

Healthy Lifestyles Gazette

Winter 2010 A newsletter for childcare providers and families of preschool children Volume 15, Issue 1



2010 - THE YEAR OF CHANGE FOR THE PICKY EATER



If you have a picky eater at home, you're not alone.

Follow these simple steps to say goodbye to mealtime battles.

SET A GOOD EXAMPLE FOR YOUR PICKY EATER

Your preschooler models you. If you eat healthy foods with a smile, not a yuck face, he'll do the same. If you focus on your meal and turn the TV off, your preschooler will love to sit and tell you about his day while you eat. Food behavior patterns that begin in childhood last a lifetime and it's your job as a parent to make sure the right ones are set.



BUILD ON THE CHOSEN ONES

It can be frustrating when your preschooler asks for the same macaroni and cheese or peanut butter sandwich every meal, but for kids this age, comfort is the key. Build on these foods to create new favorites. Offer fresh veggie slices along with that peanut butter sandwich. Or how about offering a bowl of wedged cherry tomatoes along with the macaroni and cheese.

TRY A FUN MENU



Whole grain pancakes and turkey bacon for dinner? Sure...add some strawberries and pineapple too. Serving hamburgers for dinner? Use cookie cutters sometime to keep portions small and interesting. Make sitting down at the dinner table fun and your preschooler will be more likely to eat.

VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE



The more familiar your little one becomes with a new food, the more likely he will try it. If your little one tries broccoli and doesn't like it, it doesn't mean he'll say no to spinach. Keep trying as children often need to be offered a new food up to 5 times to want to try it.

BANISH THE BRIBING

Saying "If you don't finish your dinner, you won't get any dessert" teaches a child that dessert is the best part of a meal. Serve dessert even if he doesn't clear his plate. Just make sure the dessert is healthy by serving fresh berries or an all fruit smoothie rather than cookies or cake.



STOP FORCE FEEDING



Children have small bellies that need very little food to fill. Keep portion sizes small. Children will eat when they're hungry.

COLOR THEIR WORLD

There is a rainbow of food choices just waiting for your preschooler to try. Make her plate colorful. Pair bright red tomatoes with brown meatloaf and orange sweet potatoes. Point out all the colors and encourage her to find out what "orange" [sweet potatoes tastes like. Ask her what color she would like to at the next dinner and be sure to serve that color.



STOP THE SNACKS

Don't serve juice or snacks for at least one hour before mealtime. If your child is hungry when he comes to the table, he'll be more likely to eat.

When a child is taught from an early age to eat right and play hard, the benefits last a lifetime!

PICKY EATERS TO BUDDING CHEF



Get your child in on the act of meal-time from grocery shopping to helping prepare meals. In the supermarket, let your child pick a fresh veggie for dinner and let him help prepare it. The more involved he is, the more likely he will get excited about mealtime. Let him tear lettuce for a salad or snap green beans. Be sure to praise his choice and hard work when your family sits down together to eat.

Fun to Make, Yummy to Eat

You'll need:

- 3 whole wheat soft tortillas
- Your favorite low-fat white cheese, shredded
- Slivers of carrots, peppers, and other favorite veggies
- Pretzel sticks
- Raisins or black olives



Place tortillas in the shape of a snowman on a cookie sheet; you'll need to trim 2 of the tortillas to make the smaller circles needed for the snowman shape. Cover the tortillas with shredded cheese and place in oven until cheese is melted. Use the carrots, peppers, pretzel sticks and raisins to decorate your snowman. The red pepper can be a scarf, the pretzel sticks can be arms, and raisins can be eyes. Get creative and design your snowman however you wish! This is a quick and healthy snack the whole family can enjoy.

EVERYONE WHO PLAYS IS A WINNER

Active play like walking or dancing is a great way to help stay healthy. Let the Olympic games inspire you to play together as a family.

If your family enjoys watching ice skating, have a sock skating competition in your home. Take your shoes off and take turns twirling and speed skating across your floors like skaters.



Are you fans of the ski races? Great! Get outside as a family and head to the park to compete in your own race. Race walking forward, backward, up a hill and down a hill.

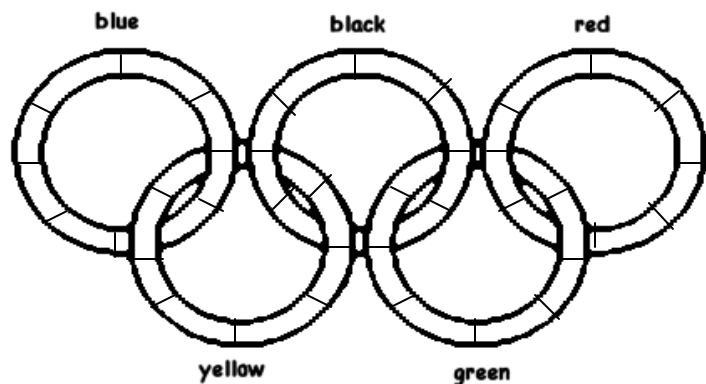
Use chalk outside or string inside to make the 5 colored Olympic rings. Jump from one ring to another as you say a word that goes with the color ring, like "red is for apple" or "green is for grass." This fun activity will get your bodies and minds working!



Whatever activity you choose to do, inside or outside, make it fun for everyone!

GO FOR THE GOLD AND THE RED AND THE GREEN!

Get into to the spirit of the Olympics and help your preschooler to eat like a champion! Use the Olympic rings below to help your tot keep track of all the healthy food she eats. If she eats a red fruit, help her color in one of the sections in the ring with the word "red" printed above it. If she eats a green veggie, she colors in a section of the green ring. Use the ring with "black" above it to keep track of other colors she may eat that are not listed, like purple and orange. Once she has colored in every section of each ring, tell her she is a healthy eating champion and present her with a special award like a pretend Olympic medal or a new box of crayons. Remind her to eat all different colors every day, just like you, to grow healthy and strong.



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The Gazette is printed through funds provided by The Bergen County Cancer Coalition. The Coalition is made possible by a grant from the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services' Office of Cancer Control and Prevention. The mission of the Bergen County Cancer Coalition is to implement the New Jersey Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan in Bergen County. For more information on Comprehensive Cancer Control in New Jersey, please visit: www.njcancer.gov.