

How To Help Your Kids Eat Healthier



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Tips And Tricks For Parents

Contents:

[Introduction: The importance of making your kids eat healthy](#)

[Chapter 1. How To Feed A Picky Eater](#)

[Chapter 2. Ideal Portion Sizes For Kids](#)

[Chapter 3. Proper Snacks For Childhood Weight Control](#)

[Chapter 4. Vitamins For Children](#)

[Chapter 5. How To Talk To Your Child About Alcohol](#)

[Chapter 6. Essential Nutrients For Kids](#)

[Chapter 7. Healthy Drinks For Kids](#)

[Chapter 8. Get Your Kids Involved](#)

[Chapter 9. Conclusion](#)

Introduction:

The importance of making your kids eat healthy

The need to maintain a healthy eating habit in the family cannot be emphasized enough. This is because of the extent in which healthy eating affects the lives of the family members. Moreover, healthy eating affects the quality of life that members of the family will enjoy. As a parent or guardian, it is your responsibility to ensure that the young ones in the family enjoy healthy meals and get the best nutrition for their bodies. This can be a challenging task due to many challenges caused by processed foods and the readily available fast food outlets. The business ventures provide an alternative to the healthy meals and this provides a challenge since studies have found that fast food lead to serious health complications. In order to make a huge impact in their lives, it is important that you instill healthy eating habits in your children as early as possible in their lives. There are several benefits of healthy eating including;

The level of productivity will improve.

The brain needs quality fuel to function more efficiently just like a car needs quality fuel to work properly. There have been several studies done in the importance of healthy eating. One such study found that when you eat unhealthy foods, there is a risk of 66% percent of productivity loss in your life. This makes it crucial; for you to maintain high energy levels and ensure that you and your children experience increased productivity both in school and at home.

Healthy eating increases happiness levels.

The types of food that we eat influence the functioning of the brain. Take for instance a single banana contains about 10 milligrams of dopamine. This is a hormone that improves the mood in the brain. Moreover dark chocolate is known to boost production of serotonin according to studies. This is a neurotransmitter that is commonly targeted by anti-depressants. Therefore when your kids are feeling gloomy, a dark chocolate covered banana will do the trick and improve their moods. Fun fact, it is healthy!

A reduction in stress levels.

There are daily pressures that may lead to stress. However, healthy eating is known to reduce the stress levels in our bodies. There are certain types of food that have been found to reduce control the level of cortisol, the body's stress hormone. Foods that are rich in vitamin C, magnesium and the omega-3 fatty acids are known to reduce the levels of cortisol. This means that you will have happier and less stressed children in your household.

Healthy eating helps you to control your weight.

There are several small healthy adjustments that you can make to help maintain ideal weight in your family. This is especially important since teenagers are self-conscious about their weight. Tips such as replacing commercial beverages such as sodas with water, replacing chips with carrots and ordering a plate of salad instead of fries will allow you and your children to lose weight. Moreover, you will be able to save some cash while you are at it.

Prevention of health disorders.

There are serious health risks involved with unhealthy eating. Health complications ranging from obesity, osteoporosis, type 2 diabetes, heart disease and other health issues stem from unhealthy eating habits. The primary role as a parent or guardian is to protect you family and you can do this by instilling healthy eating habits in your children. This will allow them to age better, look better, and live healthier, live longer. Therefore adopt strategies provided below to provide healthy meals to your family.

How To Feed A Picky Eater

There are many kids who are picky eaters. This can provide a challenge to parents and guardians who are not well informed on how to handle this situation. It is important that you know that it is not your fault that the child is a picky eater. Many parents and guardians think that it is their fault thus bribe a child into eating their meals. Moreover, some may choose to indulge the child in sugary or salty snacks in order to feed them. These actions have bad consequences to future eating habits of the child and it is counterproductive in the end. It therefore helps to know some of the tips that will help you to ensure that your child will eat healthy foods including vegetables which most picky eaters do not like on their plates. Some of the tips you can employ to help get your toddler to eat include;

Observe a certain routine

You should ensure that the meals and snacks are served at certain times in a day consistently every day. There are parents who offer juice during the day. This may impact your child's appetite during mealtimes since they may feel full during the mealtimes hence become picky about their food. Instead offer the juice a part of the meals and give the child water in between meals.

