



Fuel Their Minds

Ideas for Better Eating and Active Play with Young Children



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Young Children Should Never "Diet"

New Year's resolutions are ringing throughout the land... **but this year, keep your weight loss goals to yourself!**

Instead of sharing your complaints about your pant size, share your examples of a healthy and active lifestyle. Share breakfast together, a trip to a farmers market, time preparing healthy meals, active time together, and positive comments about the food and body you both have.

Model the healthy behaviors you want them to mimic, and that will be the best way to keep children at a healthy weight.



And never put a young child on a diet! Instead, all young children should be:

- ◆ Offered a variety of healthy food choices at appropriate meal times
- ◆ Limited to one serving of "junk foods" or "treats" on most days.
- ◆ Engaged in active play time at least 1 hour a day.
- ◆ Limited to no more than 2 hours of "screen time" (videos, computers, TV) a day.
- ◆ Put to bed on time (usually around 7:00 pm), so that 11-12 hours of sleep is possible a night.
- ◆ Encouraged to find the joy in food and movement.
- ◆ Offered water to drink.

Break the Fast

We have heard that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, and it is! Children need to eat breakfast to function properly in school. Here are some new ideas that are sure to please.

- ◆ **Waffle Sandwich:** Toast 2 whole grain waffles and spread nut butter, fruity yogurt or a mashed banana on them for a fiber and protein rich sandwich.
- ◆ **Fruit Bagel:** Toast a whole wheat bagel and top with low fat cream cheese and dried cranberries.

- ◆ **Morning Burrito:** Fill a warm whole grain tortilla with low fat cheese, scrambled eggs, salsa and sliced avocado. Wrap it in foil and take it to go.



- ◆ **Smoothie:** Combine 1/2 cup juice, 1/2 cup low fat yogurt and a 1/2 cup of any soft fruit (like canned pineapple or peaches, ripe bananas, or frozen berries) and viola, instant breakfast. Pour into a to-go mug and hit the road.

- ◆ **Juicy Oatmeal:** Use 100% apple juice or low fat milk instead of water when heating up instant oatmeal for more nutrition. Look for low sugar varieties of instant oatmeal too. Top with walnuts and raisins.

Eat Fresh, Eat Seasonally

In California, we are lucky to have an abundance of fresh produce year round.

Eating fruits and vegetables that are in season not only saves you money, they may taste better and pack more nutrition than out-of-season produce. If you are trying to introduce new fruits and vegetables to your child, take them on a trip to a local farmers market, where they can fill up their own canvas bag with whatever they choose! Here are some winter favorites:

- ◆ Acorn and butternut squash
- ◆ Apples
- ◆ Avocados
- ◆ Beets
- ◆ Bok Choy
- ◆ Broccoli
- ◆ Brussels Sprouts
- ◆ Cabbage



- ◆ Carrots
- ◆ Cauliflower
- ◆ Citrus fruits such as oranges, grapefruits, mandarins, lemons and limes
- ◆ Kiwi
- ◆ Kale and Swiss chard
- ◆ Leeks
- ◆ Mushrooms
- ◆ Parsnips
- ◆ Pears
- ◆ Persimmons
- ◆ Potatoes
- ◆ Spinach
- ◆ Sweet Potatoes
- ◆ Yams

For more information about eating seasonally check out this website:

<http://www.nrdc.org/health/foodmiles>

Weekend (or Weekday) Warm Up

Here is a recipe that uses a seasonal vegetable in a traditional morning treat.

Make the batter the night before and refrigerate and you can serve pancakes for breakfast on a weekday morning too!

Pancakes with Sweet Potato or Pumpkin

Serves 4

- 1 cup water
- 1/2 cup sweet potato puree or canned pumpkin
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon or pumpkin pie spice
- 1 cup pancake mix
- 1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil
- Nonstick cooking spray
- Pancake syrup, for serving
- Diced pears or apples, for topping



1. In a large bowl, mix the water, sweet potato puree or pumpkin and spice.
2. Add the pancake mix and stir just to combine-the batter should be lumpy.
3. Coat a griddle or large nonstick skillet lightly with oil and set it over medium-high heat.
4. Spoon about 1/4 cup of batter for each pancake when the pan is hot.
5. Cook until bubbles form on top of the pancakes and the batter is set, 2-3 minutes.
6. Then flip the pancakes and cook them until golden brown on the other side, about 1 minute.
7. Top with pancake syrup and add fresh or canned, diced pears or sliced apples.

Recipe adapted by Angela Asch from Deceptively Delicious by Jessica Seinfeld

Beating the Winter Blues, Staying Healthy

Cold and flu season is upon us, so remember to practice these tips to help ward off illness (and remind children to do the same).

- ◆ Turn on/off light switches with the side of your hand or wrist.
- ◆ Carry your own pen, borrowing someone else's puts you at greater risk.
- ◆ Clean up often, using hot water and soap (or disinfectant spray) to clean surfaces. Common cold viruses can live on hard surfaces for up to 18 hours!
- ◆ Sneeze into the crook of your elbow if you don't have a tissue handy.
- ◆ Wash hands frequently for at least 20 seconds. Sing Happy Birthday to yourself twice!
- ◆ Avoid rubbing your eyes, nose or mouth— these are the entryways for germs.
- ◆ Don't share drinks or utensils with others.
- ◆ Sanitize toys, use a diluted bleach solution of 1 teaspoon bleach to 4 cups of water, or put them in the dishwasher.
- ◆ Carry hand sanitizer with you so when soap and water are not available you can still protect yourself.



Food Safety: What You Need to Know

When it comes to preventing tummy troubles due to food-borne illness (also sometimes referred to as “food poisoning”) there are 4 golden rules: **Clean, Separate, Cook and Chill.**

Clean: Always wash your hands with soap and warm water before cooking. Rinse fruits and vegetables with cold running water before preparing or eating them. For melons, scrub the rind with a brush under running water before cutting. This removes bacteria before they are spread by the knife. However, don't clean your meat— take it straight from the package to the pan or cutting board. Also, make sure your work area is clean before and after preparing food.



Separate: Use separate cutting boards when preparing meat and other foods. An easy way to do this is to have different colored, plastic cutting boards. For ex-

ample, a red cutting board can be used for meat and a green cutting board can be used for fruits and vegetables.

Cook: It is crucial to cook foods to the proper temperature to prevent food borne illness. Using a meat thermometer is a good safety practice to ensure that foods are properly cooked. The color of the meat is not a safe indicator. For a list of foods and the temperatures they should be cooked to go to www.fightbac.org

Chill: Bacteria rapidly multiple when in the “danger zone”, 40-140 degrees Fahrenheit. Your refrigerator should be set at 35-39 degrees and the freezer at 0 degrees. Refrigerate or freeze leftovers after they have cooled. Do not let food sit out for more than two hours at room temperature, one hour when the temperature is 90 degrees or more. For large batches of food, like soups and chili, store leftovers in shallow, small containers so the food cools quickly. Adding hot foods to a refrigerator will bring the temperature of the entire refrigerator up, so it is recommended to cool foods quickly and then refrigerate or freeze.

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Activity Kits Free From the University of California

The University of California has prepared activity kits to help you teach food and activity concepts to your young children. **These lessons come "ready-made"** with all of the materials you need to teach a fun and interactive lesson with your preschoolers or kindergarteners. Three top-rated curriculum are used; Go Glow Grow; Happy, Healthy Me; and Food and Me. These curriculum were developed by the University or Scholastic, Inc.

We will bring the materials to your site, free of charge, and we can even 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 Angela at 530-666-8740.

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