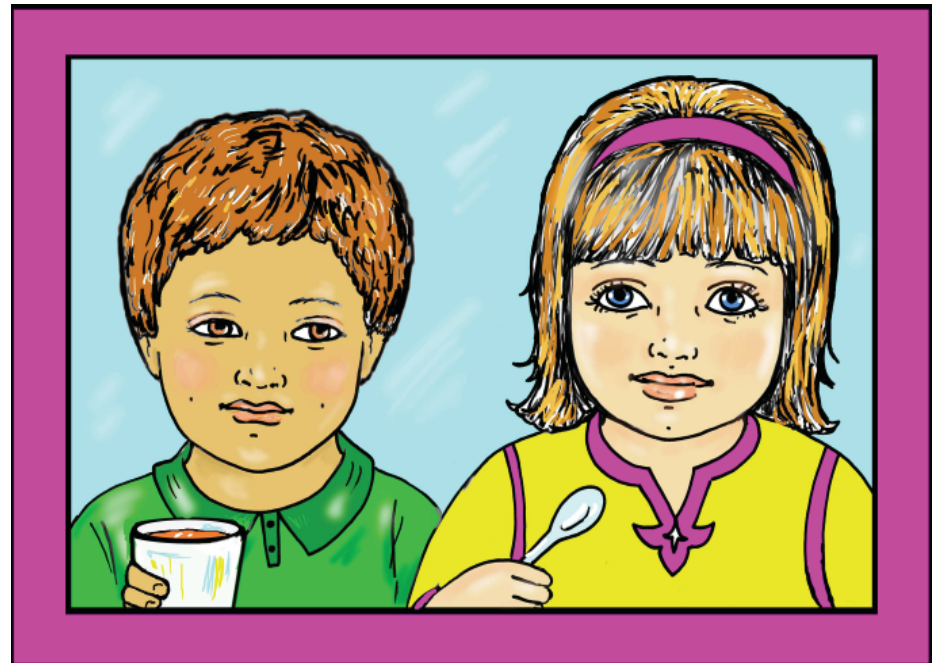


Feeding Young Children Ages 2 - 5



Feeding Young Children

(teacher)

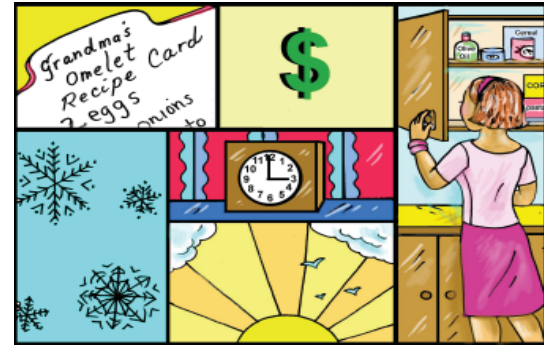
Sample question:

“How do you decide what you are going to feed your children?”

Example of factors that influence a parent’s decisions on what to cook:

- Taste preferences - one of the most important influences on food choices
- Lifestyle (at-home mom vs. working mom)
- Catering to childrens’ desires
- Cost of foods and available money for purchasing foods (food budget)
- Transportation to and from the grocery store (car vs. bus)
- Concerns about the family’s general health or body weight
- Specific health conditions (diabetes, lactose intolerance)
- Weather/season
- Availability of food - what is in your kitchen cabinets and refrigerator

How do you decide what you are going to feed your children?



Feeding Young Children 3

- Cultural influences
- Media, marketing and advertising (ex. television food advertisements)

How do you decide what you are going to feed your children?



(teacher)

Share with participants:

“It is important to include all food groups in your child’s diet everyday.”

Remember no one food group will provide all the nutrients and energy children need and no one food group is more important than another.

