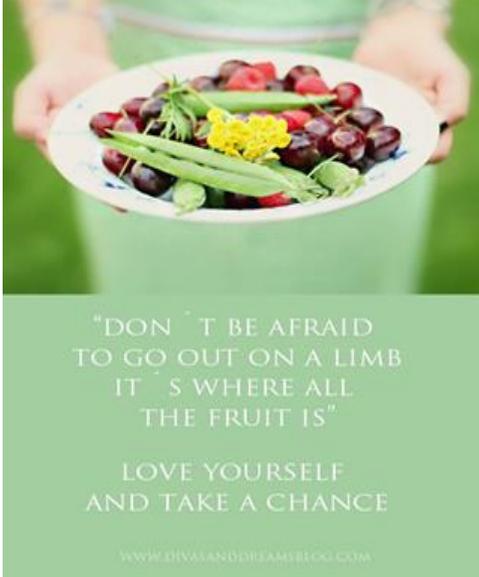




Eating Obstacles, Adventures and Tips!

Make mealtimes about more than just healthy food

- ◆ Making time to sit down as a family to eat a home-cooked meal not only sets a great example for children about the importance of healthy food, it can bring a family together—even teenagers love to eat tasty, home-cooked meals!
- ◆ Regular family meals provide comfort. Knowing the whole family will sit down to eat dinner (or breakfast) together at approximately the same time every day can be very comforting for kids and enhance appetite.
- ◆ Family meals offer opportunity to catch up on your children's daily lives. Gathering the family around a table for a meal is an ideal opportunity to talk and listen to your children without the distraction of TV, phones, or computers.
- ◆ Social interaction is vital for your child. The simple act of talking to a parent over the dinner table about how they feel can play a big role in relieving stress and boosting your child's mood and self-esteem. And it gives you chance to identify problems in your child's life and deal with them early.
- ◆ Mealtimes enable you to "teach by example." Eating together lets your children see you eating healthy food while keeping your portions in check and limiting junk food. Refrain from obsessive calorie counting or commenting on your own weight so
- ◆ that your children don't adopt negative associations with food.
- ◆ Mealtimes let you monitor your children's eating habits. This can be important for older children and teens who spend a lot of time eating at school or friends' houses. If your teen's choices are less than ideal, the best way to make changes is to emphasize short-term consequences of a poor diet, such as physical appearance or athletic ability. These are more important to teens than long-term health. For example, "Calcium will help you grow taller." "Iron will help you do better on tests."



Here are 10 key rules to live by:

1. Parents control the supply lines. You decide which foods to buy and when to serve them. Though children will pester their parents for less nutritious foods, adults should be in charge when deciding which foods are regularly stocked in the house. Children won't go hungry. They'll eat what's available in the cupboard and fridge at home. If their favorite snack isn't all that nutritious, you can still buy it once in a while so they don't feel deprived.
2. From the foods you offer, let them choose what they will eat or whether to eat at all. Children need to have some say in the matter. Schedule regular meal and snack times. From the selections you offer, let them choose what to eat and how much of it they want. This may seem like a little too much freedom. But if you follow step 1, your children will be choosing only from the foods you buy and serve.
3. Quit the "clean-plate club." Let children stop eating when they feel they've had enough. Lots of parents grew up under the clean-plate rule, but that approach doesn't help children listen to their own bodies when they feel full. When children notice and respond to feelings of fullness, they're less likely to overeat.
4. Start them young. Food preferences are developed early in life, so offer variety. Likes and dislikes begin forming even when they are babies. You may need to serve a new food a few different times for a child to accept it. You may also want to introduce a new food while also serving one of their favourite foods. Don't force a child to eat, but offer a few bites. With older kids, ask them to try one bite.
5. Rewrite the menu. Who says kids only want to eat hot dogs, pizza, burgers, and macaroni and cheese? When eating out, let them try new foods and they might surprise you with their willingness to experiment. You can start by letting them try a little of whatever you ordered or ordering an appetizer for them to try.
6. Drink calories count. Soda and other sweetened drinks add extra calories and get in the way of good nutrition. Water and milk are the best drinks for children. Juice is fine when it's 100%, but they don't need much of it — 4 to 6 ounces a day is enough for preschoolers.
7. Put sweets in their place. Occasional sweets are fine, but don't turn dessert into the main reason for eating dinner. When dessert is the prize for eating dinner, children naturally place more value on the cupcake than the broccoli. Try to stay neutral about foods.
8. Food is not love. Find better ways to say "I love you." When foods are used to reward children and show affection, they may start using food to cope with stress or other emotions. Offer hugs, praise, and attention instead of food treats.
9. Children do as you do. Be a role model and eat healthy yourself. When trying to teach good eating habits and appropriate table manners try to set the best example possible. Choose nutritious snacks, eat at the table, and don't skip meals.
10. Limit TV and computer time. When you do, you'll avoid mindless snacking and encourage activity. Research has shown that children who cut down on TV-watching also reduced their percentage of body fat. When TV and computer time are limited, they'll find more active things to do. And limiting "screen time" means you'll have more time to be active together.

