



## Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care

# How Can I Influence What My Child Eats?

### Here's Why It's Important...

Parents have a lifelong effect on their child's eating behaviors. Your children are influenced not just by what you do, but also by what you say. There are many things parents can do to help their children establish healthy eating habits.

- 🍓 Parents control what foods enter the house.
- 🍓 Parents decide how food is prepared and served.
- 🍓 Parents can encourage children to try new foods and role model this behavior themselves.
- 🍓 Happy, fun family mealtimes will create a positive outlook towards food and vice versa.
- 🍓 Eating as a family improves academic achievement scores and overall nutrient intake, and helps reduce behavior problems.



### Quick Breakfast Ideas

- 🍓 Peanut butter toast
- 🍓 Bagels with cream cheese
- 🍓 Oatmeal with applesauce
- 🍓 Pita bread and yogurt
- 🍓 Cereal with milk and fruit
- 🍓 Toasted waffle with sliced fruit

### Make Mealtimes Count!

- 🍓 Turn off the TV and computer.
- 🍓 Turn off the phone and enjoy conversation with your family.
- 🍓 Sit down together.
- 🍓 Take time to talk to each other.
- 🍓 Listen to everyone.
- 🍓 Let your children talk about things they are interested in.
- 🍓 Keep conversations positive so mealtimes are happy times!





## Division of Responsibility

Children like to be in control and often one of the only things a child may be able to control is what he/she eats. Therefore, to avoid meal-time battles and encourage healthy eating; it is helpful to give children the power of control. In doing so, keep “the division of responsibility” in mind. It is your responsibility to buy, prepare and serve healthy meals and snacks. It is the child’s job to decide if, how much, and what to eat. If this “division of responsibility” is respected, children will learn to try new foods, recognize their fullness cues, and maintain lifelong healthy eating behaviors.

## Tips for Feeding Your Kids

- 🍓 Set a good example! Eat the foods you want your child to eat.
- 🍓 Offer healthy snacks between meals. Children have small stomachs and often need to eat every three hours.
- 🍓 Introduce new foods with familiar favorites.
- 🍓 If your child refuses to eat, don’t make it a power struggle, instead say, “You must not be hungry. You may have something later at snack time.”
- 🍓 Gently and positively encourage your child to try a small bite of something, but don’t force your child to eat!
- 🍓 When offering a new food for the first time, talk about the food’s color, shape, size and texture and remember to stay casual. This will give your child an opportunity to try something new without pressure.
- 🍓 Be persistent! It may take ten or more exposures before a child accepts a new food.
- 🍓 Involve children at the grocery store and allow them to pick out healthy foods (fruits, vegetables); encourage them to find something new.
- 🍓 Don’t bribe your child with food, such as “If you eat your broccoli, you can have dessert.” This places “value” on food and relates healthier foods to unpleasant experiences. This may also increase your child’s desire for sweets.
- 🍓 Encourage children to serve themselves or serve small portions for them; this will avoid overwhelming them. Also, give them control over seconds.
- 🍓 Encourage your child to help prepare meals or involve them in menu planning. This gives everyone a vote in what the family eats.
- 🍓 Avoid being a short-order cook. Prepare one meal that includes at least one item that each person will eat and don’t force the others.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.betterkidcare.psu.edu/>

<http://www.ellynsatter.com/>

<http://www.mypyramid.gov/kids/>





## Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care

# Avoid Being a Family of Sofa Slugs



## Choices You Can Make for Your Child

- ① Turn off the TV! When it is off, children won't watch it.
- ① Limit TV viewing; set rules and guidelines for the whole family.
- ① Pick educational videos/TV shows for your child.
- ① Watch TV with your child and discuss the show during commercials.
- ① Record TV shows to limit advertising.
- ① Avoid using TV as a baby sitter; instead, involve your children in daily household activities.
- ① Set a good example: watch TV after your child goes to bed.

## Here's Why It's Important...

A recent study by the Kaiser Family Foundation found that children six and under spend three times more each day with screen media (TV, videos/DVDs, computer, and video games) than reading or being read to. In addition, screen media are being used for about the same amount of time as playing outside, approximately two hours per day. The study also found that 30% of 0-3 year olds and 43% of 4-6 year olds have a television in their bedroom.

