



Fuel Their Minds

Ideas for Better Eating and Active Play with Young Children



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Whooping Cough (Pertussis)

The winter season has come upon us, and it is now time to make sure we take extra caution when it comes to colds and viruses that affect ourselves and our children. Pertussis, known as Whooping Cough, has become widely publicized and some schools are requiring an immunization before the next school year begins. Whooping Cough not only affects children, but adults as well.

What is Whooping Cough?

An infection of the respiratory system caused by the bacterium *pertussis* that can easily be spread from one individual to another.

How Contagious is Whooping Cough?

Whooping Cough is highly contagious. Most people are contagious during the early stages of the illness, up to about 2 weeks after the cough begins. Just like any seasonal flu or cold, this spreads from person to person contact by:

- Coughing
- Sneezing
- Touching surfaces or objects contaminated with the bacterium then touching your mouth or nose

What are the Signs & Symptoms?

The beginning signs of Whooping Cough are similar to those of a common cold:

- Runny nose
- Sneezing
- Mild cough
- Low-grade fever

After one to two weeks, the dry cough turns into coughing spells which may look as if the

individual is gasping for air. It is more likely that a young child will go through the coughing spells, but not everyone will. Adults and adolescents may have milder symptoms, such as a cough without the spells.



How Long will Whooping Cough last?

Whooping Cough will usually entail 1 to 2 weeks of common cold symptoms, followed by 2-4 weeks of severe coughing. Coughing spells may last even longer. The final stage is recovery, which may take several weeks to a month.

Warning Signs

- Worsening cough
- Gasping for air/shortness of breath
- Vomiting after coughing spell
- Symptoms lasting longer than 1-2 weeks

How to Prevent Whooping Cough

- Wash hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds
- Use sanitizing gel or wipes with 60% or more alcohol
- Avoid shaking hands, or sharing food, drinks, or utensils with others
- Cover your mouth with the crook of your arm when sneezing or coughing
- Vaccines and boosters are available

Article adapted from kidshealth.org

Family Meals

Eating meals as a family or group plays an important role in the academic achievement, health, and well-being of a child. Sitting down at the table during mealtime will help to reinforce the positive behaviors you are trying to set for your child. Enjoying family meals will:



Improve Academic Achievement. Daily family meals are linked to success in school, such as alertness, concentration, and decreased behavioral problems. Sitting down for a meal at the table will give your child the opportunity to practice their language skills as they discuss current school projects or their daily activities. Additionally, attempting to put sentences together will allow them to hone in on their literacy skills.

Provide Sound Nutrition. Consuming family meals together significantly increases the child's intake of fruits, vegetables, and other important nutrients. Family meals will assist in decreasing the overall dietary fat intake for the family as there is more control over types of food and ingredients being served. This is also a great opportunity to discuss the importance of eating from different food groups every day, especially fruits and vegetables. If your child does not like a specific food item, do not be discouraged as it may take 10-15 exposures before the child is willing to accept the new food.

Increase Self-Esteem. Conversations during mealtime assists in bringing the family together as a whole, leading to positive self-esteem in children. Dialogue relating to the food being presented at mealtime will start positive and lasting relationships with food for young children, as new foods are often frightening. Additionally, sitting down at the table provides your child with the opportunity to verbalize what is on their mind and receive positive feedback.

Family Mealtime Tips

1. **Keep meals simple.** Foods that are healthy can be a quick fix. Spending time together is your number one priority. Turn off the television, video games, mobile phones, and the computer. This should be time spent with the family.



2. **Weekly meal planning.** Create a menu for the week so you know what ingredients are needed for each dish. This will help in the shopping and preparation process as well as the budget.

3. **Cook when you have the time.** Pre-cook food items on the weekends or nights when you have extra time. Whole-grain pasta noodles can be pre-boiled and stored. Fruits and vegetables can be washed and pre-cut.

