



KidFood

Healthy Eating for Today's Kids

Nutrition Matters

September 2015

Play with Food

Small children learn how to eat by playing with food.

Children learn a lot about foods before the food is in their mouth by touching and playing with it. Playing with food can be messy. That's okay!

Say yes to a mess!

Let your child learn to enjoy eating a wide variety of foods.

Finger foods are fun and easy to eat. Children love finger foods.

Offer finger foods often.

Roll Up Sandwiches

Your child can spread mayonnaise or mustard on a tortilla or flat bread. Add thin slices of ham, turkey, or roast beef. Top with shredded lettuce or carrots, chopped tomatoes or shredded cheese. Roll up and eat!

Fruits and Veggies

Your child may be more willing to try new fruits and vegetables if they are served as finger foods. Offer soft fruits and vegetables such as banana chunks, canned peaches and pears, kiwi slices, cooked carrots, green beans, and squash chunks.



Your child may want to mash the fruits and vegetables with his fingers before eating them. He is learning how foods feel and taste.

Stacking Snacks

Offer small crackers, small slices of cheese, meats (turkey or ham), tomato slices, lettuce pieces, and shredded carrots. Let your child stack up his snack and eat!

Snack Time



Collect Small Cookie Cutters

Look for a variety of shapes such as stars, moons, hearts, and animals. Cookie cutters are fun for playing with food. Your child can cut shapes out of cheese slices, meat slices, bread, tortillas, kiwi, or apple slices.



Fruity Crackers

Spread strawberry cream cheese on round crackers. Top with small pieces of fruit - strawberry slices, blueberries, banana slices, peach slices.



Mucho Nachos

Sprinkle shredded cheddar cheese on taco chips. Heat in microwave until cheese melts. Serve with bowls of refried beans, salsa, and cooked seasoned hamburger. Dip and eat!



Fruit Dips

Put pretzel sticks into chunks of fruit - strawberries, kiwi, peaches, pears, pineapple.

Serve with a dish of low-fat flavored yogurt and a dish of granola or coconut. Let your child dip fruit into yogurt and then into granola or coconut.

Kale Chips

Yield: 4 servings

Time: 40 minutes

Ingredients:

- 1 large bunch of kale
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt to taste

Directions:

1. Preheat an oven to 300°F
2. Cut away inner ribs from each kale leaf and discard; tear the leaves into bite-size pieces. Wash torn kale pieces and spin dry in a salad spinner or dry with paper towels until they are very dry.
3. Put kale pieces into a large bowl. Drizzle with olive oil and mix until all kale pieces are evenly coated. A clean pair of hands works best for this job.
4. Spread the leaves evenly onto a baking sheet.
5. Bake in the preheated oven until mostly crisp, about 20-30 minutes. Check half way through cooking rearrange as necessary.
6. Season with salt and serve immediately.



Is your child a fussy eater?

Your child refuses to eat his lunch.

Is he fussy?

Your child may not be hungry.

His growth slows down between the ages of 2 and 4 years. His appetite may also slow down and he will eat less.

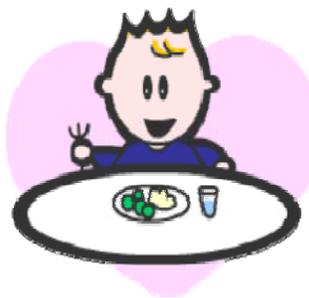
Or maybe your child's tummy is full.

Some children will fill their small tummies with milk, juice, or sweet drinks.

- ♥ **Serve milk at mealtimes.**
If your child is drinking more than 24 ounces of milk in a day, it's too much.
- ♥ **Limit juice to 6 ounces each day or less.**
- ♥ **Offer water to drink between meals.**
- ♥ **Offer planned snacks between meals.**
Try to have 2 hours without eating snacks before a meal. Offer one snack at 2:00 to 3:00, if dinner is served at 5:00.
If your child snacks all day long, he will not be hungry at mealtimes.

Why your child may refuse to eat:

- ♥ **Your child may be too tired.**
Most preschool children need an afternoon nap. He will feel better and eat better at dinner time.
- ♥ **Your child may be too excited.**
Have some quiet time before eating. Your child can color pictures at the table while you finish cooking.
- ♥ **Your child may want other foods.**
If he sees others eating chips and candy, he will want to eat chips and candy. Be a good role model for your child.
- ♥ **Your child may want to find out if you will cook something different for him.** Offer a variety of healthy foods.



Don't offer to cook different foods for your child. He will learn to eat what the family eats.



What Can You Do?

- Make some finger foods with my child.
- Offer 1 to 2 planned snacks between meals.
- Drink water with my child between meals.
- Other: _____

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