

Nutrition for Kids



Use the following tools to help your children develop healthy eating habits:

Be a good role model and practice what you preach.

Unhealthy kids are often the result of unhealthy parents. Eating habits are learned behaviors so what they learn to eat at home at a young age will stick with them into adulthood.

Educate and talk to your kids early about healthy habits. Inform your kids that if they eat healthy foods they will grow up to be strong and healthy. Educate them about the benefits of living an active lifestyle as opposed to sitting in front of the TV.

Take the kids grocery shopping. Introduce them to the variety of whole foods. Allow kids to make choices about what they want to buy and eat. Encourage them to explore new foods.

Take a trip to the local farmer's market. Introduce them to the farmers. Explain to them where the food comes from and what's the difference between organic and non-organic.

Be flexible. Don't be too strict with food. Allow your child to have most things in moderation. Allow them to have a special treat each day or once a week. This will help them to build a good relationship with food.

Make mealtime a special family time. Create a warm atmosphere. Plate each dish so it looks good. Pay attention to all five senses when sitting down to a meal.

Get the whole family involved in meal production. Give each child a special task at meal time. Allow your kids to plan weekly meals. Let kids help in the kitchen. Kids like eating foods they create. Allow kids to get creative when preparing their school lunch.

Don't serve "kid food" and "adult food". Research shows that it takes 10-12 attempts before a child will try a new food. Make the same dinner for everyone being sure to include food they like.

Cook with your kids or get your kids involved in a kid's cooking class. Teach kids about food and cooking in an active way. This will increase their sense of culinary adventure.

Teach your kids about the negative marketing of foods to kids. Avoid the highly marketed processed foods targeting at kids.

Avoid processed foods. Work hard to avoid food colorings, benzoate preservatives and artificial sweeteners. Food dyes and additives are a factor in attention and behavior disorders and can increase incidence of ADHD.

Don't use food as rewards, bribes or punishments. This will foster a negative relationship between you and your child and food.

Love and accept your child at any weight, size or shape. Help your child create a healthy relationship with food. Dieting during a growth spurt can have dangerous results.

Make sure your child eats breakfast. It is the most important meal of the day. It will increase their energy, alertness and attention.

Remember that as the parent, you are the boss. Adults need to set boundaries and limits. Listen to your children but set limits.

Source:
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