Healthy children (2 -5 years of age) need to eat these approximate* amounts of food each day from the following food groups:

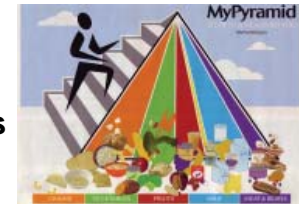
- 3 - 5 ounces from the Grains Group.
- 1 - 1 1/2 cups from the Vegetable Group
- 1 - 1 1/2 cups from the Fruit Group
- 2 cups from the Milk Group, and
- 2 - 4 ounces from the Meat Group.

*NOTE – These are approximate amounts because children’s growth spurts and activity levels will effect how much food (calories) they will need to eat.

Healthy children (2 - 5 years of age) need to eat food from each of the 5 food groups each day.

Approximate amounts:

- 3 - 5 ounces of bread, rice, cereal, pasta
- 1 - 1 ½ cups vegetables
- 1 - 1 ½ cups fruit
- 2 cups milk
- 2 - 4 ounces of meat, poultry, fish, and beans

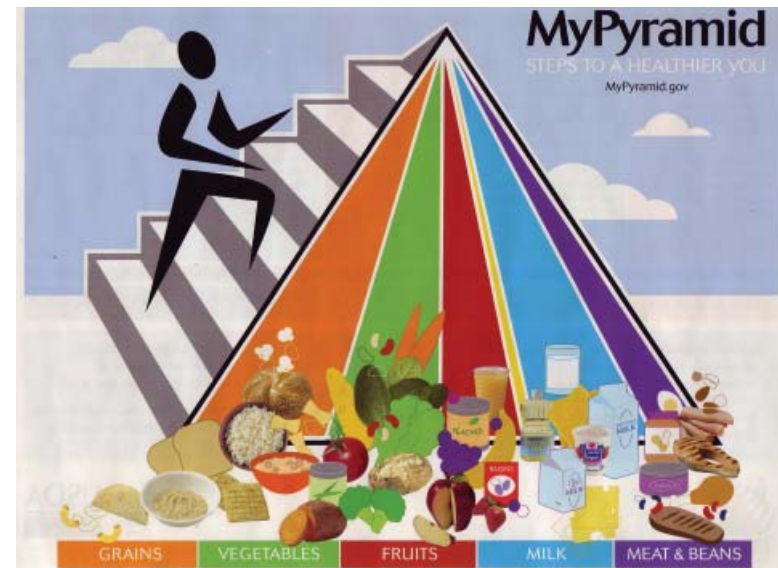


Feeding Young Children 5

Healthy children (2 - 5 years of age) need to eat food from each of the 5 food groups each day.

Approximate amounts:

- 3 - 5 ounces of bread, rice, cereal, pasta
- 1 - 1 ½ cups vegetables
- 1 - 1 ½ cups fruit
- 2 cups milk
- 2 - 4 ounces of meat, poultry, fish, and beans



(teacher)

Share with participants:

“Children less than 2 years of age need to drink whole milk.”

- **Children, less than 2 years of age, should not be put on a low-fat diet.** Children less than 2 years of age should drink whole milk because they are very active and need the fat for energy, growth and brain development.

Teacher information: The recommended fat intake for children ages 1-3 is 30 - 40% of total daily calories. For children over age 3 thru adults, the recommendation is no more than 25 - 35% of total daily calories from fat.

- Milk is needed to build strong bones and healthy teeth.
- Children two years and older can drink fat-free or low-fat milk.
- Some children experience problems drinking milk? Some adults and children in different ethnic groups (African American, Asian, and Native Americans) cannot digest the sugar in milk called lactose.

Children, less than 2 years old, should drink whole milk.



Feeding Young Children

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A variety of other calcium rich foods and beverages including yogurts, calcium fortified juices, calcium fortified soy milk, dark green vegetables, cheese, or lactose reduced milk can be served instead of milk.

- **Check with your health care provider before giving calcium supplements to children.**

**Children, less than 2 years old,
should drink whole milk.**



(teacher)

Share with participants:

“Dieting is not recommended for children because their bodies are still growing and developing. They should be taught to develop good eating habits that include a balanced diet and exercise. Consult your health-care provider if you are concerned about your child’s weight.”