*According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, children under the age of 2 should not watch television at all and children 2 and older should watch no more than 1-2 hours of educational, nonviolent programs a day.*

## Our Children Are Spending Way Too Much Time in Front of the Television!

Too much TV promotes an inactive lifestyle and has been linked to overweight. When children are watching TV or sitting in front of a computer, they are usually inactive and their gross motor needs are not being met, which is critical for very young children. Children, infants, and toddlers learn best through relationships, interactions, and experiences, not through media exposure.





**“Why do so many Americans want their children to watch less TV, yet continue to expand the opportunities for them to watch it? More important, why do so many people no longer consider the physical world worth watching?”**

– Richard Louv

## **Instead of Turning the TV on:**

- Play together as a family.
- Dance to music.
- Read a book together.
- Look at a picture book/magazine.
- Tell stories and act them out.
- Set up an obstacle course inside or outside and take turns going through it.
- Go on a family treasure hunt in the backyard or in your neighborhood.
- Go to a local museum.
- Do crafts.
- Take a walk around the neighborhood.
- Explore a nearby forest or wooded area.
- Go to the library for story time.
- Make dinner together.
- Create an active outdoor game with your child.
- Go to a local park or zoo.
- Teach your child a new gross motor skill, such as riding a bike or skipping rope.

## **Rules for TV**

- Eat meals as a family without the TV on.
- If it is sunny outside, no TV! Your child will learn to appreciate the outdoors and will begin to choose this over TV.
- Set a time limit per day and per week. Example: 30 minutes per day and six hours a week (more time allowed for the weekend). Your child can save up time to use another day.
- Chores must be completed before the TV comes on.



For more information, please visit:

<http://www.limitv.org>

<http://www.aap.org/family/smarttv.htm>

<http://www.familytlc.net/>



## Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care

### How to Make Your Home an Active One



#### Here's Why It's Important...

Children need time to move their bodies! Active play and the outdoors contribute to learning in young children. Social skills blossom as children interact with adults, other children, and even objects found in the environment. Through experiences, encouragement, and instruction children acquire necessary motor skills such as jumping, hopping, galloping, kicking, and throwing. Active play can take place both indoors and outdoors and allows children to use up their energy (which helps when it comes to nap time or bedtime!). Remember to keep active play fun, creative, and noncompetitive for all preschool children!

#### Activity Recommendations for Your Preschool Child

- Children should accumulate at least 60 minutes of structured activity, which is activity that is led by an adult. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that this structured activity be done in 15 to 20 minute bouts.
- Children should accumulate at least 60 minutes and up to several hours of daily, unstructured physical activity, where they choose what to do.
- Children should not be seated for more than 30 minutes at a time except when sleeping or eating.

*Remember, joining your child in active play allows you to reach your physical activity goal of 30 minutes/day and also spend quality time with your family!*



## Ways to Be Active as a Family

Being active is a great way to spend time with your family. You will learn more about your children and they will greatly appreciate the attention from you, even if it's only for thirty minutes.

- ① Set up an obstacle course around the house or in a garage with chairs, trash cans, balls, etc. Have them skip, walk backwards, crawl, bounce or throw a ball in different parts of the obstacle course.
- ① Move to music. Put on music to get your children moving. Mix up the music (some fast, some slow). Props can be added such as scarves or musical instruments. Get children started by stomping, marching, and hopping.
- ① Go on a nature walk. Have children bring a plastic bag to collect leaves, small sticks and acorns. Ask them about each item as they put it in their bag. They can even make a collage with their findings when you get home.
- ① Have a special day(s) of the week, such as Bike Day, Pool Day, Park Day, or (your child's name) Day. Let your children pick any outdoor activity of their choice for that day.
- ① Go sledding on a small slope in the winter. Make snow people, snow structures and snow angels.

