



Teacher Training Webinar

A Taste of African Heritage &
A Children's Taste of African Heritage



Overview

- Cultural Competency
- The African Diaspora
- The African Heritage Diet
- A Taste of African Heritage (ATOAH) & A Children's Taste of African Heritage (ACTOAH), Lesson-by-Lesson
- Best Practices/Teaching Tips



About Oldways

We're a nonprofit dedicated to improving public health by inspiring individuals and organizations to embrace the healthy, sustainable joys of the "old ways" of eating – heritage-based diets high in taste, nourishment, sustainability, and joy.

Since 1990, we've helped people live healthier, happier lives by offering educational programs, resources, and recipes based on shared cultural food traditions from around the world. It's a mission we take great joy in, one with proven nutritional and emotional benefits.




Cultural Competency



Cultural Competence in Teaching

According to the DHHS, "Practicing cultural competence to honor diversity means understanding the core needs of your target audience and designing services and materials to meet those needs strategically."

- Structure ATOAH as a constant cultural exchange.
- Value diversity
- Be culturally self-aware
- Always use inclusive language
- Learn about your students' different cultural roots. Don't make assumptions



Barriers to Healthy Eating

Understanding your students' daily experiences will also help you reach them in a more conscious, authentic, and effective way. Be mindful of:

- Different income levels / ingredient costs
- Local access to healthy foods
- Local grocery markets where SNAP benefits are offered
- Transportation access
- Kitchen equipment



Which of the following factors are important to understand and acknowledge when teaching and counseling your participants?

- A. Participants' income levels
- B. Food access in participants' neighborhood
- C. What basic kitchen equipment they are missing
- D. Transportation issues and solutions
- E. Sharing which local grocery stores and farmers markets have the best produce selection
- F. All of the above



Which of the following factors are important to understand and acknowledge when teaching and counseling your participants?

F. All of the above




The African Diaspora



Africa is a CONTINENT

- 54 countries
- Over 1500 different languages
- Lots of culinary diversity




What is the African Diaspora?

Diaspora: the dispersion of any people from their original homeland

The African Diaspora encompasses:

- Continental Africa (West/Central Africa)
- The Caribbean
- Latin America
- The American South




African Peoples: West/Central Africa

- The majority of African heritage ancestors came from this region and were transported to the African Diaspora (an estimated 9-11 million Africans).
- With an estimated population of 174,507,539, Nigeria is the most populous Black nation in the world.
- Traditional foods include: watermelon, black-eyed peas, yams, okra, and millet.




Afro-Caribbean

- The Caribbean was often the first destination enslaved Africans reached after Africa before some went on to the Americas. It is estimated that well over 90% Africans were taken to the Caribbean & South America
- The Caribbean is made up of roughly 30 countries with 100s of islands attached to them
- Traditional food staples: Plantains, Cassava/Yuca, coconut and hot peppers



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Afro-Latin America

- Out of about 10 million Africans, about 3.5 million alone were taken to Brazil
- Brazil has the largest Black population outside of Africa
- Common traditional foods throughout: manioc (cassava), lentils, plantains, sugarcane



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American South

- The roots of early African-American food staples came from Africa, Southern plantation houses, enslaved peoples' private gardens, and foraging in the wild.
- Louisiana's Creole cooking has its roots in African, French, Spanish, and Haitian cuisines.
- Traditional Low Country and Gullah cooking, from around South Carolina's and Georgia's coasts, feature seafood, rice, and sweet potatoes.



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African Heritage Cultural Traditions

- **Celebrations:** Carnival-Caribbean, Carnival-Latin America, Mardi Gras-Louisiana, Juneteenth, Kwanzaa,
- **Music:** Spirituals, Ragtime, Jazz, Blues, Soca, Reggae, Doo Wop, Rap, Samba, Funk
- **Spiritual Traditions:** Candomble-Brazil, Santeria-other parts of Latin America, Vodun-Haiti, Ifa-Nigeria, Akan & Vodun-Ghana & Benin
- **Cultural Movement/Dance:** Capoeira, Rumba (Cuba), Samba (Brazil), Charleston, Jitterbug, Swing, Tap
- **Clothing:** Black Arts Movement 1960's, Kente cloth, vibrant colors, mud cloth, trade beads, Adinkra motifs in jewelry and fabrics, wraps for waist and hair

