



Tips for Promoting Healthy Eating Habits

1. Establish Regular Family Meal Times.

Use this time to talk and enjoy each other's company. Create a fun, relaxed and special time together, but keep it short for your toddler's limited attention span.

2. Offer Nutritional Choices.

Toddlers often like three or four different kinds of food at a meal, with different textures and tastes.

3. Keep Portions Small.

Don't overwhelm your toddler with a heaping pile of food. You can always give him more if he finishes.

4. Give Your Child Some Control.

Let her choose between your choices of nutritional foods. Let her decide when she is done.

5. Let Your Child Help Prepare The Meal.

Let him feel "in charge."

6. Make Meal Times Fun!

Offer finger foods and dipping sauce. Make fun shapes with sandwiches or pasta. Make purple mashed potatoes!

7. Model Good Eating Habits.

Help your child learn by your healthy example.

8. Praise Good Eating and Avoid Bribery.

Giving sweets to get your child to eat her peas may work in the short term, but may be setting up bad eating habits.

9. Avoid Meal Time Battles

Getting into a struggle over food is never a good idea. Nobody wins.

10. Ask For Help.

Your health care professional may have ideas to help turn meal times into a positive experience for all.

Developed for Healthy StepsSM for Young Children by BUSM[®]: Department of Pediatrics, Boston Medical Center



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