Patience should be exercised when introducing new foods.

Children like to associate their food with colour and smell. This therefore means that they take much longer to like a certain type of food compared to adults who associate food with taste. In order to introduce new food, give it in small portions alongside their favorite food. Repeated exposure will help to make them like the new food faster.

Involve the kids

When you go out shopping, engage the kids in the selection of the healthy foods to eat. Ensure that everything you buy you want your child to eat. Involve them in the preparation of the food through rinsing the vegetables, stirring the batter or even setting the table for the meal. This will encourage them to eat more.

Minimize distractions during mealtimes.

These may come from a range of issues. The television should be switched off and other electronic gadgets as well. Doing this will assist your child to maintain focus when eating. Electronic devices especially television may also affect your child's eating since most advertisements contain sugary and salty foods thus influence your child's desire to eat less healthy food.

Do not cook separate meals for your child in short order.

Should your child refuse to eat the healthy meal, do not prepare food that he or she wants. This will encourage picky eating in the home. Instead, encourage them to stay at the table during mealtimes. This should be the case even when they do not want to eat. Repeated exposure to healthy options will make them become familiar with the healthy food and even learn to love healthy food choices.

Do not bribe your kids with dessert. This will make them assume certain foods especially

sugary food to be better than the healthy alternatives. Moreover, do not force your child to finish their food. This may make them to associate mealtimes with anxiety and may cause them to stress eat as adults. The portions of food also play a role to the health of the child. It is important that you understand all about portion sizes.

Ideal Portion Sizes For Kids

There are several reasons why people may be overweight and in some instances obese. It is common to hear people complaining of being overweight yet they eat healthy food. However, it is important to consider the amount of calories that your kids consume in a day. This is associated with the type of food and the amount of food that they eat. Over the years, the portion sizes for food has increased steadily. This has resulted in people eating larger portions of food thus having larger waistlines. Extensive knowledge on the ideal portion sizes is crucial for your family even if the food they are eating is healthy. This article covers the basics of portion sizes and the tips that will help you to ensure that your children eat only the ideal portions in a day thus maintain healthy lifestyle and look great as well!

Use visual cues to help reduce the portion sizes.

In order to determine the right amount of nutrients for the body, you can use divided plate. The concept of divided plate involves having a plate that is divided into four equal parts. In order to have a balanced meal, fill one of the upper parts with proteins. Fill the other upper part with carbohydrate or starch preferably with a whole grain. Fill the two lower parts with veggies and there you have it, a balanced meal and at the right portion sizes! Great, right?

Serve food on smaller plates.

The common portions sizes are distorted. This makes your kids to want more food. In order to reduce the portions to the right amounts, use smaller plates to serve your food. Once ounce of pasta on a large plate looks little, but on a small plate, well it looks substantial. This will help your child to eat just the right amount.

Divide the leftovers.

When you decide to cook large batches of leftovers for the family, you should divide the food into smaller portions before you store it. This will ensure that when your child goes for the food, they will eat a smaller portion. This is not the case when you put all the food in a single portion.

Serve chips individually.

You should not allow your kids to bring the whole bag of chips to the couch to eat. Instead when you want to eat chips, serve each of the people individually. This will allow you to regulate the portions that each of the family members eats.

Schedule healthy meals three times a day.

Having regular meal times will maintain consistency. Moreover, it prevents the skipping of meals. Skipping meals is not good since your child will tend to overeat on the next meal. You can schedule two snacks in the course of the day. When you child wants a second helping, offer them more salads and vegetables which is healthier.