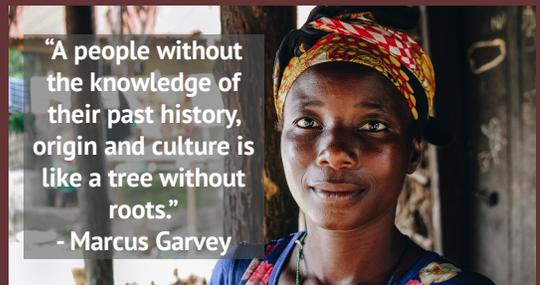
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Ideas for Discussing the African Diaspora

- **Culture Share/Storytelling:**
 - What foods or food preparations are similar?
 - What food traditions have been maintained and how?
 - Share about different travel experiences and foods eaten abroad or in different parts of the U.S.
 - Share about childhood foods and how personal diets have changed
- **Make Connections:** Share what you know is culturally similar and what is different across the African Diaspora
- **Increase Understanding:** Talk about the classes' misconceptions of the African Diaspora. Talk about what sharing and learning about the African Diaspora can do for our understanding of the cultures from that region.

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"A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots."
- Marcus Garvey



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Southern Diet vs African Heritage Diet

- The "Southern Diet" of fried foods, processed meats, added fats, and sugary beverages is often seen as the "traditional" diet for many African Americans.
- But in fact, a healthier, more traditional model can be found by looking to the foods brought to the New World by Africans.

Traditional vs. Modern Eating

Traditional African Heritage Diet Pattern	Modern Standard American Diet Pattern
Plant-based	Animal-based
Whole foods	Fast food and pre-packaged convenience foods
High in fiber and complex carbohydrates: whole grains, cereals, starchy vegetables and tubers	Low in fiber; high in refined flours and grains
Naturally low in sodium	High in sodium
Low in unhealthy fats and refined sugars	High in fried foods, soft drinks and other sugary drinks

Dietary Guidelines for Americans

"Healthy eating patterns are designed to be flexible in order to accommodate traditional and cultural foods. Individuals are encouraged to retain the healthy aspects of their eating and physical activity patterns and avoid adopting behaviors that are less healthy. **Professionals can help individuals or population groups by recognizing cultural diversity and developing programs and materials that are responsive and appropriate to their belief systems, lifestyles and practices, traditions, and other needs.**"

Oldways African Heritage Diet Pyramid

The African Heritage Diet Pyramid illustrates the healthy foods and traditional eating patterns of the African Diaspora. It celebrates the healthy culinary traditions practiced by people of African descent across Africa, Central & South America, the Caribbean, and the American South.

Sankofa

An Adinkra word from the Akan people of Africa that means "to go back and take," **bringing the best of the old ways forward.** The Sankofa bird looks behind while flying forward so that the past might inform the future journey.

Shifts from traditional to modern lifestyle patterns include increases in all of the following EXCEPT:

- A. Unhealthy types of fats
- B. Sodium
- C. Physical activity
- D. Refined sugar
- E. All of the above



Shifts from traditional to modern lifestyle patterns include increases in all of the following EXCEPT:

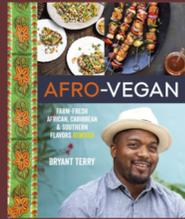
- C. Physical activity



"Culturally appropriate food is an important criterion for determining what is 'healthy' and people of African descent need not look any further than our own historical foodways for better well-being. It is vital that we incorporate African and African-diasporic vegetables, grains, legumes, fruits, nuts, seeds, and cooking techniques into our kitchens.

The nonprofit group Oldways: Health Through Heritage took a major step in illuminating the importance of eating African ancestral foods when they created the African Heritage Diet Food Pyramid in 2011. This revision of the antiquated, one-size-fits-all food guide pyramid encourages us to consume lots of culturally appropriate leafy green vegetables, tubers, fruits, whole grains, legumes, seeds and nuts."

-- Bryant Terry, from his cookbook *Afro-Vegan: Farm-Fresh African, Caribbean & Southern Flavors Remixed*



Which of the following characteristics best describe the African Heritage Diet?

