



# TEACH KIDS HEALTHY EATING EARLY

*It's never too early to encourage kids to adopt healthy eating habits. Yes, it can be a challenge, but the costs in health care and other health risks linked to an unhealthy diet can produce worse challenges in the future.*

*So while you're at home trying to find things to keep kids busy, use some of that time to serve healthy meals and teach your kids about foods that make a healthy plate.*

*Included here are coloring pages that can help teach healthy eating while providing a fun activity.*

*Below are tips to guide you in conversations with your kids and actions you can plan that reinforce the ideas you present.*

## **Healthy Eating Conversations**

Use these talking points and actions to promote healthy eating with young kids using the coloring sheets provided.

Before the child begins to color any one of the sheets, ask the following questions:

- Can you name the foods in the picture?  
*Note: For the vegetable sheet, also ask that they name the color.*
- Have you ever eaten them? Did you like them? Why or why not?

After asking the questions above while the child colors the sheet, share the information and ask the questions listed with each sheet. The remarks in quotation marks (“”) provide some words for explaining each sheet. Additional actions are also suggested.



## ***Fuel Up with Fruit Coloring Sheet***

“We are going to choose fruit more often for a healthy snack.”

“Fresh fruits, like apples, oranges and bananas, are better for you than candy.”

- Give kids a fresh fruit to eat, or a dried fruit, like cranberries or raisins, to try.
- Ask how they feel about eating the fruit.

## ***Veg Out with Vegetables Coloring Sheet***

“Did you know that vegetables add color to your plate?”

“Vegetables are good for you. They give you energy to run and play and could help keep you from getting sick.”

- When you serve vegetables at home, ask your child to name the vegetables and the color.
- Serve your child a vegetable with a dip. They generally like vegetables, such as carrots, with a dip.
- You can also try putting peanut butter on celery with raisins spread on top. It’s called “Ants on a Log” and kids love it.

## ***Win with Whole Grains Coloring Sheet***

- Ask your child to read the line on the coloring sheet, or you can read it aloud.
- Make him/her a peanut butter and jelly sandwich with one piece of whole grain bread.
- Ask your child if they like it, And why or why not.
- Serve a whole grain cereal, like Cheerios, for breakfast or as a snack. Eat with your child to encourage them.



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## Power Up with Protein Coloring Sheet

- Ask your child to read the line on the coloring sheet or read it aloud to them.
- Ask your child to flex his/her arm and make a muscle. Squeeze the muscle and share that proteins help to build muscles.

## Dash for Dairy Coloring Sheet

- Ask your child to read the line on the coloring sheet or read it aloud to them: “Eating dairy food at least two times a day can help make sure you the have strong bones.”
- Prepare a smoothie using fat-free milk or yogurt with fresh or frozen fruit. They’ll love it.

## Reach for Water Coloring Sheet

- Give your child a glass of water. You should also have a glass.
- Once you have finished drinking the water, tell your child: “We should drink 6-8 glasses of water a day!”
- Make a chart with your child so that they can track how much water they drink for a day.
- Serve a meal where only water is available to drink. Ask the child to tell the rest of the family how many glasses we should drink every day and why.

Conversations about healthy eating can help cultivate healthy habits in your household.

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For more information, contact Carinthia Cherry, Ph.D., nutrition specialist, at [cacherry@ncat.edu](mailto:cacherry@ncat.edu).