There are several other ways that will help you to reduce the portion sizes for your child. When serving food, practice single serving sizes that will help the kids to know what an appropriate portion size looks like. Wondering what the right snacks for childhood weight

control are? Read on.

Proper Snacks For Childhood Weight Control

Healthy snacking for kids is crucial especially when you consider the rising epidemic that is characterized by more and more obese and overweight children. Having snack is a very important part of the day for children. This is because snacks allow the children to have a high energy in between meals. This has the direct effect of increasing the productivity of the children in their day to day activities. As a parent, you have to understand the calorie intake of your children in their snacks. This is because sugary and extremely salty snack tend to promote obesity in children. Most of the commonly promoted snacks are not healthy at all including some of the candy bars and chips which are full of coloring, sugar and salt. For parents who want their children to maintain a healthy weight should invest in healthy snacks for their children. Some of the healthy homemade snacks available include;

Pineapple pops.

This is one of the easiest healthy snacks to make. All it involves is a blender, canned pineapple, banana, low fat vanilla yoghurt. Blend the mixture and place them in Popsicle molds or available ice cube trays. Once done, you can place them in the fridge. This is a fun activity that you can use to involve the kids in the making of the snack.

Fruits and vegetable muffins

This type of muffins are very healthy for the kids. Moreover, the kids don't even know that the fruits and vegetables are in the muffins. These tasty muffins contain applesauce, bananas and carrots in them baked into small bite sized snacks. As a parent, you have the option of adding extra types of fruits to ensure that they get enough fruit.

White bean dip snack.

Children are very interesting and like to dip food in whichever type of dipping sauce that is available in the home. Most of the dipping sauces available are not especially healthy. This does little to regulate the amount of weight that you kids have. The white bean dip is healthy since it contains a lot of fiber, protein and very little fat. You can serve the white bean dip with celery or carrot amongst other snacks.

Freshly cooked sweet potato chips.

There are several benefits that your kids can get from eating sweet potato chips. The nutritional value of sweet potato is quite high with vitamin A and C with a lot of fiber. The sweet potato chips are great during daytime or as dinner is approaching.

Dried peach snack.

Kids love dried fruit as snacks. This is a favorite among many children with a lot of nutrients in the dried peach. There are several recipes for dried peaches available that you can use. This is especially handy in the late summer when there are several peaches available since they are in season.

These are just but a few of the several different types of snacks that are available for kids. The low amount of calories in the snack will help them to reduce weight or maintain the right weight. The right nutrients are important for children thus healthy snacks can help ensure they get these nutrients without weight gain.

Vitamins For Children

When children are growing up, they need to be given all the nutrients they require in order to develop properly. This is especially important because they grow much faster and it requires you to pay attention to the type of food they eat. The safe way is to ensure that they eat healthy meals with very little processed foods. However, many parents remain concerned about the right amount of nutrients they should provide and where they can get these nutrients. This is the case when parents want their children to have the right amount of vitamins. The right type of vitamins requires that you have knowledge about the different types of food that can adequately provide vitamins for the children. Some of the sources of vitamins readily available include;

The sun is one source of vitamin D.

Vitamin D is sometimes referred to as the sunshine vitamin. This is because the body is able to synthesize vitamin D when exposed to sunshine. There are some limitations, however to the amount of vitamin D that you can produce. Such limitations occur due to the amount of time that you are required to stay in the sunlight and the type of clothes that you have worn. Moreover, smog, geographic location limit the exposure to sunlight. Moreover, there are certain health concerns about the exposure to sunlight with scientists attributing it to skin cancer.

There are certain foods that provide vitamins.