- A. It is a similar eating pattern to the Mediterranean diet.
- B. Healthy staple starches such as squash, pumpkin, tubers, root vegetables, and yams are primary foods.
- C. Meat, poultry, and wild game are eaten minimally, often used as flavorings.
- D. Meets the nutritional guidelines linked to improved cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and stroke.
- E. All of the above



Which of the following characteristics best describe the African Heritage Diet?

- E. All of the above



What are the key features of the traditional African Heritage Diet that Contribute to Good Health?

- A. Plant-based, lower in animal protein like red and processed meats
- B. Lower carbohydrate intake
- C. Increased use of healthy herbs and spices instead of salt
- D. Emphasis on whole, minimally processed foods
- E. Eating meals with others
- F. All of the above EXCEPT B
- G. All of the above EXCEPT E



What are the key features of the traditional African Heritage Diet that Contribute to Good Health?

F. All of the above EXCEPT B



African American Health Today

African Americans are disproportionately affected by many chronic health conditions.

- Blacks ages 35-64 are 50% more likely to have high blood pressure than whites.
- Blacks ages 18-49 are 2x as likely to die from heart disease as whites.
- Blacks ages 35-64 are 40-64% more likely to have diabetes than whites.
- Black adults are about 30% more likely to be obese than white adults.

Source: "African American Health" Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Last updated July 3, 2017. Accessed June 28, 2018. <https://www.cdc.gov/nri/news/ahhealth/index.html>



Body Image and Health Identity

- Often a disconnect between medical definitions of overweight/obesity and cultural definitions of body size (e.g. "big boned")
- Promote healthy eating for well-being, rather than focusing solely on weight loss or physical appearance.
- Respect the diversity of body weights and shapes, and avoid body-shaming



African Americans are likely to suffer disproportionately from which of the following conditions?

- A. Obesity
- B. High blood pressure
- C. Heart disease mortality
- D. Diabetes
- E. All of the above



African Americans are likely to suffer disproportionately from which of the following conditions?

E. All of the above




Heart Disease is NOT a Part of Heritage.

What is in our heritage is a healthy heart, strong body, and vibrant and delicious foods.





A Taste of African Heritage

Lesson by Lesson

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The African Heritage Diet

Lesson 1 in ATOAH, Lesson 1 in ACTOAH

- Introduction to the Traditional African Heritage Diet Pyramid
- Regional culinary traditions across Africa, Central & South America, the Caribbean and the American South
- Nutrition shifts from traditional to modern eating and their health consequences



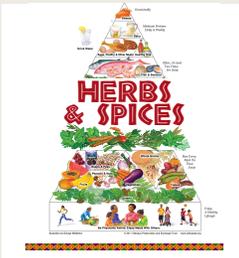
Occasionally
Moderate portions daily to weekly
Often, at least two times per week
Base every meal on these foods
Enjoy a healthy lifestyle

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Herbs & Spices

Lesson 1 in ATOAH, Lesson 2 in ACTOAH

- Regional culinary traditions across Africa, Central & South America, the Caribbean and the American South
- African Heritage Herb & Spice Highlights
- ATOAH: Cooking with African Heritage Spices
- ACTOAH: Exploring spice blends, grinding spices, optional herb planting



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Cooking with African Heritage Herbs & Spices



West African Jollof Rice



African Heritage Spicy Chickpeas

Recipes for ATOAH only. (ACTOAH has hands-on spice activity)

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Tips for Teaching: The African Heritage Diet, Herbs & Spices

- **Oldways Tip #1:** Read the Health Through Heritage Pledge out loud together, and encourage students to connect on Facebook for even more peer support.
- **Oldways Tip #2:** Engage your students in discussions about their cultural ancestries, personal food traditions and cooking experience, family health, food experiences while traveling, and visits to African heritage restaurants in the U.S.
- **Oldways Tip #3:** Pull from your experiences to relay the information:
 - Have you lived or traveled outside the country? If so, where? Have you been to Africa, the Caribbean, South America or the Southern U.S.? What was the food like in those places? How was the food different from the standard American diet?
 - Have any of your friends grown up or lived in African heritage regions? Have those friends cooked for you?
 - Have you ever eaten at an African, Caribbean, or South American restaurant?
 - Can you remember garden-to-table meals with your parents or grandparents?