4. **Involve your child with the meal time process.** Have your child practice setting the table, pouring water into each glass,

washing the fruits or vegetables, or adding ingredients from a recipe. Being part of the meal preparation allows them to practice practical life, math, and transferring skills. Additionally, having your child assist in the preparation process will allow them to become familiar with the food and may increase the likelihood of them wanting to try the food being prepared.

Article adapted from www.makingmealsmatter.org and Nibbles for Health

Purple Cabbage & Apple Slaw

Try this easy and interactive recipe with your child during the winter months while this vegetable is still in season. This is a healthy and delicious snack or side dish your child can help create and serve.

Ingredients Needed:

- 1 head purple cabbage
- 2 tablespoons vinegar, any variety
- 2 teaspoons oil, any variety
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 4 apples, any variety
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- 4 medium carrots
- 1 cup shelled sunflower seeds

Additional Toppings:

- Raisins
- Dried Cranberries

Caution: Toppings may be a choking hazard to children 4 years of age and younger.



Recipe adapted from www.allrecipes.com

Recipe serves 8 one cup portions.

Instructions:

1. Ask the child to wash their hands with warm, soapy water.
2. Have the child wash the cabbage, apples, and carrots in a clean strainer and set aside.
3. Using a clean, sharp knife, cut the cabbage head in half. Lay the cut side down on a clean cutting board and cut the cabbage into thin strips. Place in a large bowl.
4. Have your child help you add the vinegar, oil, salt, black pepper, and sugar to the cabbage. Allow your child to mix the ingredients together.
5. Using a clean grater, grate the carrots into the cabbage mixture.
6. Put lemon juice in a clean bowl. Using a clean grater, grate apples with skin on, not including the core and seeds. Place the shredded apples into the bowl of lemon juice and stir.
7. Combine the apples, sunflower seeds, and additional toppings into the cabbage mixture and stir well.
8. Allow the cabbage mixture to sit for 25-30 minutes in the refrigerator.
9. Have your child serve themselves or others using specific kitchen utensils and proper serving etiquette.

Valentine's Day Arts & Crafts Corner

VALENTINE SUN CATCHERS

What You Need:

- Wax Paper
- Red and pink crayon shavings
- Ribbon
- Towel
- Iron

Instructions:

Cut 2 pieces of wax paper into the shape of a heart. Provide the children with crayon shavings and have them sprinkle them onto one of the wax paper heart pieces, then cover with the other heart piece. Place a towel over the hearts and hold a warm iron over the towel for about 25 seconds. Remove the towel and punch a hole in the top of the heart. Use a piece of ribbon to tie through the hole to create a sun catcher.

VALENTINE MAILBOXES

What You Need:

- White Lunch Bags
- Sponges cut into different size hearts
- Pink and red colored paint
- Hole Punch
- Red Ribbon

Instructions:

Give each child one white lunch bag. Have them sponge paint hearts all over the bag. Once the bags are dry, fold the edges over twice and hole punch around the edges of the bag every inch. Have the children weave a red ribbon through the holes and then tie a bow. Use this as a mailbox during the Valentine's Day card exchange.

Arts & Crafts ideas from www.everythingpreschool.com

Activity Kits Free From the University of California

The University of California has prepared activity kits to help you teach nutrition and physical activity concepts to your young children while integrating math, language arts, and science.

These lessons come “ready-made” with all the materials you will need to teach a fun and interactive lesson with your preschoolers through third graders. The curriculum was developed by the University of California.

We will bring the materials to your site, free of charge, and we can provide your staff with trainings and additional resources to increase their confidence in these topics. We can also plan classroom, food-themed parties, special events, and other fun sessions.

If you are interested in signing up to receive these materials, please contact us.



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Lack of Sleep & the Link to Obesity

Does your child receive an adequate amount of sleep every night? Making sure your child is receiving the proper amount of sleep every night is just as important as a healthy diet and daily exercise. Nighttime sleep helps repair the body, keeps the heart healthy, reduces stress, and improves memory.

Several recent studies have shown that children who **do not get enough sleep are more likely** to be overweight or obese. A study published in the journal *Sleep*, found that children who slept an average of nine hours or less at night had a 3.4 % increase in body fat, compared to those who slept nine hours or more.