There are several foods available that can [provide you child with the vitamins that they need for their growth. The healthcare specialist recommends that children should receive 400 UI of vitamin D in a day. Some of the foods that provide vitamins include salmon, , fortified yoghurt, canned tuna, orange juice, fortified milk, fortified American cheese, large egg yolk, fortified margarine. When taking vitamin D, it is important that you regulate the amount that your child is taking on a daily basis. This is because vitamin D is stored in the body as a tissue. Vitamin C on the other hand is quite harmless to your child. This is so because the body only absorbs what it needs. The excess vitamin C is then removed from the body.

Vitamin supplements from manufacturers.

There are several manufacturers who provide vitamin supplements to children. These vitamin supplements are provided in terms of tables or as solutions. Children who are old enough to chew the tablets are given those but those who are too young to swallow the tablets are given the vitamins in form of a solution.

Vitamin supplements are by far the most popular source of vitamins. This is because it is easy to regulate the amount of vitamins and the types of vitamins that you provide to your children that way. Over the counter supplements are available for purchase. However, it is important that you know the exact amount that your child requires. You can do this by consulting the services of a doctor. The doctor will provide the recommended amounts and the best supplements to use.

How To Talk To Your Child About Alcohol

Talking to your children about alcohol plays a crucial role in their eventual views about drinking and their drinking habits. This is a very important subject in the family that should be addressed with great importance. By modeling your own attitude and behavior when it comes to handling such things as alcohol, you will be able to set a good example to your kids and raise responsible adults. Now to address the issue of alcohol, in the home, you can use the following tips to help you advise your child about drinking alcohol and to reduce the chances of your kid taking to alcohol either for recreational purposes or as an alcoholic.

Establish open communication with the child.

This is a long term goal that you should consistently work on for it to become effective. The relationship you have with your child will allow them to either keep their thoughts about serious issues such as alcohol to themselves or it will allow them to share their feelings with you. It is therefore important that you raise your kids in such a way that they are able to talk to you about anything honestly. This call for you pay attention to what they tell you and to acknowledge their point of view before offering your advice or direction. Do not belittle their ideas.

Conduct extensive research yourself.

In as much as schools offer advice to the children about the dangers of alcohol addiction, it is important that you provide clear advice and create awareness in your home as well. This therefore means that you have to conduct thorough research before you talk to your child about alcohol in the home. You can get this information on the internet, books, journals and other media outlets.

Draw the line on issues pertaining to alcohol in the home.

It is important that you establish some rules within the home for your family. The guidelines should be clear and realistic expectations from your children. This means that these rules should have consequences which will be consistently enforced should they be flouted.

Show your kids that you care about them.

There are many teenagers who turn to alcohol because they feel unloved. Moreover, some feel that they are not listened to. In order to avoid this, you should spend as much time with your kids as possible. One on one time is crucial since they will feel loved. This will therefore create an emotionally stable child.

Be a role model to your family.

Children most times observe what their parents do than what they are told. Therefore, you should set an example for the family that the children can emulate. This will ensure that the children are raised in a good environment and they will have lower chances of taking alcohol.

Teach your children healthy ways to address stress

When your kids know how to manage stress and peer pressure, they are able to resist the

urge to engage in drinking.

These are some of the things that will help you to talk to your child about alcohol.

Essential Nutrients For Kids

A proper diet will ensure that your children grow to be strong and healthy even in their old age. It is for this reason that as a parent or guardian, investing in the right kind of food and in the right quantities is a must. You require knowledge in the nutrition in order to provide the right amounts of nutrients for their proper development. There are several different types of nutrients available and some of the essential nutrients for your children include;

Proteins.

Proteins is an energy giving nutrient that is contributes immensely in building the cells your child's body, fight infection and assist the body to carry oxygen in the body. Some of the types of food that contain high levels of protein include meat, poultry, fish, eggs, nuts, beans and dairy products.

Carbohydrates.

