

Southern University Land- Grant Campus Nutrition Fact Sheet



Nutrition for Children

Eating Healthy is a good way to ensure proper growth and development in young children. Nutrition is a major component in a child's overall health and wellness. It also helps prevent obesity and weight-related diseases, such as diabetes. Parents think of their nutritional decisions as health decisions for their future health and wellness.

Some tips to encourage good nutrition for children are:

- **Start early and offer your child to a variety of foods.** Offer your child at an early age a variety of healthy foods, which will help them build the foundation for healthy appreciation of food.
- **Plan ahead.** It's a good idea to plan for meals in advance this will help reduce buying fast food where you don't have control over the nutrition content the meals.
- **Take your children grocery shopping.** Grocery shopping can be a fun family time to spend with your kids. It is also a great opportunity to teach your children about shopping for nutrition foods and reading food labels. This also gives you a chance to see what foods your kids like and dislike.



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- **Replace sugary drinks with water.** Most juice can be high in sugar and have been linked to childhood obesity. Drinking more water can reduce the possible risk factors of health problems associated with sugary drinks. Majority of sugary drinks are high in sugar and can cause future health problems.
- **Be an active role model.** Children learn best from their parents or other family members. If a child sees a parents not eating healthy foods then they tend avoid trying healthy foods. But vice versa, if a child sees their parents eating foods then they most likely will try healthy foods. Children are always watching and listening.
- **Be patient with picky eater.** Parents have to be patient with their kids who don't like trting new things. They have to realize that it may take several tries before a child starts to try new food. Most children have their favorite food and only eat those foods. Parents should allow their kids to eat what they like if it's healthy and encourage them to try new foods. Most importantly just be patient and allow your kids to be independent.
- **Encourage family meal times.** Pleasant and engaging conversation during family mealtime can help your child develop healthy eating habits. When children are able to enjoy their meals, take their time and eat slowly, they are more likely to feel and be aware of their body's natural signals that they are full. When you can, avoid unpleasant or stressful situations at mealtimes; this may cause children to eat faster, ignoring their body's natural signal for fullness and to associate food with stressful times.

Provided By: Kasundra Cyrus, Southern University Family and Human Development Program Supervisor

Reference: <http://www.onetoughjob.org/safety>. Helping your child develop healthy eating habits. Children's Trust 2007.