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Leafy Greens

Lesson 2 in ATOAH, Lesson 3 in ACTOAH

- The abundant use of greens in African heritage cuisines; tradition & nutritional wisdom (potlikker)
- The nutrition of leafy greens and the concept of "quick-cooking" greens to retain nutrition but not lose flavor
- How to shop for leafy greens (for adults), how to fit your greens in
- Cooking With African Heritage Leafy Greens
- ACTOAH: Kitchen safety



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Cooking with African Heritage Leafy Greens

- Spinach Cucumber Dill Salad
- Green Smoothie
- Tangy Collard Greens (ATOAH only)
- Greens Mixup: Kale, Mustard & Dandelions w/ Garlicky Dill Mojo Sauce (ATOAH only)



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Tips for Teaching: Leafy Greens

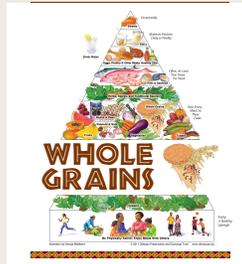
- **Oldways Tip #1:** Display your greens
- **Oldways Tip #2:** Prep whatever you can ahead of time
- **Oldways Tip #3:** Address medical conditions, medications, and leafy greens. Some medications and health conditions have contraindications with diets high in leafy greens, due to their high vitamin K and oxalic acid content. Refer to handout "Eating Leafy Greens With Certain Health Conditions and Medications" on the online Training Guide.
- **Oldways Tip #4:** Pull from your experiences to relay the information:
 - What are your favorite leafy greens?
 - What are your personal perceptions of "quick-cooked" greens?
 - Were leafy greens cooked in your home growing up? If so, which ones?

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Whole Grains

Lesson 3 in ATOAH, Lesson 4 in ACTOAH

- The definition and parts of a whole grain
- Health and nutritional benefits of whole grains
- How to identify whole grains using the Whole Grain Stamp
- Whole grains and their uses in African Heritage cooking
- Cooking with African Heritage whole grains



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Cooking with African Heritage Whole Grains



Millet with Zucchini and Chickpeas (ATOAH)



Quinoa with Ginger and Carrots (ATOAH)



Oldways Millet Banana Breakfast Porridge (ACTOAH)

Not pictured: Curry Couscous with Peppers (ATOAH)

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Tips for Teaching: Whole Grains

Oldways Tip #1: Many students are surprised to learn that so many whole grains have cultural ties to Africa. Emphasize this connection in your class when talking about each grain.

Oldways Tip #2: Tell your students where you purchased your whole grains, so that they can easily find them too. If you have trouble finding any of the whole grains for the recipes, consider more accessible whole grains as substitutes.

Oldways Tip #3: Bring in examples of different whole grains and products with the Whole Grain Stamp on their packaging

Oldways Tip #4: Pull from your experiences to relay the information:

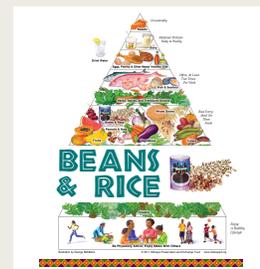
- What whole grains do you consume at home?
- Are you familiar with the Whole Grain Stamp?
- What African Heritage whole grain dishes have you tried before?

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Beans & Rice

Lesson 4 in ATOAH, Lesson 5 in ACTOAH

- **Health & Heritage:** The cultural significance, powerful nutrition and affordability of beans and rice as traditional African Heritage staples
- Traditional rice & bean dishes found across the African Diaspora
- **Plant-based protein:** The health benefits of eating more vegetarian meals with beans
- Cooking with African Heritage beans



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Cooking with African Heritage Beans & Rice

Not pictured:

- Simple Red Lentils (ATOAH)
- Caribbean Coconut Red Beans (ATOAH)
- Make-your-own African Heritage Grain Bowls (supplement to ATOAH, ACTOAH)



Tips for Teaching: Beans & Rice

Oldways Tip #1: Display samples of dried and canned African Heritage beans
Oldways Tip #2: Remind students that you don't have to be a vegetarian to eat vegetarian meals. Benefits include: increased nutrition, meals naturally lower in calories, affordability, good for the planet, closer to TRADITION!