Some of the health magazines recommend the cutting of carbohydrates from the diet. This is not only impractical but is also unhealthy. This is because carbohydrates provide the body a major source of energy. It is the carbohydrates that help the body to use fat and protein for building and repairing the body tissue. There are several types of carbohydrates including starch, fiber and sugar. For children however, they should consume more of starch and fiber and not sugar. This is because sugar leads to Weight gain and may lead to obesity. Some of the foodstuffs that contain carbohydrates include bread, rice, cereals, pasta and potatoes.

Fats.

This type of nutrients provide a great source of energy for children and they are easily stored in the body. They help the body to use some of the other nutrients that are available. Some of the foods that contain fats include cooking oils, meat, fish and nuts.

Calcium.

For the healthy formation of strong bones and teeth, calcium is an essential nutrient. Moreover, calcium plays an important role in blood clotting and for the function of important body organs such as the nerves, muscle and the heart. Calcium is contained in ice cream, yoghurt, egg yolk, cheese, spinach and broccoli.

Iron.

The body needs to efficiently carry oxygen throughout the body for proper functioning to take place. Iron is the nutrient that is use to produce blood and it helps the blood to carry oxygen to the rest of the body. Some of the foods that contain a lot of iron include liver, shellfish, nuts, whole grains, red meat and iron-fortified cereals.

Folate.

This nutrient is important for the healthy growth and development of the kid's cells. This is the nutrient that prevents anemia in children. Some of the foods include lentils, chickpeas, asparagus and spinach.

Vitamins.

Vitamins play a crucial role to the health of your child. Vitamin A is important for the eyes, healthy skin and infection prevention. Some good sources of vitamin A include carrots, apricots, fish oils, squash and sweet potatoes. Vitamin C helps in fighting the common cold, strengthening the blood vessels and helps the body to heal wounds. Some of the foods include strawberries, tomatoes, melons, cabbage.

Fiber is also another important nutrient and it can be gotten from chickpeas, kidney beans, seeds and nuts. It reduces chances of heart disease and cancer.

Healthy Drinks For Kids

In a society where we are consistently bombarded with images of products that is guaranteed to stimulate, boost, nurture, soothe and strengthen your children, it is important that we know what indeed is good for your children and what is not. You skip the drinks aisle entirely since there is very little that is good for your child there. I will explain. Some of the drinks that you should not buy for your child include;

Artificially colored drinks.

These drinks are enticingly colored at the store. Although the dyes that are used to make these drinks are permitted, the drinks are not healthy. Firstly, the high amounts of sugar in the drinks may cause your children to be hyperactive and may also cause weight gain in your children. These drinks should not be included in your budget.

Sports drinks.

Many of these drinks are labeled as being able to energize, strengthen and increase the physical prowess of the person who consumes it. These drinks are meant for athletes who need to replace the electrolytes that they have lost. Children do not need to replace these electrolytes since they do not conduct strenuous exercises. Moreover, the high sugar levels cause weight gain.

Juices,

Yes, even the organic juice or 100% natural juice is not the best for your children. This is because when such juices are made, the fruits are stripped of the fiber and other nutrients. This essentially leaves some vitamins and lots of liquid sugars in the juices. This is not ideal since the liquid sugars are absorbed and processed in the body in the same way as the regular sugar. This therefore adds unnecessary calories for your child.

So you may ask, what kind of drinks then should my child drink? This is the good part. The best drinks for your child to drink is;

Water.

One of the best thing you can do to make your child healthy is to inculcate a preference for water over the other artificially sweetened drinks. This is because water has several benefits compared to the other types of drinks. Firstly, water has zero calories to the body. This attribute in itself reduces the chances of your child gaining weight by a substantial amount. Thus your child can drink as much water as they would like. Moreover, water improves the metabolism in the body and helps to keep the skin looking radiant. Moreover, it makes the skin look young. That is a beauty secret right there from your children!

Milk.

Milk has for a long time been the classic drink that children take. It is important that you provide whole milk for your kid since it contains more nutrients that are helpful for the young one. Avoid skin milk since it does not provide as much health benefits as whole milk. Moreover, skim milk is heavily processed. There are several varieties of milk that you can introduce to your children that are still healthy. This may range from almond

milk, soy milk and rice milk.

