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Another Bite

Utah State University Extension

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Utah State University
Department of Nutrition & Food Sciences
Vol. 1, No. 1

Another Bite

A fact sheet with helpful nutrition information for preschoolers

Division of Responsibility

When trying to get a child to eat, parents and children have separate responsibilities. The care givers responsibility is to provide and prepare the food for the child. It is the child's responsibility to determine how much he or she eats. Forcing the child to eat and to "clean your plate" will only cause fights between the care giver and the child.

It is also the care givers responsibility to make meals pleasant. Often if the care giver and the child do not agree on the type of food to provide and argue about food during meals, the child will respond by not eating. Also, the child needs to be well behaved to make the meal pleasant for you and others at the table.

Care Giver's Responsibilities Include:

- Selecting and buying food
- Making and presenting meals
- Timing of meals and snacks
- Presenting food in child size portions
- Allowing comfortable eating style for child
- Pleasant meal times
- Help child participate in meals
- Help child concentrate on eating
- Define appropriate behavior for meals

Not Responsible for:

- How much the child eats
- If the child eats
- How the child's body develops

Care givers are responsible for ***WHAT*** is presented to eat and the manner in which it is presented.

Children are responsible for ***HOW MUCH*** and even ***IF*** they eat.

- Ellyn Satter

How to Get Your Preschooler to Eat Better

Does your preschooler ever refuse to eat? Does he or she ask for the same foods over and over for every meal? These are not uncommon occurrences with preschoolers. Here are some hints that will help you get your preschooler to eat better.

- Have regularly scheduled meals and snacks. Set up times for snacking and eating. You should plan three meals and two snacks for your preschooler every day. This helps children cut down on grazing and free hand outs, which often cause children to not eat at meals.

- Avoid forcing preschoolers to eat. Give preschoolers the right to decide to eat or not eat a particular food. Present new foods frequently so the child may become familiar with them.

- Do not become a short order cook. Do not let your child get in the habit of not eating the prepared meal and requesting different foods.

Kid's Korner

Color affects the way we think food tastes. Add food coloring to different juices. See if your friends can tell what the juice really is. You can use juices like:

- Apple
- Pineapple
- Orange
- White Grape
- Lemonade
- Limeade

Inside the Next Issue:

Food Guide Pyramid
Needed Nutrients

Appropriate Use of Foods

It's so easy to get a child to stop crying or whining at the store by promising a cookie when you get home. But is this the best for your child? Even if you promised an orange, is using food for bribery appropriate?

Food is important for energy and good health. It should also be enjoyed. Food should not be a means of punishment or reward for anyone. When food is used to change behavior, children will assume this is a function of food.

When disciplining children, punishments should not include withholding meals or even threatening to do so. Withholding meals may lead a child to over eat at other meals, for fear of not being able to eat later. This may cause a child to become overweight.

Bribery is not a good idea either. While the promise of a treat can encourage good behavior, there are problems that may show up later. If a parent does not give the treat promised, the child may not trust the parent. It is hard to have a good relationship with someone who cannot be trusted. Giving treats for good behavior is a problem, too. The child may misbehave just to get a treat later for being good. It may be hard to get the child to behave without a treat.

Ideas for Rewards:

- an extra story before bed
- a book of stickers
- a pencil or crayons
- a hug
- a trip to the park or zoo

Suggested Reference

How To get Your Kid to Eat...But Not Too Much by Ellyn Satter, Bull Publishing Company, Palo Alto, CA 1987. This publication gives ideas for dealing with children of all ages and their eating habits.

Snack Shop

Rolled-Up Sandwich

4 slices of Bread
Peanut Butter
Jam, Honey, or Banana Slices

1. Cut the crust off the bread slices.
2. Flatten slices using a rolling pin.
3. Spread peanut butter on the flattened slices.
4. Spread on jam, honey, or place on banana slices. Be careful not to put too much on or it will run out the edges when the bread is rolled.
5. Roll the bread into a log and secure with a tooth pick.

Variations:
Chill for 1 hour and slice into wheels.
Use cream cheese, chopped ham, or chopped parsley for a center.
Makes four sandwiches.

This fact sheet was prepared as a class project by senior dietetics students in the Department of Nutrition and Food Sciences, Utah State University, Logan, Utah, and is distributed by Utah State University Cooperative Extension Service.

