

Key Parenting Tips for Feeding Your Family

Feeding and positive parenting are linked. Feeding your child requires parenting skills that include the careful blend of consistency with patience, tolerance, and understanding. Setting boundaries can help. It is not about forcing your child to eat just because “I said so,” nor is it allowing children to graze for food as they please. Consider the following tips:

- ♥ Eat together. Model eating slowly and make mealtimes pleasant. Regular family meals improve communication and encourage better eating habits.
- ♥ Remember that parents decide what, where, and when to eat. The child decides whether to eat and how much.

♥ Include your children in family meal planning. Make it fun. Let them choose a different color vegetable for each day of the week, or choose one day where they can select their favorite fruit for dessert.



Plan Healthy Snacks!

♥ Plan for snacks and put a stop to continuous snacking. It often leads to overeating.

♥ Plan healthy snacks that are low in sugar and fat, at specific times during the day.

♥ Be a role model. Children learn best by example. If you drink milk, so will your child. Children are more apt to be active if they see their parents physically active.



Building Blocks to Good Health

- ☺ February is Heart Healthy Month and March is National Nutrition Month!
- ☺ Choose healthy foods and prepare them in a healthy way. Let the kids help!
- ☺ Get plenty of physical activity each day.
- ☺ Reduce the salt in your diet.
- ☺ Saturated fats should be less than 10 percent of total calories daily.
- ☺ Visit <http://checkmark.heart.org/> for your own heart healthy food list!
- ☺ Follow the Pyramid described in the last issue of Wellness Buddies. Check out www.MyPyramid.gov for tips.



Parent Question Box

Q. My child is in third grade. She is a fussy eater and often refuses to eat her dinner. Should we make her sit at the table until she finishes?



A. It is often frustrating for parents when children are fussy eaters and refuse to eat. Remain patient and positive. Sometimes fussy eaters and their parents struggle for control. Do not force feed, bribe, beg, or keep a child in her seat until she finishes her plate. Make a variety of foods available. If you are a fussy eater, you may need to learn right along with your child. Do not pressure or call attention to your fussy eater; try not to compare them to other children in the family. According to Ellyn Satter, author of *Child of Mine, Feeding with Love and Good Sense*, a noted nutritionist, and lecturer, it is your job to plan the menu, get the food on the table, and make mealtime pleasant. Your child's job is to eat— or choose not to.



Parenting Place

Feeding Your Family: Positive Parenting Required

As stated before, feeding and positive parenting are linked. You teach your child something positive and encourage him/her to be self-reliant when you:

- ♥ Discontinue the "Clean Your Plate" Club and "Just one More Bite" Society.
- ♥ Put an end to telling kids to eat everything before they can have dessert.
- ♥ Turn off the television at mealtime. Mealtime is a

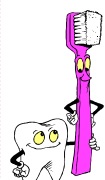
chance to connect with one another, and share your ideas. The TV is distracting and interferes with family communication.

- ♥ Never discipline a child by withholding food. This gives food a role it should not have. It creates fear in a child and it upsets healthy eating.
- ♥ Never use food as a reward. (This means teachers too!)

- ♥ Say "No" to snacking at the computer, in front of the TV, or video games.
- ♥ Promote non-food fundraisers at school and in the community.

Feeding and parenting go hand in hand. Seize the chance to set your child on the road to healthy habits that can last a lifetime.

Children copy what you do, so remember to set a good



February is Children's Dental Health Month!

Make sure your child is brushing and flossing their teeth before bed, when they wake up, and after they eat. Schedule a dental check-up to keep their smiles bright! Replace toothbrushes every six months!



Family Physical Activity Corner

- ☆ Put on some music and dance. It's a great heart healthy activity!
- ☆ Check out the new statewide health and wellness initiative, **Get Moving-Get Healthy NJ**. The goal is a healthier New Jersey.
- ☆ Visit the Get Moving-Get Healthy NJ website at: www.getmovinggethealthynj.rutgers.edu for information and activities for children, adults, and families!
- ☆ Try the Walk NJ Point-to-Point Challenge! Get moving now! Involve your school.

Wellness Buddies was created by Marilou Rochford, Rutgers Cooperative Extension, July 2009. rochford@njaes.rutgers.edu
Technical assistance by Holly Larsen

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Creation Station

Spicy Macaroni Meal (Serves 6)

Adapted from K-State Research and Extension, Family Nutrition Program, Kids a Cookin'

Ingredients:

- 1 pound lean ground turkey
- ½ cup each of chopped onion, green pepper, celery and carrots
- 2 tsp. ground cumin
- 2 tsp. chili powder (Tip: use less to reduce the spiciness)
- ½ tsp. garlic powder
- ½ tsp. pepper
- 2 cups tomato juice
- 2 cups water
- 1 ½ cup uncooked elbow macaroni

Directions:

1. **Remember to wash your hands.**
 2. Brown meat, onion, and green pepper in a large skillet. Drain fat.
 3. Stir in remaining ingredients.
- Heat to boiling, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat, cover the pan, and simmer about 15 minutes, stirring occasionally so the macaroni doesn't stick.

Serve with applesauce, peas, and milk.

Enjoy!