## It Only Takes a Few Small Changes at Home...

- ① Keep TVs out of children's bedrooms.
- ① Purchase multipurpose and inexpensive toys such as different size balls, hula hoops, jump ropes, scarves, and used tricycles and scooters.
- ① Remove breakable items from your child's room and/or any play rooms. This will allow for more activity without worrying about breaking anything!
- ① Schedule family active play time daily.

For more information, please visit:

[http://www.kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition\\_fit/fitness/fit\\_preschooler.html](http://www.kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition_fit/fitness/fit_preschooler.html)

[http://www.shapeup.org/fittips/20\\_tips.php](http://www.shapeup.org/fittips/20_tips.php)

<http://www.fitcitychallenge.org/Content/m1/Families/PDF/FunFitness.pdf>



## Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care

# What's in Your House? Creating a Healthy Food Environment

### Here's Why It's Important...

Healthy eating is not only important for weight control, but it is linked to better behavior and academic performance in kids; therefore it is important to provide an environment that supports healthy eating. Parents that provide healthy foods in a supporting environment will be the most successful in creating healthy lifelong eating habits for their children. After all, you want your family to have energy, be healthy and stay well!

### What Does a Healthy Food Environment Look Like?

- 🍓 Stock up on fruits and vegetables. Keep them within easy reach for your children. Or better yet, keep some washed and cut up on the counter for quick snacks.
- 🍓 Keep frozen and canned fruits and vegetables on hand for days when you have less time to prepare fresh ones. Choose low-sodium canned vegetables and fruits canned in their own juice or rinse with water before serving.
- 🍓 Limit the amount of chips, cookies, ice cream, and other unhealthy snacks in your house. When you do have them, store them where children cannot reach or see them. They are likely to forget they are there!
- 🍓 Buy whole grain foods such as breads, oatmeal, brown rice, whole wheat pasta, and whole grain cereals such as Cheerios®, Raisin Bran®, Total®, Wheaties®, or shredded wheat cereals.
- 🍓 Make sure children have access to water at all times. When thirsty, reach for the water first!



- 🍓 Choose beverages wisely; they can add a lot of unnecessary calories. Keep 1% or skim milk on hand for meals and make sure your children don't drink more than 4-6 oz. of 100% fruit juice each day.
- 🍓 Eat together as a family more often! Studies show that, when families eat together, children eat more fruits and vegetables.



## Quick Changes You Can Make Today

- 🍓 Get the kids involved! They can slice bananas, mix ingredients, wash fruits and vegetables, and set the table.
- 🍓 Keep a grocery list so you aren't tempted by impulse buys.
- 🍓 Start a fruit bowl and keep it out at all times.
- 🍓 Keep a pitcher of fresh water with lemon slices on a low table with cups for children to pour when thirsty.
- 🍓 Store "snack-size" packages of dried fruit, pretzels, baked chips, or graham crackers for a grab-and-go snack.

For more information, please visit:  
[www.fitcitychallenge.org/Families](http://www.fitcitychallenge.org/Families)  
[www.mypyramid.gov/kids](http://www.mypyramid.gov/kids)



## Whole Grain Pita Pizzas

*Makes 2 servings*

- 2 round 6-7" whole wheat pitas
- 6 oz. spaghetti sauce (about 1/4 of a typical jar)
- 3 oz. part-skim shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 cup chopped vegetables (onions, peppers, mushrooms, spinach, olives—your choice)
- 1/2 cup chopped chicken or tofu

- 1) Preheat oven to 350°. Spread half the sauce on each pita round. If you're using chopped fresh spinach, add it now, before the cheese, so it won't dry out too much.
- 2) Top with cheese, divided between the two pizzas, and then vegetables and meat.
- 3) Bake at 350° for 15 minutes on a pizza pan or cookie sheet.

Much healthier than store or restaurant pizza because you have a whole grain crust, plenty of vegetables and a reasonable amount of cheese.