Help your child maintain a healthy weight:

- Wean toddlers from the bottle by 1 year of age.
- Limit or avoid empty-calorie foods (candy, soda, doughnuts, French fries, etc.) high in fat and sugar.
- Breakfast is said to be the most important meal of the day for children and adults. It helps regulate their appetite so they are less likely to overeat.
- Serve child size portions and allow children to ask for seconds. Offer small meals and snacks at the same time each day but be flexible enough to meet your child’s hunger needs.
- Limit foods and beverages eaten between meals.
- Do not force your child to eat.

Dieting is not recommended for children.



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- Do not rush meals and snack time. Allow enough time for children to feel relaxed when eating.
- Encourage your child to be physically active at least 60 minutes each day.

Dieting is not recommended for children.



(teacher)

Share with participants: ***“As children grow they need more iron. If they don’t get enough iron they become anemic.”***









- A child’s diet should be able to provide his or hers’ body with enough iron.
- Children may feel tired, lack energy and have short attention spans when anemic. See a healthcare provider if you are concerned about your child being anemic. The healthcare provider can prescribe iron supplements if they determine your child is anemic.

Good food sources for iron: meat, fish, dry beans, peas, spinach, iron-fortified cereals, tortillas, breads, pasta, and rice.

- Iron Tips: The best iron sources are fresh meats like beef, pork and chicken.
- Vitamin C helps iron absorption when served with meals. Serve vitamin C-rich fruits and vegetables with meals.

Foods Sources of Iron

Meat (beef, pork, chicken) Dry beans, Peas, Spinach, Iron-fortified cereals, tortillas, breads, pasta, and rice.

spinach 	iron-fortified cereal 	beef 	dry beans 
raisins 	pork 	tortilla 	chicken 

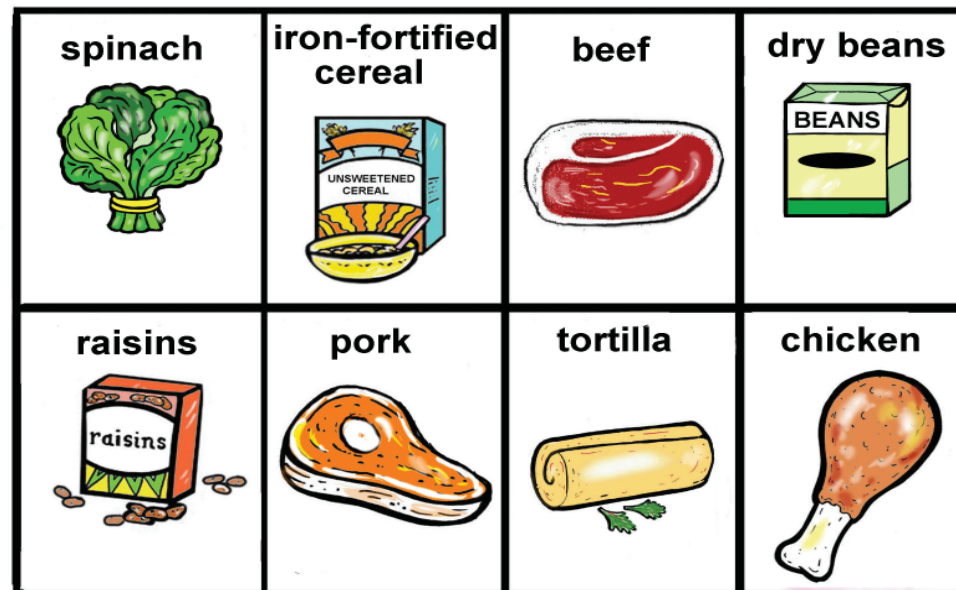
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Teacher Information:

- Anemia, caused by low iron, occurs when your blood can’t make enough hemoglobin. Iron is needed to make hemoglobin. Hemoglobin is the part of a red blood cell that carries oxygen in your body.

