

# Raising Great Kids



**MARCH**

## Educating Your Preschooler About Nutrition

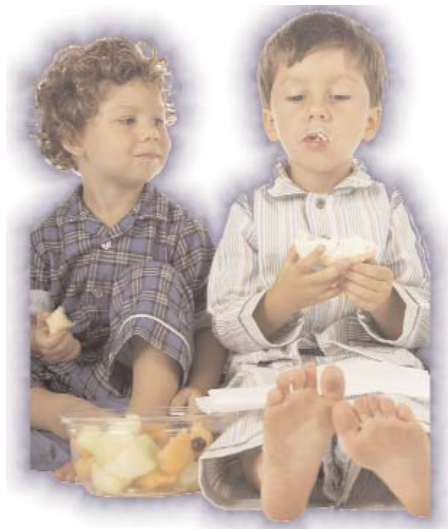
### March is National Nutrition Month.

The best time to teach good dietary habits is during the early years. A child's food experiences have an impact on his future eating habits and his health. As a parent, you can help your child avoid some diseases related to poor eating habits such as obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease. A healthy diet includes exercise and a variety of foods from the all of the food groups.

Examples of grains are whole grain breads and cereals, brown rice and whole wheat pasta, instead of refined wheat products.

Have available a variety of fruits and vegetables daily. Serve at least 3 cups a day for ages 3 to 5 years old. Examples: 1½ apple, 1½ large bananas, 1 large raw whole tomato, 1 medium baked or boiled potato, 12 baby carrots. Limit juice intake; offer fresh fruits and vegetables at each meal.

Young children's skeletal system is still developing. Serve reduced-fat milk to children over 2 years old and whole milk to children under two. Serving recommendation is 2-3 cups daily.



### **Safety Scoop**

#### **To Prevent Burns**

Make sure hot liquids and foods are out of the reach of children.

Always turn handles of pots and pans toward the back of the stove.

Remove/cover stove knobs if they are easy to turn and are in reach of children.

Teach children not to play around/near the stove. **Z**

Don't over feed children. Introduce healthy new foods one at a time. If the child refuses, keep serving the food several times. Eventually he will try and may like it. Get kids involved in cooking and planning meals.

Sit together as a family to eat. Turn the television off and talk with each other. This way you can check on what children eat. Encourage good eating habits and quality family time together.

Get the whole family moving! Take walks, ride bikes, go swimming, do gardening or just play hide-and- seek outside. Everyone will benefit from the exercise and the time together. Parents are powerful role models for their children and can make food, fun and fitness an important part of everyday. **Z**

Sources: National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) & American Heart Association



# Did You Know?

## Did you know that children can help in the kitchen?

Children love to help prepare and cook food because they can use all their senses. Besides, preparing meals together strengthens your relationship.



### Three-year-olds can:

Pour cold liquids.  
Shake a milk drink.  
Spread peanut butter on bread (using a disposable knife).


### Four-year-olds can:

Wash dishes.  
Roll bananas in cereal for a snack.  
Mash soft fruits and vegetables.

### Five-year-olds can:

Set and clear the table.  
Measure dry and liquid ingredients.  
Beat eggs with an eggbeater. Z

Source: Penn State University Cooperative Extension




## Cooking with Kids

### pudding Pops

1 (3 oz) package of instant pudding, your favorite flavor  
2-1/2 cups milk  
plastic spoons  
small paper cups  
large plastic bowl  
large spoon or whip to mix

Place the pudding mix and milk into a large plastic bowl. Mix well until thick. Fill each paper cup about half full of pudding and place in the freezer. When the pops are almost frozen, put a plastic spoon into each cup. Put the cups back in the freezer until the pudding is hard. Peel the paper away from the frozen pudding for a cool snack. Z

**Kids Can Help**  
Children can bring and measure ingredients, add ingredients to bowl and stir.



**All children must be supervised when they are in the kitchen.**



## I have a three year old who is a picky eater, What can I do??

Do not despair. Many children are picky eaters. Fighting with a child or forcing her to eat her food does not help. The good news is there are simple ways to deal with a picky eater. Here are some tips to help her develop healthy eating habits:

- ✓ Offer one food at a time.
- ✓ Continue to offer the new food. It takes about 8-10 exposures to a food before she may try it.
- ✓ Lead by example.
- ✓ Serve the unfamiliar food with a familiar food item. Examples, add blueberries to pancakes, vegetables over rice or pasta.
- ✓ Involve your child in the preparation process.
- ✓ Schedule snack time and stick to it.
- ✓ Avoid the "clean your plate" rule. Kids know when they are full.
- ✓ Eat at the dinner table as a family. The interaction helps in more than one way. Besides, never leave a child eating alone.

Source: American Heart Association




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