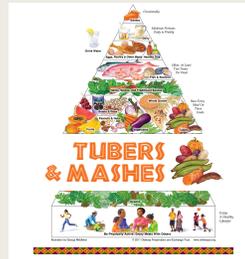
Oldways Tip #3: Pull from your experiences to relay the information:
 •What kinds of beans do you love best? Do you eat beans regularly?
 •What are some vegetarian meals that you enjoy eating?



Tubers & Mashies

Lesson 5 in ATOAH, Lesson 6 in ACTOAH

- Discussing tubers' prominence in traditional African Heritage cooking
- Walking through how to cook different types of tubers:
 - Yuca (or Cassava), Taro, Yams, Potatoes and Sweet Potatoes
- Where to find healthy tubers and how to choose them (adults)
- Cooking with African Heritage tubers



Cooking African Heritage Tubers & Mashies



Not pictured:

- Iriro: Kenyan Vegetable Mashed Potatoes (ATOAH)
- Boiled Plantains (ACTOAH)



Tips for Teaching: Tubers & Mashies

Oldways Tip #1: Bring in a variety of tubers to show students (cassava, taro, yams, purple potatoes if in season, etc.) or bring in photographs of different tubers.

Oldways Tip #2: Identify African, Caribbean, Latin American and International grocery stores in your area to share with students to help them find a greater selection of African heritage tubers.

Oldways Tip #3: Note the Potluck suggestion on this week's Homework Assignment page, inviting students to bring in an African Heritage dish from home for a last-class potluck.

Oldways Tip #4: Pull from your experiences to relay the information:

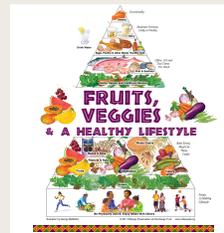
- Have you ever eaten or prepared traditional tubers other than potatoes or sweet potatoes? Share your experiences and ask your students to share theirs.



Fruits, Vegetables, & Healthy Lifestyle

Lesson 6 in ATOAH, Lesson 7 in ACTOAH

- The nutrition and cultural heritage of African Heritage fruits and vegetables
- A Healthy & Happy Life: identifying different areas of our lifestyles that nourish us in different ways
- Cooking with African Heritage fruits and vegetables



Cooking with African Heritage Fruits & Vegetables

Not pictured:

- Braised Cabbage (ATOAH only)
- Charred Okra



Mango and Papaya After-Chop Fruit Salad (ATOAH & ACTOAH)

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Teaching Tips: Fruits, Vegetables, & Healthy Lifestyle

Oldways Tip #1: Review the Healthy Heritage Pledge at the beginning of class with your students; discuss successes and challenges that they have experienced following the pledge

Oldways Tip #2: Use the pyramid to review all of the different vegetables already covered so far in the program (paired with spices, mixed with whole grains, etc.) and to discuss different traditional healthy lifestyle practices

Oldways Tip #3: Take your time with the Healthy Lifestyle Activity – students really appreciate the time to check in with themselves about other areas in their life that need nourishing

Oldways Tip #4: Pull from your experiences to relay the information:

- What fruits and vegetables do you eat most often at home?
- How do you nourish your life? Yoga? Walking? Art? Spirituality? Friends?

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Goals of the A Taste of African Heritage Program include all of the following EXCEPT:

- A. Shining a light on the healthy eating practices that once sustained and protected the health of African American ancestors
- B. Sharing that, in spite of current health disparities, diabetes and other chronic diseases are NOT inevitable
- C. Sharing that healthy foods and a healthy life ARE a part of African heritage
- D. Encouraging students to eat more plant-based meals and plant foods as part of reclaiming cultural traditions
- E. Motivating students to eat a diet high in animal protein and low in whole grains, starchy potatoes, and beans

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Goals of the A Taste of African Heritage Program include all of the following EXCEPT:

- E. Motivating students to eat a diet high in animal protein and low in whole grains, starchy potatoes, and beans

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Best Practices / Teaching Tips

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Securing Your Class Site

- Oldways' A Taste of African Heritage program sites have included:
Churches, Schools, Recreation Centers, Grocery Stores, Senior Centers, Community Rooms of Multifamily Housing Units, Community Clinics, Home Kitchens, Community Gardens, Farmer's Markets
- Teach from your home kitchen.
- Contact a local church.
- Get to know local organizations in your community.
- Utilize your connections.
- Reach out to your local City or State Health Department.