Foods Sources of Iron

Meat (beef, pork, chicken), Dry beans, Peas, Spinach, Iron-fortified cereals, tortillas, breads, pasta, and rice.



(teacher)

Sample question:

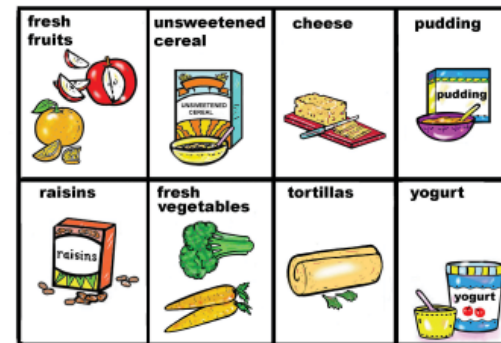
“What are some of your child’s favorite snack foods?”

Serve healthy snacks that contain foods from one or two food groups. Healthy snacks ideas include graham crackers, unsweetened or low sugar cereal, pudding, low-fat yogurt, cheese sticks, fruits or vegetables.

Snacks prevent children from becoming too hungry and irritable in between meals.

- Young children have small stomachs which don’t hold enough food to last from one meal to the next.
- Young children may not be able to get all the nutrients and calories they need from three meals a day. Snacks help young children get the calories and nutrients they need for normal growth and development.
- Serve your child two healthy snacks each day 1½ to 2 hours between meals.

Choose healthy snacks for you and your family!



Feeding Young Children

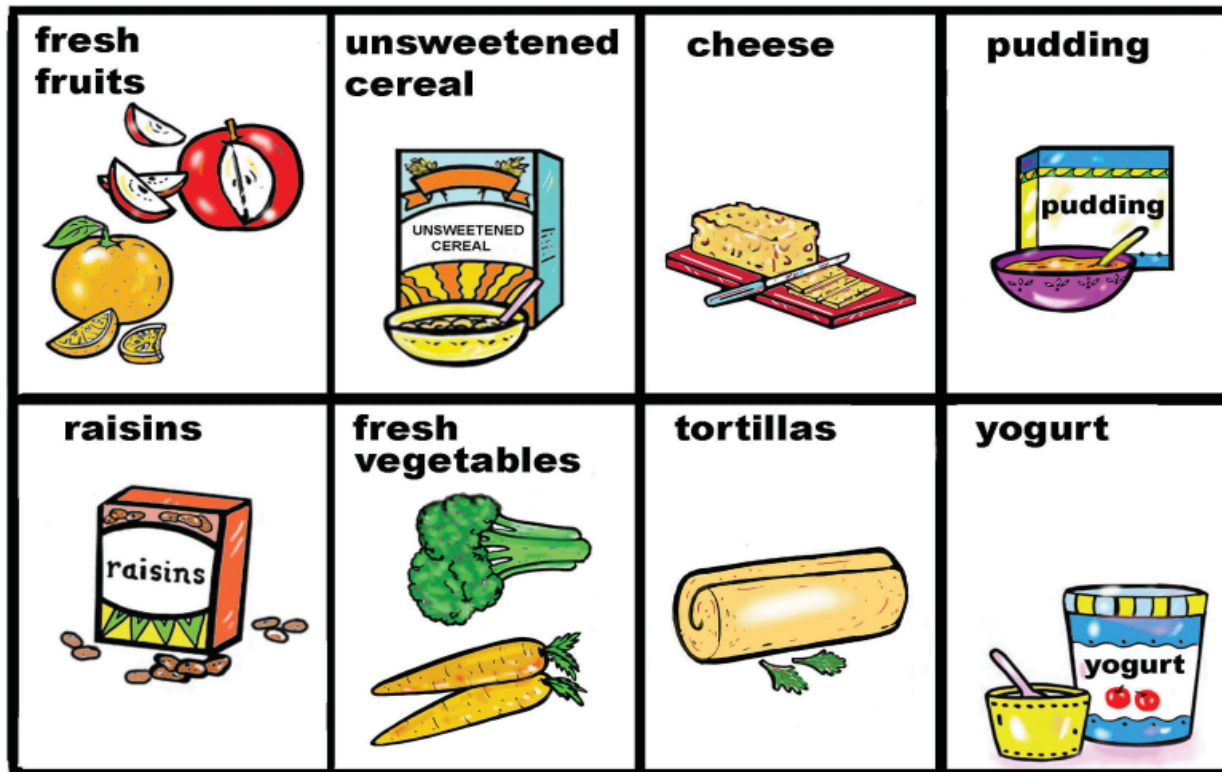
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- Introduce small amounts of new foods along with a favorite food during snack time. If the new food is not well accepted try it another time or serve it a different way. It can take serving a new food many times before it is accepted by the child.