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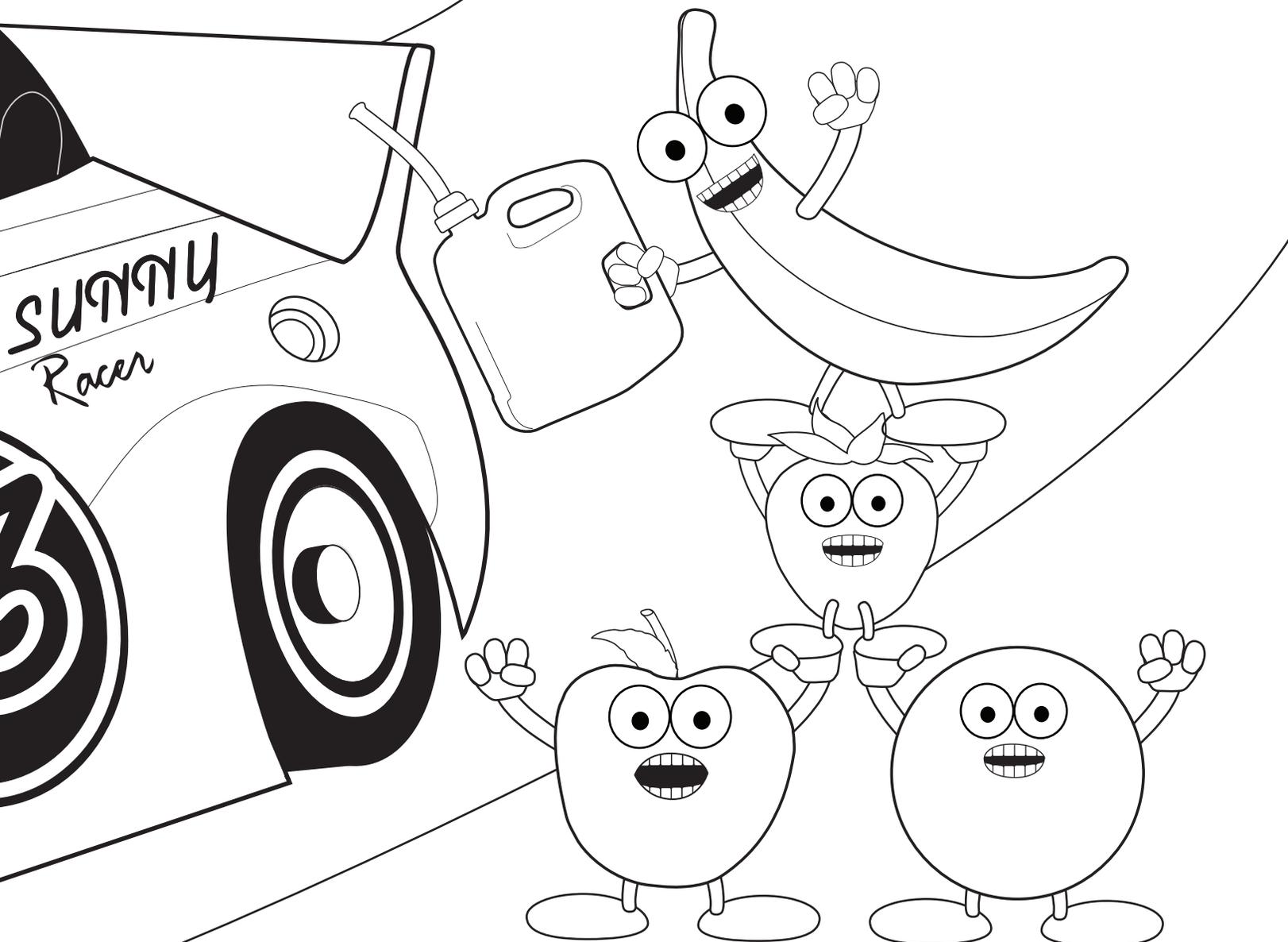
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Fuel up with fruit!



