Title: Mini Gingerbread House

Life Skill Area: Problem Solving and Decision Making

LIFE SKILLS TAUGHT
Nutrition, the Food Guide Pyramid
Creativity and uniqueness
Art
Character Education
Engineering
Problem Solving and Decision Making

MATERIALS NEEDED
1. Plastic table cover
2. Plain Graham Crackers (not cinnamon sugar)
3. House pattern, attached, and heavy paper
4. Cellophane tape
5. Butter Cream frosting, homemade or purchased, any flavor
6. Cake decorating tube and tips, optional
7. Small, sturdy disposable plates
8. Supply of small candies, raisins, nuts, peanuts
9. Plastic knives for spreading
10. Rubber scraper
11. Plates, bowls, or tray for various candies, etc.

PROCEDURES
1. Copy, cut, fold, and construct paper house form using cellophane tape and following pattern instructions.
2. Cover work surface with table cover.
3. Wash hands for food safety.
4. Carefully break graham crackers into 2½-inch squares, allowing 6 squares for each house.
5. “Glue” base of paper house form to plate using frosting.
6. Using frosting as glue, attach 1 graham cracker to each of the 4 paper house side sections to form the walls, and 1 graham cracker to each of the 2 top sections to form the roof.
7. Now the real creativity begins. Participants may decorate their gingerbread houses any way they desire, using supplied food items and frosting as glue. Frostings in decorator tubes with various tips are
optional but great for older youth, or younger participants with volunteers to help them.

DISCUSSION
Talk about how many of the decorative items are not actually highly nutritious, but are alright in small amounts. Point out on the Food Guide Pyramid where each of the items is found. Discuss the fact that peoples’ homes vary tremendously over the world, and range from grass huts to igloos, and cardboard shanties to palaces. Just like the gingerbread houses, people build their own houses with whatever materials are available and affordable. Encourage each participant to give their gingerbread house as a gift to a shut-in, an elderly neighbor, or someone else special.

HOME ACTIVITY
Make more mini gingerbread houses to use as gifts. Read the story about Hansel and Gretel together.