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Food Guide Pyramid

GENERAL OVERVIEW

The Food Guide Pyramid is designed to be a guideline of what to eat each day. The Pyramid goes beyond the Basic Four Food Groups. It emphasizes foods from six food groups: Bread, cereal, rice, and pasta group; vegetable group; fruit group; milk, yogurt, and cheese g-roup; meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, eggs, and nuts group; and fats, oils, sweets.

The base of the Pyramid is the grain group; this should be the "base" of our diet. More servings should come from this group than any other. The next level of the Pyramid contains the fruit group and the vegetable group. Most people do not eat enough of these. The third level of the Pyramid contains the milk and meat groups. The tip of the Pyramid is fats, oils, and sweets. Items from this group should be used sparingly.

You can use the Pyramid as a guide to choosing a healthful diet. Each food group provides some of the nutrients you need: No one group is more important than the other. For good health, you need a variety of foods.

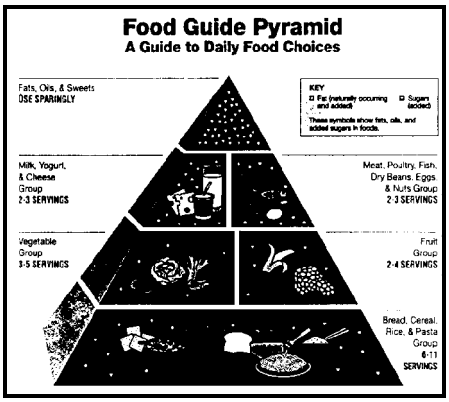
Quote

Be the change you are trying to create.

-Ghandi

SERVING SIZES

Children can be overwhelmed by adult-size food portions. The Food Guide Pyramid recommends a certain number of servings from each food group. Children need the same number of servings from each group, but in smaller portions. (See Pyramid for number of servings.)



For example, a child-size serving would be (ages 2-5):

- 1 slice of bread, ⅓ cup rice or pasta, or 3 graham cracker squares
- ¼ cup cooked or ½ cup raw vegetables
- ½ cup fruit juice or 1 small piece of fresh fruit
- ½ - ¾ cup milk or yogurt or ¾ - 1 ounce of cheese
- 1 -2 ounces of meat, 1 egg, ½ - ¾ cup cooked beans, or 2 tablespoons peanut butter. Remember it is better to give a child too little food and have them ask for more than to overwhelm them with large portion sizes.

NUTRIENTS PROVIDED

Each group on the Food Guide Pyramid supplies different nutrients which children need to grow and learn.

Energy mainly comes from the breads/cereals group. Energy is necessary for children to learn, play, and grow. Choose whole grain breads and cereals.

Fruits and vegetables supply folic acid, Vitamins A and C, and many minerals. Folic acid is necessary for growth. Vitamin A helps keep eyes healthy. Vitamin C helps gums and skin. Fruits and vegetables, as well as breads and cereals, contain fiber. Fiber helps prevent constipation. Choose dark green vegetables and whole fruits often.

The meat group supplies protein for growth and iron to help the blood carry oxygen. Without enough iron, children are tired and have difficulty learning. Lean meats, poultry (no skin), and cooked dry beans are the best choices.

The milk group is the best source of calcium. Calcium builds strong bones and teeth. Yogurt and milk are good choices. Ice cream can be an occasional treat.

Eating foods from each group helps children get the vitamins and minerals they need. They will be stronger, healthier, and better able to

learn.

Activity

FOOD PYRAMID COLLAGE

1. Cut a triangle out of construction paper. The triangle should be at least 8 inches tall and 11 inches wide at the base.
2. Draw three horizontal lines on the pyramid dividing it into four equal sections or levels.
3. Draw a vertical line dividing the second and third levels in half.
4. Cut pictures of food from magazines, food packages, or draw them yourself.
5. Place the pictures in the correct area of the Pyramid.
6. All parts of this activity can be laminated and used repeatedly.

Recipe

MACARONI AND CHEESE
(LOW-FAT)

1 7 ounce package of macaroni and cheese (with the powdered cheese sauce)
2 Tablespoons skim milk
2 oz grated mozzarella cheese

Cook the noodles according to package directions, omitting salt. Drain, then add milk and cheese instead of butter or margarine called for on the package. Mix well to coat evenly. Add contents of the cheese sauce packet; mix well. Serve hot. Makes 4 ½ cup servings.

Calories: 283
Fat: 5 grams per serving

Macaroni and cheese can be a healthy choice when made properly. The noodles (bread group) are rich in carbohydrates. The milk and cheese (milk group) provide calcium and protein.