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Choose healthy snacks for you and your family!



(teacher)

Share with participants:

“Children can learn from their parents and caregivers when sitting and eating with them. Parents and caregivers will be able to assist their child if they begin to choke if they sit with them while they eat.”

- Parents, who sit with their children while eating; can serve as role models,
 - ~ teach table manners,
 - ~ encourage children to eat more,
 - ~ teach socialization skills and
 - ~ help the child if he/she begins to choke on food.
- Some foods may cause children less than 4 years of age to choke: nuts, seeds, popcorn, hot dogs, whole grapes, hard candy, raw carrots, cough drops, chips, chewing gum, peanut butter, marshmallows, pretzels, raisins, cherries with pits, chunks of meat and raw celery.

Avoid feeding your toddler foods that may cause choking.



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- Prepare foods so they are not a choking hazard: cut grapes in four pieces, spread peanut butter thin or add apple juice to thin peanut butter before spreading, cut hot dogs and carrots the long way and grind meat or cut it up finely
- Sit with your children when they are eating. Children should sit at the table rather than walking around when eating.

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Avoid feeding your toddler foods that may cause choking.



(teacher)

Share with participants:

“Children’s appetites change from day to day.”

Children’s appetites change from day to day because:

- of different activity levels;
 - they are having a growth spurt (eat more);
 - they are not feeling well/illness (colds and flu);
 - they are affected by weather changes (too hot or cold).
-
- Children’s appetites change from day to day the same as adults. You should allow your child to decide how much they will eat each day by offering small amounts of each meal item and allowing them to ask for seconds.
-
- They know when they are full and should not be forced to clean their plates.

Children’s appetites change from day to day.



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- Children might refuse to eat a meal. It is ok for a healthy child to occasionally skip a meal.

Children's appetites change from day to day.



(teacher)

Sample question:

“What are some examples of nutritious foods you like but your children will not eat?”

- Plan meals that your child will eat by including foods they like along with new foods or foods that are not well received. It might take 7 to 10 times before your child will accept a new food so continue to offer new foods in small amounts until they develop a taste for them.
- There might be some foods that your child dislikes and will not eat. Respect their food choices. Even adults have foods they don't like.
- Picky eaters may eat the foods that you let them choose and help prepare. Have the child pick a food for the family to eat.
- Sometimes a child will select a few foods and want to eat only these foods. This is usually temporary so do not fuss about it with your child. If this continues for long periods of time contact your healthcare professional.

Picky eaters may eat the foods that you let them choose and help prepare.



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**Picky eaters may eat
the foods that you let them
choose and help prepare.**



(teacher)

Sample question:

“In order to get your child to eat certain foods how do you have to prepare them differently from the way you would prepare them for yourself?”

- Let your child help plan and prepare meals.
- Children are very sensitive to taste and temperature of foods. Serve foods with mild flavors that are not too spicy.
- Allow food to cool so it is lukewarm before serving. Don't serve food that is too hot or too cold.
- Children like finger foods. Cut food in bite-size pieces that are easy to pick up, chew and swallow.
- Chewing meat may be difficult for young children. Serve ground meats, legumes, eggs and peanut butter.

