



Fuel Their Minds

Ideas for Better Eating and Active Play with Young Children



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Playground Safety

The USDA dietary guidelines recommends that children get 60 minutes of active play everyday. Active play is an essential part of building strong muscles and bones. Outdoor play also helps children behave and focus better throughout the day. Children sleep better too if they have had the opportunity to move throughout the day. Through active play, children learn how to move their bodies and learn to enjoy physical activity as a daily habit which they will likely practice into adulthood.



Going to the playground is a great way to get children moving. Playgrounds offer plenty of climbing, sliding, and balancing opportunities. Unfortunately, accidents can and do happen at the playground. It is estimated that 70% of injuries are due to falls and every year an estimated 170,000 playground injuries occur. If a new playground is being explored for the first time, make sure to take the time to check for any hidden dangers like broken glass or unsafe items that could be harmful. There are a few easy steps to prevent injuries and accidents from happening.

Here are a few reminders to keep children safe during free play.

1. Supervision. Keeping an eye on children is key to preventing playground injuries. Adults should be present and watching at all times to supervise and guide play if necessary.
2. Strings and ropes. Both of these items should not be present at playgrounds. Strings on sweatshirts should be removed as they can get caught in equipment and result in accidental strangulation. Ropes can also get caught in equipment and injure children.
3. Sliding alone. Children should slide down the

slide alone. Rubber soled shoes should be removed, as they can catch on the slide and twist and break little legs. Adults that slide with children should make sure that the child's feet are not touching the slide. Again, shoes can get stuck and the weight and force of the adult sliding with the child can result in a broken leg.

4. Check surfaces. During the spring and summer months temperatures can soar, so make sure to check playground surfaces before children play. Burns may occur if surfaces are too hot.
5. Limit sun exposure. During the summer months, try to head to the playground before 11am and after 4pm, before and after the sun reaches its hottest.
6. Dress appropriately. Children should wear wide brimmed hats to cover their head and necks and limit sun exposure. During cold months, hats and gloves keep little heads and hands warm and protect from frost bite.
7. Hydrate. Check for clean water fountains, or pack an insulated water bottle to prevent dehydration.
8. Have a kit handy. A mini first aid kit with bandages and antibiotic ointment, can help soothe any discomfort if a scratch or fall happens.
9. Check the age requirement. Some playgrounds have signs posted on site that state which parts of the playground are appropriate for children 2-5 and which areas are more suited for children 5-12. A preschooler's development and large motor skills are far different than a child of 10 or 12 years of age.
10. Have fun! Moving outside with children is a great way to model healthy behavior and a great stress reliever for adults and children. Don't let fear of injury keep you indoors. Sitting too much is even riskier to your child's health!

Smart Snacking

Healthy snacks that are visually appealing help keep little ones energized throughout the day. Snacks also help to incorporate all of the nutrients their growing bodies need. It is important to offer a variety and a rainbow of color. When choosing snacks, keep in mind the textures of the snacks should offer variety too. Textures can be soft, fork tender, creamy, or crunchy. Remember to include at least two food groups when offering snacks. The way the food is served (offered whole versus cut up) should also be appropriate for the child's age. For children under the age of 4 avoid foods such as whole grapes, popcorn, whole nuts, nut butters, hot dogs, raisins and raw veggies like carrots and celery as they are choking hazards. Beverages are important too and water is always a great beverage choice to offer with snacks.

Here are some quick, easy and healthy snack ideas:

- Fresh fruits cut into pieces; such as strawberries, pineapple, kiwis, and bananas. Serve with low-fat yogurt.
- Unsweetened applesauce or pureed pears with whole grain crackers.
- Fruit smoothie- frozen berries, mangos, and bananas blended with low-fat milk, soy milk or yogurt.
- Quick steamed, fork tender veggies such as carrots, zucchini, broccoli, cauliflower, or green beans. Serve with hummus or low-fat cottage cheese.
- Brown rice cakes topped with shredded cheese, pizza sauce, or hummus spread.
- One slice of whole grain cinnamon, raisin bread topped with low-fat cream cheese.
- Mini Pizzas-Toasted whole wheat English muffin topped with tomato sauce, shredded cheese and veggies.
- Hard boiled eggs cut into pieces with a slice of whole wheat toast.
- String cheese pulled into pieces with 1/2 cup of veggies like snap peas, edamame, or red or yellow bell pepper strips.
- Whole wheat or corn tortilla topped with mashed beans, shredded cheese, and diced tomato or salsa.
- Whole grain chips and salsa or guacamole.
- Vegetable mix like frozen peas and corn, thawed and tossed with salt and pepper.
- Cereal mix: 1/2 cup whole grain cereal (like Cheerios), 1/4 cup freeze dried fruit pieces, and 1 tablespoon shredded coconut.



Article adapted from www.education.com and www.whattoexpect.com

A Smashing Side Dish

Carrots, spinach, and asparagus are all in season in spring. Carrots are a great, kid friendly vegetable since they are naturally sweet and they can be offered in so many different ways. Carrots can be diced or shredded into soups, steamed and topped with a little butter, roasted in the oven with other root vegetables, or added to mashed potatoes. Here is an easy side dish with a boost of Vitamin A and fiber.

Carrot and Potato Mash, Serves 6

Ingredients:

- 6 medium potatoes, scrubbed and cubed (sweet potatoes work well too)
- 2 large carrots, peeled and chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, peels removed and minced
- 1/2 cup low sodium vegetable or chicken broth
- 1 tablespoon canola or olive oil
- Salt and Pepper to taste

Directions:

1. In a large pot, add potatoes, carrots, and enough water to cover vegetables. Cover with a lid and bring to a boil. Cook for about 25-30 minutes, or until a fork easily slides into a piece of potato.
2. Save 1 cup of cooking liquid and drain vegetables in a colander.
3. Return large pot to the stove, set to medium heat and add minced garlic and butter, cook until garlic becomes fragrant, about 1-2 minutes.
4. Add broth and vegetables to the pot. Turn off heat. Mash mixture with a potato masher or hand held mixer. Add cooking liquid as needed to reach desired thickness. Serve hot.

Recipe adapted from Harvest of the Month



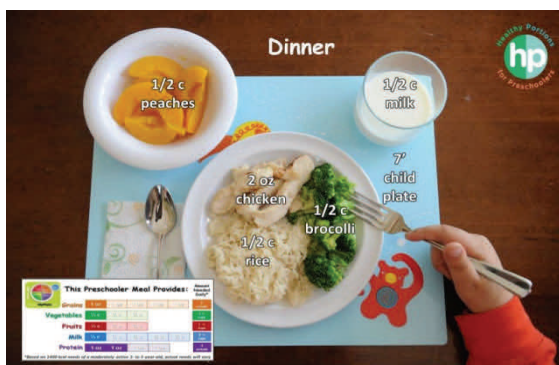
Appropriate Portion Sizes for Preschoolers

Over the last few decades, portion sizes have gotten larger and larger, not only are meals bigger but beverages are too. Restaurants serve oversized platters of food, even the children's menu offers servings much larger than recommended. Portion control is a healthy, daily practice for adults and children to follow. The picture below visually shows the appropriate portion sizes according to the USDA's Dietary Guidelines for preschool age children.

USDA's Dietary Guidelines for children 3-5

Daily Amounts:

Fruit	1 1/2 cups
Vegetable	1 1/2 cups
Grains	4-5 ounces
Dairy	2 1/2 cups
Protein	4-5 ounces



Children have smaller stomachs so they get full quickly but also need to eat more frequently. Children know when they are full but when adults tell them to clean their plates or eat more of a certain food, they stop listening to their bodies. This habit of overeating early in childhood can lead to a lifetime of eating problems in adulthood.

A good way to control portion sizes for children is to use child sized cups, bowls, plates, and silverware. Another plate option is to use an adult salad plate which is about 6"-7" in diameter. Children should serve themselves during mealtimes and they can always serve themselves more food or leave food on their plates, which is okay too. Beverages should be appropriately sized too. The recommended daily serving for juice is just one 6 ounce cup of 100% fruit or vegetable juice for children. Offer water or nonfat or low-fat milk with meals or snacks. Try the **3-2-1 rule** for beverages as a way to limit juice consumption: 3 cups of water, 2 cups of milk, and 1 cup of juice.