**Choose fruit for a healthy snack!**

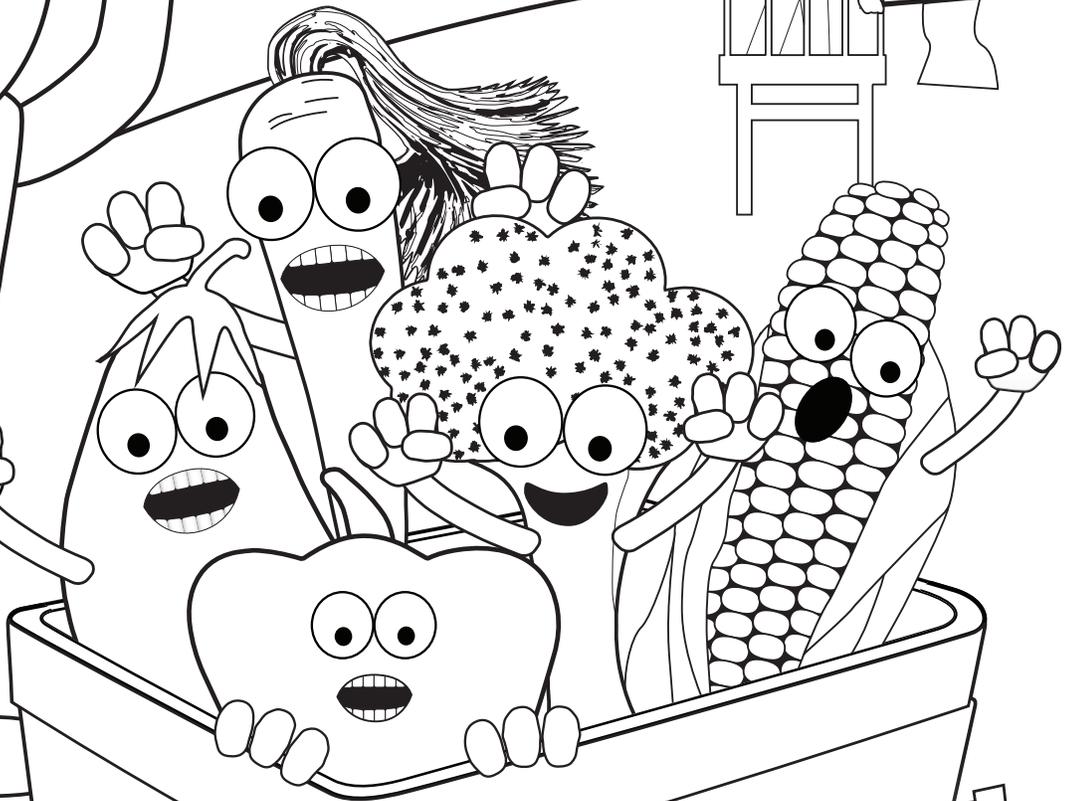
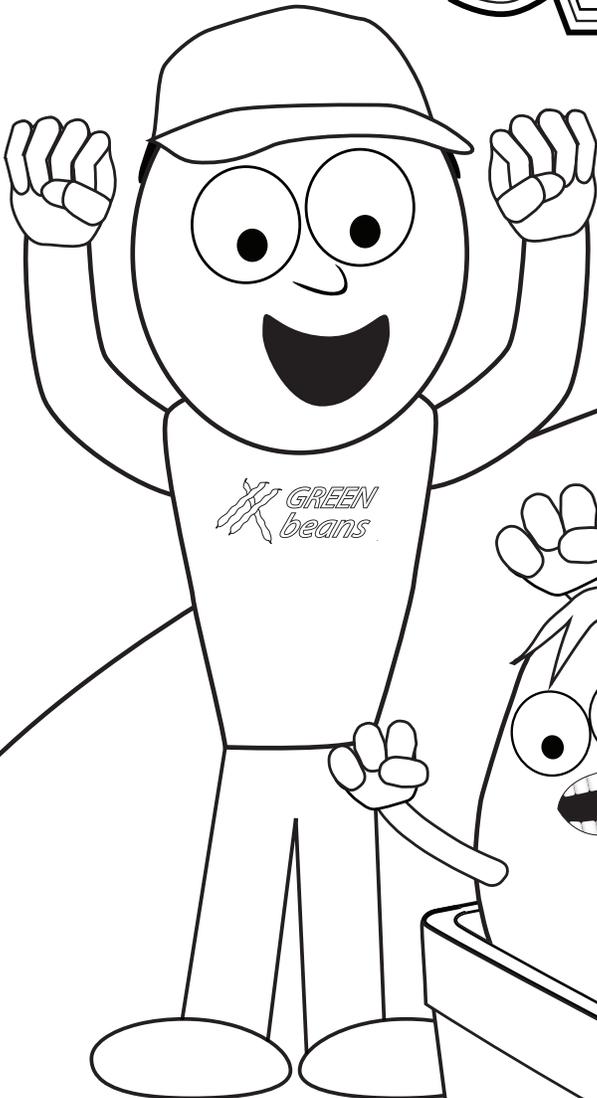
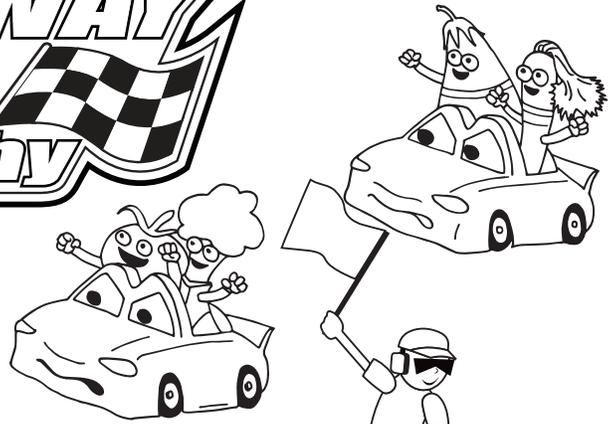