Children like foods:

- mild in flavor
- lukewarm in temperature
- bite-size
- not mixed together.



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- Young children like each food item served separate instead of mixed vegetables or casseroles and they might not want foods to touch.
- Plan meals to include a variety of taste, textures and colors.

Children like foods:

- mild in flavor
- lukewarm in temperature
- bite-size
- not mixed together



teacher)

Share with participants:

“Your child should have its first visit to the dentist scheduled after the first tooth appears or about six to twelve months.”

Help protect your child’s teeth from tooth decay (cavities):

- Limit sweet and sticky foods.
- Serve sweet and sticky foods with the meal or before brushing teeth.
- Serve raw fruits and vegetables such as apples and celery to help to cleanse the teeth.
- Do not put a child to bed with a bottle.
- Teach children 2 years and older to brush their teeth at least twice a day.

Prevent tooth decay:

- Limit sweet and sticky foods.
- Children 2 years and older should brush their teeth at least twice a day.
- Children need dental checkups at least once a year.



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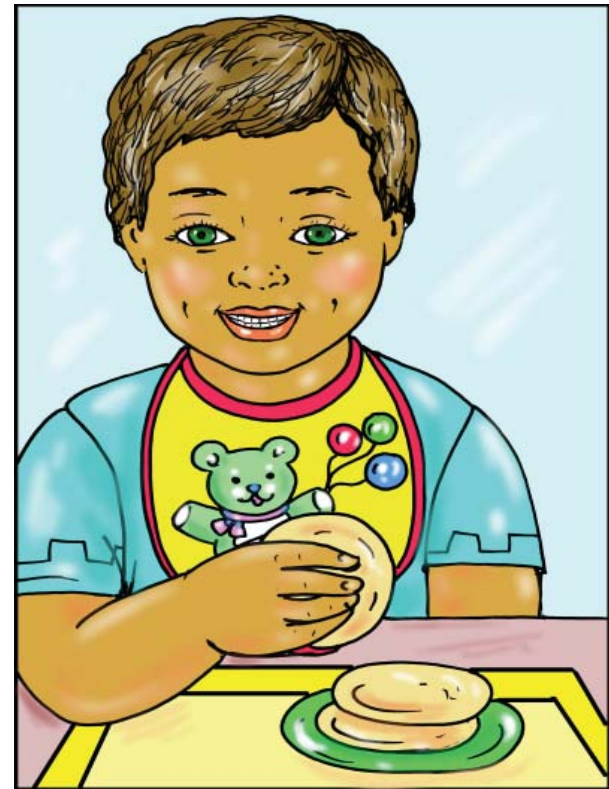
- Have dental checkups for your children at least once a year, twice a year is better.

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Prevent tooth decay:

- **Limit sweet and sticky foods.**
- **Children 2 years and older should brush their teeth at least twice a day.**
- **Children need dental checkups at least once a year.**



(teacher)

Sample question:

“What foods do your children like to eat when eating out?”

- Make healthy choices from the menu. Choose low fat and low sugar foods when possible.
- Eating out should be a pleasant experience for the entire family so compromise when helping your child make food selections from the menu. For example: If your child wants to choose a high-fat food, encourage them to drink low fat milk and fruit with the meal.
- Plan to eat out at the same time the meal would be served at home.
- Bring crackers, dried cereal or fruit for young children to snack on in case they get cranky before the meal is served.
- Order meals for the children from the Children's Menu (Kid Meals).

Tips for Eating Out With Kids

- Eat out at the same time you eat at home.
- Bring a snack for young children to eat while they wait for the food to be served.
- Choose low fat and low sugar foods from the menu when possible.



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Tips for Eating Out With Kids

- **Eat out at the same time you eat at home.**
- **Bring a snack for young children to eat while they wait for the food to be served.**
- **Choose low fat and low sugar foods from the menu when possible.**

