in” (healthful) and “clueless” (less healthful) food products, and the children work together to decide which foods fit into each category.

The program was developed by David Katz, MD, MPH, FACPM, FACP, Director of the Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center, and his wife Catherine Katz, PhD. The presentations and handouts are available in English or Spanish. The Spanish-language video has English audio with Spanish subtitles.

## **Availability**

Nutrition Detectives program and evaluation materials are available free of charge from:

- The Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center at <http://www.yalegriffinprc.org/>
- Dr. Katz’s website at <http://www.davidkatzmd.com/>
- The Turn the Tide Foundation at <http://turnthetidefoundation.org/>