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# SPEEDWAY to Healthy



**Veg out  
with vegetables!**

**Color your plate with great tasting veggies!**



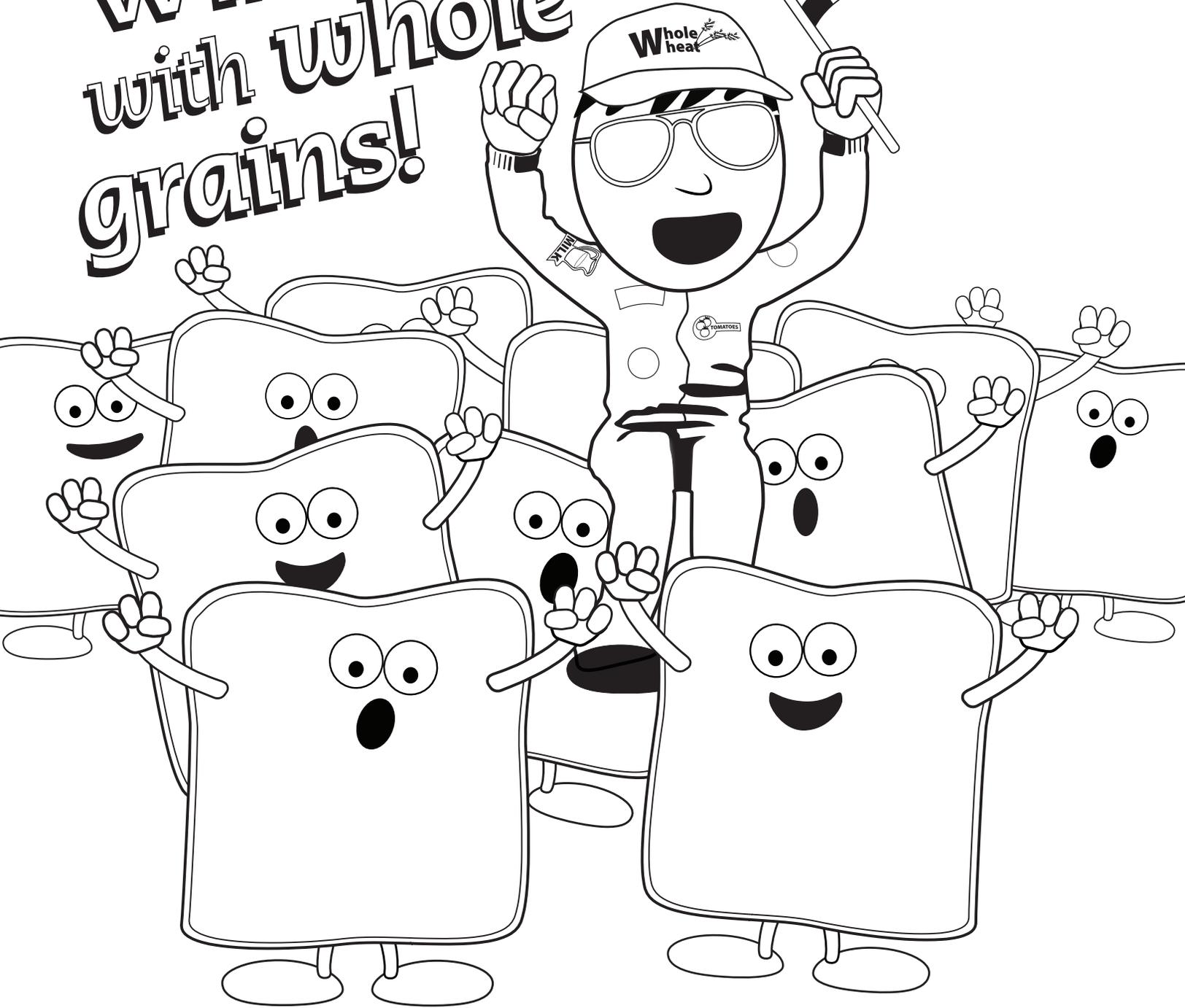
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Win  
with whole  
grains!