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### Eating between Meals: Snacking for Kids



#### Here's Why It's Important...

Snacks are important and may add up to 25% of a child's food intake in one day! If a child is not very hungry at lunch he or she may compensate at snack time; therefore, serving healthy snacks is important. See below for some GOOD snack choices. Snacks are a great way to get children to try new foods. Have children create their own snacks by making yogurt sundaes with fresh or frozen fruit and unsweetened cereal. Snacks should be rich in vitamins and minerals and low in added sugar to keep children healthy. Snacks with lots of added sugar contain extra calories, which can contribute to unhealthy weight gain. They also increase our preference for sweet foods and increase the occurrence of cavities!

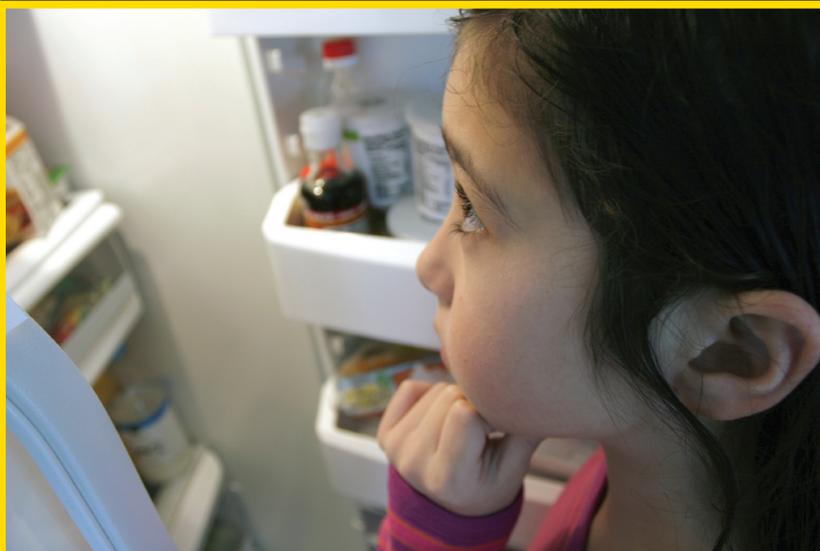
#### Simple Snack Ideas

##### Instead of...

- ☹ Soda or diet soda
- ☹ Chips with dip
- ☹ Cookies and whole milk
- ☹ Ice cream
- ☹ Snack bars
- ☹ Cheese puffs/doodles
- ☹ Fruit snacks (roll-ups and gummies)
- ☹ Pop-Tarts
- ☹ Candy

##### Try...

- ☺ Carbonated water mixed with 100% fruit juice
- ☺ Crunchy raw carrots, pepper strips, and cucumber slices with low-fat Ranch or hummus.
- ☺ Graham Crackers with peanut butter and skim milk
- ☺ Plain or vanilla yogurt mixed with fresh fruit
- ☺ Whole grain crackers (ex. Triscuits) with cheese cubes
- ☺ Small bag of plain popcorn
- ☺ Sliced peaches with cottage cheese
- ☺ Granola bar
- ☺ Trail mix (raisins, cheerios, pretzels, banana chips)



## Recipes

Child-pleasing snacks that will bring out the creativity in everyone!

### Purple Cow

¼ cup unsweetened grape juice  
1 cup skim milk  
1 sliced banana

Mix all ingredients together in a blender. Makes 4-6 small servings.

### Tortilla Roll-up

1 whole wheat tortilla  
¼ cup shredded carrot  
¼ cup shredded apple  
peanut butter or almond butter  
honey

Spread peanut or almond butter on tortilla. Add carrots and apples and drizzle lightly with honey. Roll up and cut into small pieces.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.fitcitychallenge.org/Families/MenuSnacks.aspx>

<http://www.betterkidcare.psu.edu/page01c.html>

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## Rules for Snacking

- Sit down in a quiet place with no TV visible. This will allow for time to talk with your child about healthy foods.
- Allow approximately 10-15 minutes for snacks.
- Give small servings and when more is requested, ask if your child is still hungry.
- Snacks are a great way to add extra fruits and vegetables to your child's diet.
- Water is an excellent beverage with snacks; beverages high in calories such as 100% fruit juice and other fruit drinks may fill children up and do not provide the nutrition of other healthy snacks.