Reviewed by: Mary L. Gavin

What to do if your toddler refuses food

Try the following suggestions if your toddler refuses to eat.

Offer meals and snacks at regular times

- As toddlers have short attention spans and small appetites, they tend to eat often during the day. Serve small, attractive meals.

Offer healthy snacks

- Small appetites mean that healthy snacks need to be offered between meals to give children all the nutrients they need. Rather than sugary or fatty snack foods try breads, fruits and vegetables, yoghurt or cheese.

If food is rejected

- Calmly clear it away. Most food can be safely kept in the fridge and offered again later. Try not to bully, fuss or offer bribes. Food should not be given as a reward.

Give some choices

- Children like to have a say in things – this is all part of growing up. So give them some choices about foods. Remember, you set the limits about what choices are available. For example you could say, "What would you like for morning tea – some fruit or a sandwich?" or, "Which cup do you want your drink of water from – the blue one or the red one?"

Make food fun

- Food should be enjoyed, even if it is not all eaten. For a toddler, enjoying food means touching, feeling and playing with it. Let children feed themselves. Hands are as good as spoons, even if they are messier.

Set an example

- Children will usually want the foods they see you eating – and reject the foods they see you refuse, so it's worth looking at your own diet:
- Are you adding too much sugar, salt or fat to your food?
- Do you eat too many fast food, not enough vegetables?
- Would you confidently feed your child the foods you eat?
- Remember, low fat and restrictive fad diets are not suitable for children and may affect their growth and development.

Alternatives to some foods

- No single food is essential to a child's diet, and a substitute food can easily be found.

'My child won't drink milk'... a common problem

- Milk is an excellent source of calcium and protein – but so are many other foods.

Cheese

- Hard cheeses (cheddar) can be sliced or cut into cubes for a snack, or grated and sprinkled over cooked vegetables.
- Soft cheeses (ricotta or cottage) can be mashed in foods such as potato or bananas.

Mix with dried or stewed fruits.

- Make into smoothies or freeze in hot weather.
- Yoghurt
- Milk may not be accepted as a drink but happily eaten as custard or a milk pudding. Avoid adding sweet flavourings to milk drinks as it will be hard to get

your child to drink plain milk again.

'My child hates all vegetables'... an even more common problem

- Vegetables contain valuable vitamins and fibre, but so do fruits.
- Most children will eat some fruits and salad vegetables, and these are good substitutes for cooked vegetables. Children often like the crisp texture of stir-fry vegetables, or they may simply eat a few beans or some grated carrot when you are preparing the family meal.



'My child won't touch meat'... another common complaint

- Meat contains valuable nutrients like iron and protein, but so do many other foods.
- Wholemeal bread, iron-fortified breakfast cereals, dried beans (for example baked beans) and lentils all contain iron. Protein is found in milk, cheese, yoghurt, eggs, peanut butter and beans.
- By mixing foods you can easily meet iron and protein needs. For example peanut butter sandwiches, baked beans on toast, and iron-fortified breakfast cereal with milk all contain iron and protein. Having fruit or vegetables at the same meal will help absorb the iron in these foods.



Family Fun Recipes



Green Peach Smoothie for Kids

Ingredients

- 1 cup – almond milk, unsweetened
- 2 cup – spinach
- 1 medium – banana
- 1 1/2 cup – peaches, frozen, sliced
- 1 container (4 oz) – Greek Yogurt

Directions

Place all ingredients into your blender and blend until smooth (the greek yogurt is optional)! I love using my blender!

Serves: 2 smoothies

Prep Time: 5 m

Cook Time: 2 m

Serving Size: 1 1/2 cup



Ham & pineapple pizza muffins

Ingredients

- 3 English muffins, split
- 6 tbsp pizza sauce
- 4 slices ham, diced
- 1 can (440g) crushed pineapple, drained well
- 3 cup pizza cheese

Directions

1. Toast the muffins in the toaster and spread 1 tablespoon of pizza sauce on each.
2. Scatter ham and pineapple on the pizza sauce.
3. Top with pizza cheese.
4. Place under the grill until the cheese is melted and serve or serve cold. OR place in oven at 160 for 10 mins or until cheese is melted.