**Make half your grains whole grains!**



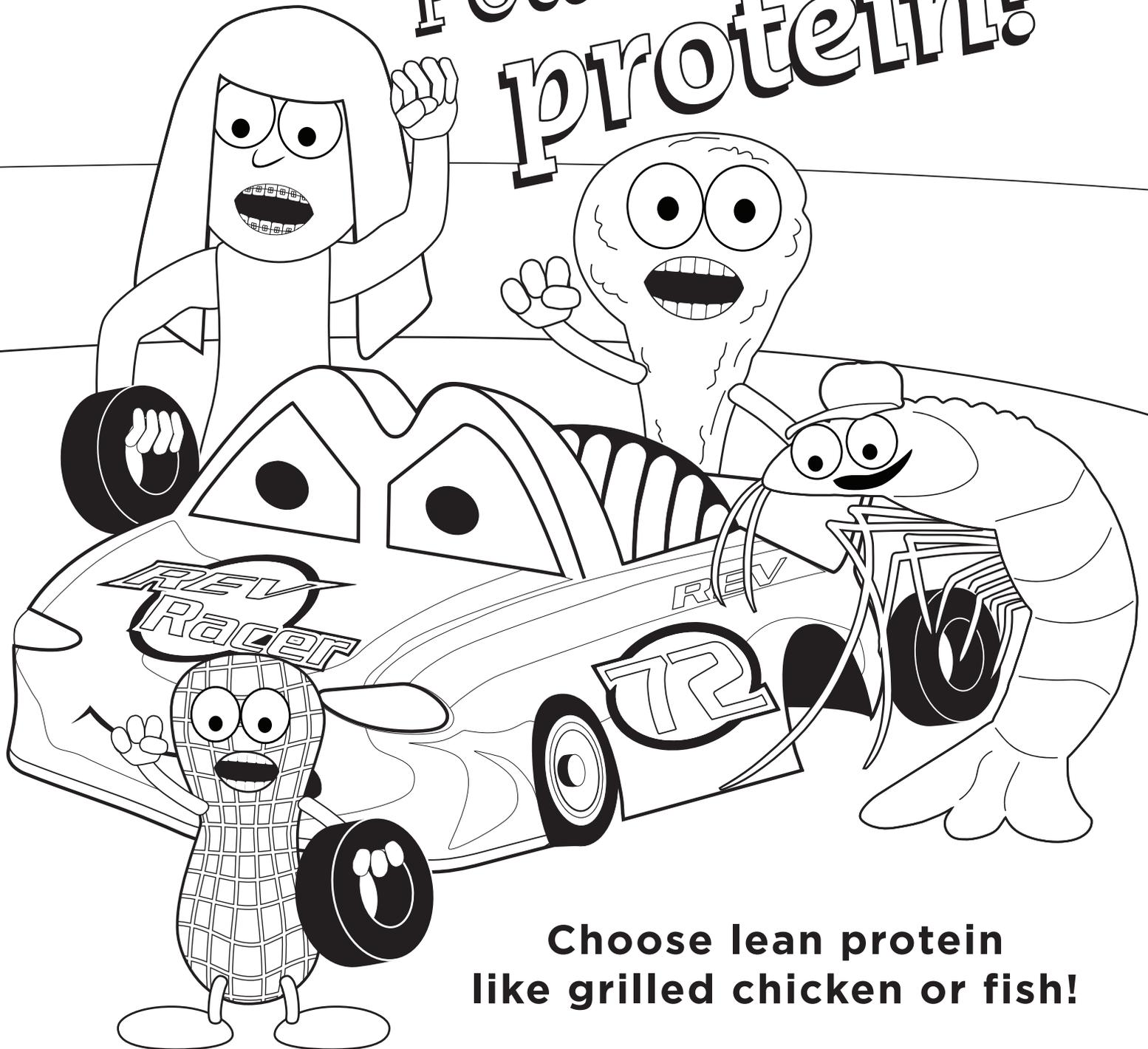
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Power up with  
protein!