In the Next Issue:

Important Nutrients

Reference
For more information regarding the Food Guide Pyramid contact the Utah Dairy Council.
Utah Dairy Council
1213 East 2100 South
Salt Lake City, UT 84106
801-487-9976

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CALCIUM

Calcium is an important mineral needed to build strong bones and teeth. We also need calcium for:

- nerve impulses
- muscle contractions
- blood clotting
- heart beat

Milk and dairy products are the major sources of calcium. Children and adults who do not drink milk or eat other dairy products are at risk for calcium deficiency. Rickets (softening of the bones) and osteoporosis (porous or brittle bones) can occur if we have a prolonged calcium deficiency.

Children need 2 to 3 servings of milk and dairy products each day.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE:
Smart Snacking for the pre-school age child

Refer to the Newsletter on the Food Guide Pyramid for appropriate serving sizes.

FLUORIDE

Fluoride is a mineral that makes developing teeth harder and more resistant to cavities. Fluoride supplements can reduce cavities during childhood by 50 to 80 percent. As the number of cavities decrease so do dental costs. Fluoride can reduce the average annual cost of dental care by at least 50 percent.

The American Dental Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics recommend beginning daily fluoride supplementation shortly after birth for breast-fed infants, infants receiving ready-to-use formula, and infants receiving formula prepared with water that is low in fluoride or non-fluoridated.

The amount of fluoride your child needs may vary depending on the fluoride content of the water. Most water in Utah does not have fluoride. Therefore, it is important to ask your child's doctor about the amount of fluoride supplementation that is appropriate for your child.

SMART SNACK RECIPE

PEACH FUZZ

1 Banana
2 ripe peaches or 3 canned peach halves
2 cups milk
1 carton (8 ozs.) plain yogurt
1/2 tsp. vanilla
5 ice cubes

Combine all ingredients in blender container. Blend until smooth and frothy. This snack is a good source of calcium and protein.

KID'S KORNER

Find foods high in calcium and iron.

MATERIALS: piece of paper
old magazines and newspapers
scissors
glue

Have the child look through the old newspapers and magazines to find foods that are good sources of calcium or iron. They might find milk, buttermilk, yogurt, cheese, or cottage cheese as good sources of calcium. Meat, fish, poultry, eggs, vegetables, and iron fortified cereals are the main sources of iron. Help the child cut out these pictures and glue them to the paper. Hang the paper up to remind them of the nutritious foods they need to eat.

IRON

Iron is a mineral that is needed for good health. Everyone needs iron for healthy blood. Iron is in the part of blood that carries oxygen to the cells. It also helps protect against disease and infection.

Iron is one of the major nutrients that is likely to be low in children's diets. Children need extra iron because many new red blood cells are made as children grow. In order for these cells to grow properly, they need iron.

If there is not enough iron in our diets, anemia may result. This will cause you to be tired, grumpy, weak, and pale. It also shortens the attention span. Headaches and infections are more likely to occur with anemia. Children may have a harder time learning as well.

Iron can be found in many foods. Meat, fish, poultry, eggs, vegetables, and cereals (especially iron fortified products) are the main sources. It is hard to get enough iron without including meat, fish, and poultry regularly.

The iron from meat is best absorbed by the intestines. The redder the meat, the better the iron. As much as 20% of the iron in red meat may be absorbed, but only 5% of the iron from plants and vegetable sources is usually absorbed.

There are ways to increase the amount of iron that the body will absorb. Some foods, we'll call them iron helpers or iron enhancers, can significantly increase iron absorption. Meat, fish, poultry, and foods containing Vitamin C are iron helpers or enhancers. Animal protein foods contain a "meat factor" that improves the absorption of iron from vegetable sources when eaten at the same meal or snack.

Examples of combinations that enhance iron absorption are spaghetti with meat and tomato sauce, hamburgers and coleslaw, hot-dogs and orange juice, and vitamin C rich fruit (like strawberries) with iron fortified cereal.

REFERENCE BOOK:

Jennifer Lang Cooks for Kids
Written by: Jennifer Harvey Lang
Harmony Books, New York, 1991

QUOTE:
Children are our future,
feed them well.

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SNACK TIME

People often think that snacking is a "no-no" for children, and try to prevent them from eating between meals. This really isn't necessary or even helpful. Children's energy needs are high, and they have a hard time getting enough food with just meals. To make the most of snacks, parents and care givers should have control over the type of snacks and the time they are served.