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommends preschool age children (2-4 years old) sleep between 11-13 hours per night and school-age children (5-9 years old) sleep between 10-11 hours per night. Additionally, constant lack of sleep may lead to irritability, hyperactivity, poor memory and concentration, poor academic performance, depression, anxiety, and aggressive behavior. So what can you do to encourage your child to receive the recommended amount of sleep?



Here are some simple tips to follow:

- Have a consistent bedtime routine. Put your child to bed at the same time every night, even on the weekends.
- Set aside 15-30 minutes every night to prepare your child for bed.
- Establish a relaxing bedtime routine. A few suggestions would be: a warm bath, soft lighting, or reading a book. A bedtime routine signals to your child that it is time to calm down and go to sleep.
- Turn the television, computer, and all video games off at least 30 minutes before bedtime.
- Do not allow foods or beverages that contain caffeine or sugar before bedtime (such as colas or teas).
- Monitor television, computer, and video games to ensure they are age-appropriate. Scary movies or games may cause nightmares or other sleep disturbances.
- Keep their room dark, cool, and noise-free.
- Remove the television, computer, and video games from their bedroom, and keep them in a common room such as the living room.
- Encourage daily physical activity. Take a walk after dinner as a family, play soccer in the yard during the afternoon, or dance to their favorite music.



Fuel Their Minds-Boletín para Padres



Ideas para Comer Mejor y Estar Activos con Niños Jóvenes

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Falta de Sueño y Enlace a la Obesidad

¿Su hijo recibe una cantidad adecuada de sueño cada noche? Asegurándose que su hijo está recibiendo la cantidad adecuada de sueño cada noche es tan importante como una dieta sana y el ejercicio diario. Durante la noche de sueño, esto ayuda a reparar el cuerpo, mantiene el corazón saludable, reduce el estrés y mejora la memoria.

Varios estudios recientes han demostrado **que los niños que no reciben suficiente sueño tienen más** probabilidades de ser alto de peso o obeso. Un estudio publicado en la revista de *Sueño*, encontró que los niños que duermen un promedio de nueve horas o menos por la noche tuvieron un incremento de 3.4% en la grasa corporal. En comparación con aquellos que duermen nueve horas o más.



La Academia Americana de Sueño Medicina recomienda los niños edad preescolar (2-4 años) deben dormir entre de 11 a 13 horas por noche y niños edad escolar (5-9 años) entre 10 y 11 horas por noche. Además, la constante falta de sueño puede llevar a tener irritabilidad, hiperactividad, mala memoria y concentración, bajo rendimiento académico, depresión, ansiedad y comportamiento agresivo. ¿Qué puede usted hacer para ayudar a su hijo recibir la cantidad recomendada de sueño?

Aquí hay algunos consejos simples que usted puede seguir:

- Tener una rutina de dormir consistente. Acostar a su hijo al mismo tiempo todas las noches, incluso los fines de semana.
- Reservar 15-30 minutos cada noche antes de acostarse.
- Establecer una rutina relajante para la hora de dormir. Unas sugerencias sería: un baño caliente, suave iluminación, o leyendo un libro. Una rutina de dormir señale a su hijo que ahora es el momento para calmar y ir a dormir.
- Apagar la televisión, equipo de juegos de vídeo al menos 30 minutos antes de acostarse.
- No permite alimentos o bebidas que contienen cafeína o azúcar antes de acostarse (como colas –sodas o té).
- Asegurarse que la televisión, equipo de juegos de video son de edad apropiada. Películas de terror o juegos que pueden causar pesadillas o otros alteraciones de sueño.
- Mantener el cuarto oscuro, fresco y sin ruido.
- Remover la television y equipo de juegos de video de su recámara y mantenerlos en una área común, como la sala.
- Hacer actividad física diaria. Ir a caminar después de la cena con la familia, jugar al fútbol durante la tarde o bailar a su música favorita.

Adaptado pr WebMD, Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, and Education.com