**Choose lean protein  
like grilled chicken or fish!**



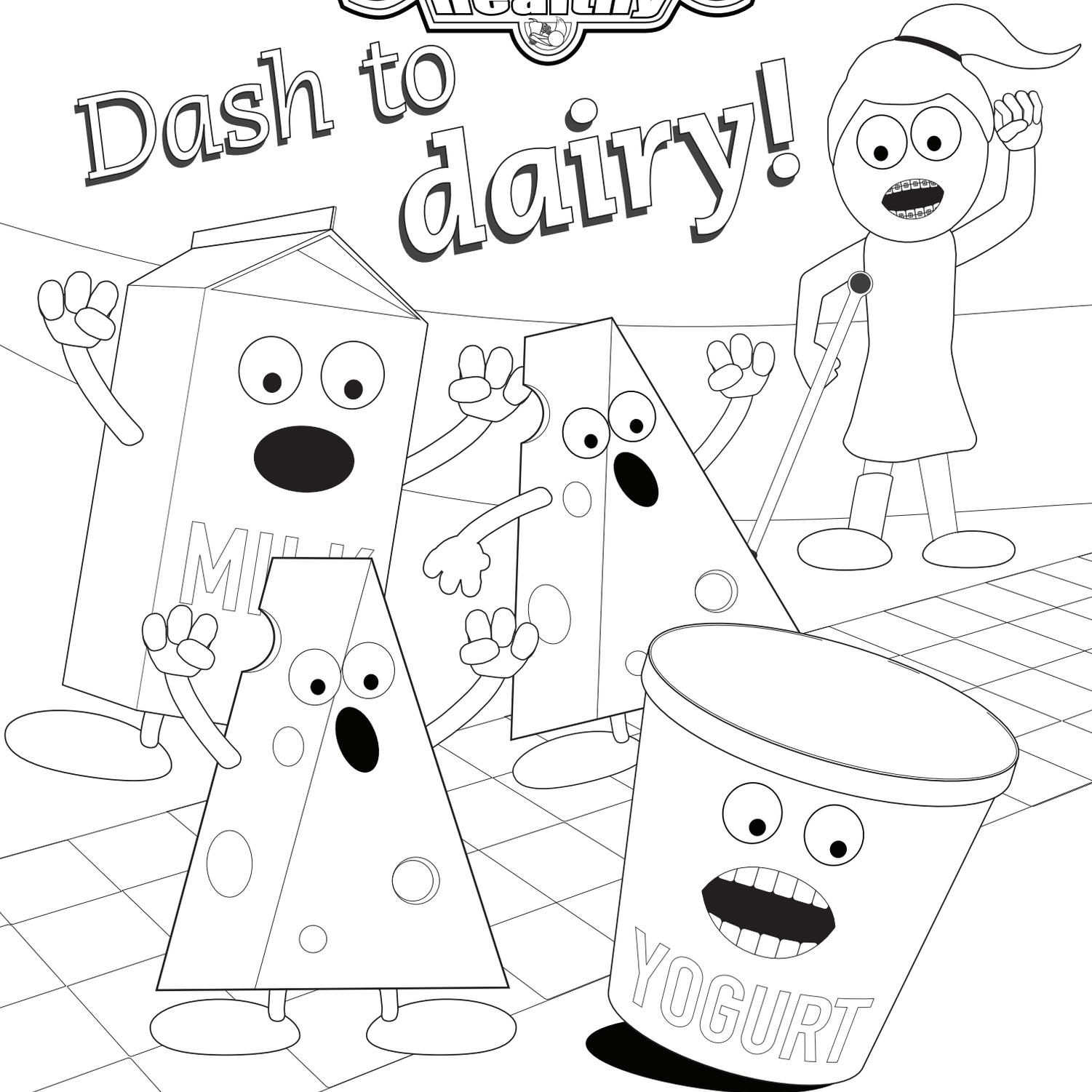
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Dash to  
dairy!



Enjoy at least two servings of dairy a day!



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to  
**Healthy**

Rev up with  
**water!**



**Drink 6-8 glasses of water a day!**



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