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<https://oldwayspt.org/atoah-class-listing>



Add your class to our online class directory, even if it is not open to the public.

- Help us track our reach
- Increase awareness for your class
- Learn about other teachers/sites in your area



Maintaining Student Retention

- Know Your Audience and Schedule Considerately
- Keep the Student Handbooks Until Graduation Day
- Create an Inviting Atmosphere



Safety and Sanitation

- **For Teachers:**
 - Familiarize yourself with your site location (first aid kit, fire extinguisher, etc)
 - Ask students the first day of class about allergies or food restrictions
- **For ALL:**
 - Wash your hands often
 - Clean Produce
 - Don't cross contaminate
 - Clean cutting boards and countertops
 - Keep Knives separate when cleaning/washing
 - Don't Double Dip
 - Tie Your Hair Back
 - "Hot Behind!" & "Knife Behind"
 - Focus with Knives!
 - Don't catch a falling knife
 - Please supervise children



The Importance of Student Surveys

To make sure that A Taste of African Heritage helps teachers and students make lasting changes, it is **VERY IMPORTANT** that we measure the program's impacts through confidential student surveys and physical health measurements.

- Measure impact
- Help us identify ways to optimize program experience for students



Last Day of Class: Ending ATOAH on a Strong Note

- Graduation Day is a time for:**
- Reflection, celebration, and intention/goal setting
 - Strengthening student bonds
 - Discussing how students can maintain their healthy habits and enjoy what they have learned everyday
 - Discuss how students can be health leaders and pass this information on to their families, friends, neighbors, communities, and beyond
 - Completing exit surveys

Here are some nice ways that past classes have ended their ATOAH series:

- Potluck Celebration
- Goal Setting
- Carrying the Torch



Engage with the ATOAH Community

- Host Single-Day Events in Your Community
- Join our Facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/atasteofafricanheritage/>
- Help future teachers by sending us your tips to info@oldwayspt.org



Creating Long-Lasting Change

- Host Follow-up Potlucks with Graduates and Their Families
- Appoint Group Leaders
- Encourage Students To Become African Heritage & Health Leaders in Their Communities
- Teach Again!



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Tips for Teaching Children (ACTOAH)

- Enlist the help of a teaching assistant, especially for larger classes
- Keep them moving!
- Put extra focus on kitchen safety
- Make class inviting and welcoming to all
- Have FUN!



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Protocol if Contacted by the Media

1. Respond ASAP and thank them for getting in touch; let them know you're happy to speak with them and will get back to them ASAP.

2. **Email Oldways at media@oldwayspt.org.** Please send complete details of media request, including:

- Name of journalist, name of newspaper/radio station/blog, & contact info
- What will they write about? Your class, the program in general, etc.?
- Deadline (if specified)?

3. Oldways will get back to you ASAP and let you know how to proceed. We will either have you reply directly to media or we will contact media (case by case).

4. Review talking points so you can discuss Oldways A Taste of African Heritage, the African Heritage & Health program, and additional Oldways work knowledgeably. As you read, try to put them in your own words so you can speak naturally and comfortably.

****Talking points will be provided when your media engagement is set.****

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Further Reading

- *The Cooking Gene: A Journey Through African American Culinary History in the Old South*, by Michael W. Twitty
- *Afro-Vegan: Farm-Fresh African, Caribbean, and Southern Flavors Reimagined*, by Bryant Terry
- *The Jemima Code: Two Centuries of African American Cookbooks*, by Imani Tipton-Martin
- *Little Wanda Finds a Cure for Nana*, by Tamara Raye Stevenson
- *High on the Hog: A Culinary Journey from Africa to America*, by Jessica B. Harris
- *Hog and Hominy: Soul Food from Africa to America*, by Frederick Ogle
- *A Taste of Country Cooking*, by Edna Lewis
- *The African American Guide to Living Well with Diabetes*, by Constance Brown-Riggs
- *Good For Me Recipes Cookbook* by Oldways and the National Black Child Development Institute



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Thank you!

Questions? info@oldwayspt.org
www.oldwayspt.org

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