Article adapted from www.extension.org and www.choosemyplate.gov

The 5 Second Rule

Everyone has dropped food on the floor at some point in time. What to do with the dropped food is a good question? The five second rule is a popular urban myth that has recently been debunked by scientists. They found that it's best not to eat what has fallen on the floor. Even though a floor may look clean, bacteria are still present. Dropped food that makes contact with the floor for just two seconds could have as many as 1,000 bacteria present. That bacteria could be toxic salmonella. Salmonella can result in diarrhea, fever, abdominal cramps, and may even lead to hospitalization. The moisture content of a food also helps to absorb even more bacteria. For example, a piece of watermelon or cheese could easily pick up close to 10,000 bacteria versus a dry cracker or piece of hard candy. Rinsing the food under running water will eliminate the number of bacteria on the food but it will not get rid of it completely. It's best to avoid eating any food that has been dropped on the floor and to let children know that they should not eat anything that has fallen on the ground.

A few things to remember:

- When in doubt, throw it out!
- Dropped food collects bacteria immediately and even a little bacteria can make you sick!



Article adapted from cdc.gov, www.discoverychannel.com, and teenshealth.org

Activity Kits Free From the University of California

Do your part to impact childhood obesity and malnutrition. Local, state, and federal initiatives (and funding) urge a coordinated approach to addressing these issues. The University of California has prepared activity kits to help you teach nutrition and physical activity concepts to your children, while integrating math, language and science concepts that address CDE standards. **These lessons come “ready-made”** with all of the materials you need to teach a fun and interactive lesson with your students. The curriculum was developed by the University of California.

We will bring the materials to your site, free of charge, and we can even provide you or your staff with trainings and additional resources to increase confidence in these topics. If you are interested, we can also plan classroom food-themed cooking clubs, special events, and other fun sessions.

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

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"Our mandate as a land grant institute ties us to the welfare, development, and protection of the state's land, resources, and people. Our mission is to develop and extend the use of research-based knowledge to improve specific practices and technologies."



Fuel Their Mind Nutrition Newsletter Enclosed

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Fuel Their Minds Parent Corner

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Plan, Shop, Save, and Cook!

Cooking and eating together as a family not only saves money but also improves health for all family members! Studies show that children that eat together with their families have higher self esteem, do better in school, and are less likely to turn to drugs and alcohol to solve their problems later in life. Sometimes busy schedules get in the way of grocery shopping, cooking, and sitting down together to eat. There are a few easy steps that can help alleviate your stress and make healthy, budget friendly meals come together in no time.



1. **Plan**– Always go to the store with a plan. Check your cupboards, freezer, and refrigerator before you start your grocery list. Seeing what you have on hand first will help shape your grocery list. Check the store flyers for sales before you go. Grocery stores advertise seasonal produce at bargain prices to sell their inventory.
2. **Shop**– Try to shop without your children, if possible. You won't be distracted and will spend less time in the store, which means saving money. If children come with you, they can help you find items on the list, bag foods, and help you search for the best deals.
3. **Save**– Save money by using unit pricing. Unit pricing is calculating out the price per ounce or pound. For example, if 32 ounces (2 pounds) of cheese costs \$7.99, the unit price per ounce would be 25 cents, because \$7.99 divided by 32 ounces equals 25 cents. Be careful when buying foods in bulk. If the food spoils before you eat it, then food and money are wasted.
4. **Cook**– Cook once and eat twice! Make double the portion of spaghetti or enchiladas so that you will have leftovers to take for lunch the next day or you will already have the start of another meal. Simply add a salad or fruit and you have dinner ready. Have family members help with the food preparation. Children can wash produce, set the table, or cut soft fruits or vegetables. Team work helps get the job done faster!

Want more information?

We offer nutrition, meal planning, and food resource management education classes! Contact Angela Asch at alасh@ucanr.edu or call (530)666-8731 for more information.

Do you need financial assistance?