TIMING

Plan regular snack times. Offer snacks midway between meals. Children should not be given a snack to make up for a meal that they would not eat. Stick to regular meal and snack times, and don't feed on demand all day long.

TYPE OF SNACKS!

Snacks should usually be limited to nutritious foods. Use snack time to meet your child's daily servings of the five food groups, according to the Food Guide Pyramid. For example, if your child hasn't had enough milk or bread, have a snack that includes these foods.

QUICK AND SMART SNACK

- Fresh fruit—oranges, bananas, sliced apples.
- Cheese and crackers.
- Decorate an open-face sandwich with raisins or other foods.
- Carrot curls.
- Cut out sandwiches with cookie cutters.
- String cheese.
- Vanilla wafers or graham crackers.
- Bagels.

NOT ALL THAT'S SWEET IS SUGAR !

A recent study found that sugar can-not be blamed for your child's hyperactivity. However, sugar does contribute to cavities and poor dental health. Also, foods containing sugar contribute little to your child's diet besides calories, and often fat.

Don't deprive your child of an occasional treat, but use creativity to provide healthy snacks that are naturally sweet.

- Serve fruit juice instead of soda pop.
- Try fruit leather or dried fruit.
- Blend frozen fruit with low fat (2%) milk to make a healthy shake.

SMART SNACKING RECIPE

FROZEN BANANAS

2 bananas, cut in half
2 T. old-fashioned peanut butter
1/2 cup evaporated skim milk
Chopped nuts or crunchy bran cereal

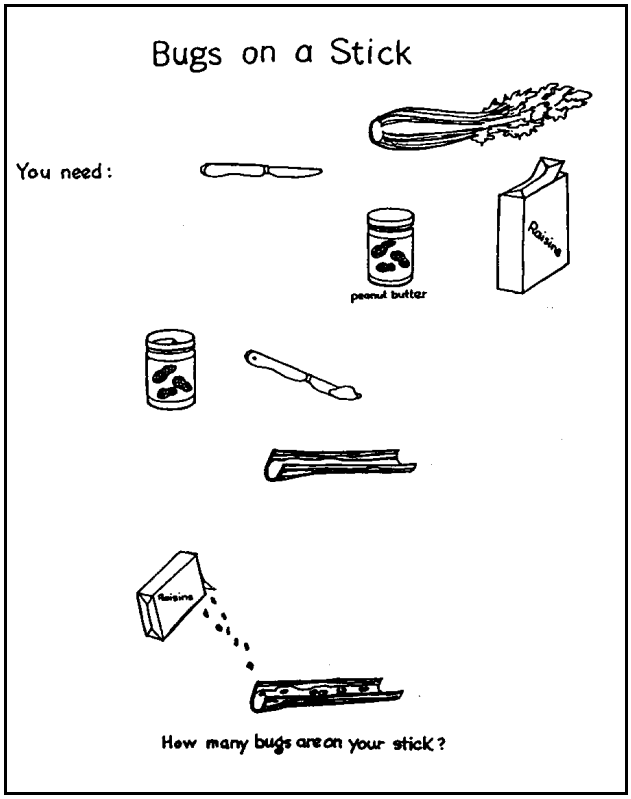
Mix peanut butter with evaporated skim milk until it is the consistency of egg whites. Roll bananas in peanut butter mixture. Then roll in nuts and/
or cereal. Place in freezer until frozen. Serves 4.

Quote for the day: Each child has something to teach us, a message that will help to explain why we are here.

RESOURCE BOOK:

Barron's Cooking Wizardry for Kids: Learn About Food... While Making Tasty Things to Eat by Margaret Kenda and Phyllis Williams.

KID'S KORNER



Frozen Yogurt Gramwiches

18 graham crackers
3 cups softened frozen yogurt, any flavor
1 cup granola or colored sprinkles

Line an 8x8x2-inch baking pan with plastic wrap. Place 9 grahams in single layer on bottom of lined pan. Spread frozen yogurt evenly over grahams. Top with a single layer of remaining grahams. Cover; freeze until firm, about 4 hours.

Remove frozen grahams from pan; cut into 9 squares. Coat sides of each sandwich with granola or sprinkles. Individually wrap and store in freezer for up to 2 weeks. Makes 9 servings.

255 calories; 5 gm total fat; 1 gm saturated fat

Portable Snacks

- graham crackers
- plain popcorn
- pretzels
- dried fruit
- fruit juice
- raisins

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