You or your family members may qualify for WIC or CalFresh benefits.

WIC (Women, Infants, and Children):

WIC helps families by providing checks for buying healthy supplemental foods from WIC-authorized vendors, nutrition education, and help finding healthcare and other community services. Participants must meet income guidelines and be pregnant women, new mothers, infants or children under age five.

<http://www.yolocounty.org/index.aspx?page=133>



The CalFresh Program helps to improve the health and well-being of qualified households and individuals by providing them a means to meet their nutritional needs. The program issues monthly electronic benefits that can be used to buy most foods at many markets and food stores.

<https://www.mybenefitscalwin.org/>

<http://www.myfoodstamps.org/yolo.html>





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Planear, Comprar, Ahorrar y Cocinar

Cocinar y comer juntos como una familia no sólo ahorra dinero, sino también mejora la salud de todos los miembros de la familia! Estudios demuestran que los niños que comen junto con sus familias tienen mayor autoestima, un mayor rendimiento académico y no recurren a drogas y alcohol para resolver sus problemas más adelante en la vida. A veces nuestro horario nos impide hacer el mandado, cocinar y sentarse juntos a comer. Hay unos cuantos pasos sencillos que pueden ayudar a aliviar el estrés, y ayudarle a hacer una comida saludable y rápida dentro de su presupuesto.



1. **Planear**- Siempre ir a la tienda con un plan. Chequear sus estantes, congelador y refrigerador antes de empezar su lista de compras. Viendo lo que tiene en su hogar primero le ayudará a formar su lista de compras. Compruebe los periódicos de tienda para ventas antes de irse. Los supermercados anuncian productos de temporada a precios de ganga para vender su inventario.
2. **Comprar**- Trate de ir de compras sin sus hijos, si es posible. No va a estar distraído y va a pasar menos tiempo en la tienda, y esto significa ahorrar dinero. Si los niños vienen con usted, ellos pueden ayudarle a encontrar los alimentos en la lista, bolsar los alimentos y ayudarle a buscar las mejores ofertas.
3. **Ahorrar**- Ahorre dinero usando el precio unitario. El precio unitario calcula el precio por onza o libra. Por ejemplo: 32 onzas (2 libras) de queso cuesta \$7.99. El precio unitario por onza sería 25 centavos, porque \$7.99 dividido por 32 onzas iguala a 25 centavos. Tenga cuidado al comprar alimentos a granel. Si la comida se desperdicia antes de comer, entonces los alimentos y el dinero se desperdician.
4. **Cocinar**- Cocinar una vez y comer dos veces! Hacer doble la porción de espaguetis o enchiladas le ayudará a tener sobras para el almuerzo del día siguiente o tiene una base para preparar otra comida. Simplemente agregue una ensalada o fruta y tiene la cena preparada. Pida que miembros de la familia le ayuden con la preparación de alimentos. Los niños pueden lavar verduras, poner la mesa, cortar frutas o verduras. Trabajando como un equipo ayuda a hacer el trabajo más rápido!

¿Quiere más información?

Ofrecemos clases de nutrición, planificación de comidas, y clases de gestión de recursos de alimentos! Póngase en contacto con Angela Asch, alasch@ucanr.edu o llame al (530)666-8731 para obtener más información.

¿Necesita ayuda financiera?

Usted o sus familiares pueden calificar para beneficios de WIC o CalFresh.

WIC (Women, Infants, and Children):

WIC ayuda a las familias proporcionando un talón para comprar alimentos saludables suplementarios de vendedores autorizados por WIC, educación nutricional y ayuda para encontrar atención médica y otros servicios de la comunidad necesarios. Para calificar, los participantes deben ser de bajo ingreso y ser mujeres embarazadas, madres con niños infantiles o niños menores de cinco años.

<http://www.yolocounty.org/index.aspx?page=133>

El Programa CalFresh ayuda a mejorar la salud y el bienestar de los hogares calificados e individuos por dándoles un medio para satisfacer sus necesidades nutricionales. Este programa proporciona un mensual electrónico de beneficios que puede utilizarse para comprar la mayoría de los alimentos en muchos mercados y tiendas.

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