Even as you offer milk, be sure to sub in water in between the meals.

Get Your Kids Involved

When you are introducing and maintaining a healthy lifestyle in your home, you should involve your kids in healthy living. When you involve the kids in healthy living, they are certain to adopt it as a lifestyle even in the old age. They may even pass on the healthy eating down generations. Wink. In order to do this, it is important that the children are involved in every stage of the preparation of the healthy meals. It does not have to be every meal but it should be a consistent thing kind of like a family tradition. This will encourage them to practice this even if you are not around. Some of the things you can do to encourage your children to participate in healthy eating include;

Teach you kids the divided plate concept.

The portion sizes for the children play a crucial role to weight control in children. It is important that your children get to know how much is too much for them. This will guide them on how to eat the right portion sizes. The divided plate method is whereby the plate is divided into four equal parts. One of the upper parts should contain a protein, the other upper part should contain a starch or carbohydrate and the two lower parts should contain vegetables. Moreover, you can associate the portion sizes to things that the children can understand such as tennis balls. These tips will help your children to eat the tight portion sizes.

Involve your kids in the food preparation process.

In order for your child to find healthy eating interesting, you should involve them in the cooking process for the food. You can do this by encouraging them to help in the kitchen. They can help by washing the vegetables, measuring the food amounts, peeling the potatoes or even slicing up the fruits. When your kids volunteer, do not refuse their help in the kitchen. Instead, provide a secure environment for them to help around safely. You can use a stool to allow them to reach the sink and see what you are doing this will help.

Making shopping for healthy food a fun activity.

When you go out shopping for groceries, encourage the kids to go with you. This therefore means that you should select an appropriate time when the kids can be able to go with you to the grocery store. You can play games such as “I spy” to identify the various grocery sections in the store. This will make healthy shopping fun. Moreover, you should regularly allow them to pick a new fruit or vegetable for the whole family to try. This will encourage them to engage their sense of smell, sight and taste thus allow you to introduce a wider variety of healthy foods in your home.

Make mealtimes fun.

When meal times are fun, children will look forward to them. Introduce colorful healthy foods and games after the meals to make the experience more fun. This will make the children conscious about meal times. They will even be reminding you! Ensure that electronic devices are off to help the kids to maintain their focus when eating. These tips will guarantee your kids involvement and make healthy eating a family tradition.

Conclusion

The world is facing a crisis with an increasing number of overweight and obese teenagers and children. This therefore means that we have to take deliberate steps in order to take control of this situation. There has been extensive research in the healthcare industry that regards weight control and proper diet for the young members of society. This is because it has been found out that the eating behaviors begin from when people are children. This means that if a child is taught how to eat healthy when they are young, they will carry on with this behavior when they are older and even into their adulthood. There are several issues that this book has covered. In summary some of the issues in healthy eating for children include;

For picky eaters, exercise patience and take appropriate action to encourage your child to eat healthy. This is because for picky eaters, you should reduce the amount of juices that they drink in between meals. This is because when children take lots of juice in between meals, they will tend to be fuller during meals thus become picky eaters. Moreover, introduce new food slowly to ensure that they are eventually embraced and preferred by the children without the risk of causing anxiety during meal times.

When it comes to the right portions for the children, it is important that you regulate the amount of food that your kid takes in one sitting. This is because large portions cause an excess of calories in the body. These calories are then converted to fat in their bodies. This is a major cause of overweight and obese children in the world. It is good that you teach your kids about the right portions of food. Do not force your kids to finish their plates of food. This is because this may cause them to associate food with stressful situations. In their adulthood therefore, they may do stress eating thus become overweight or even obese.

We cannot overlook the importance of snacks for children. Snacks keep the children's energy up in between the meals thus ensuring that they keep their productivity on a high. It is important that you prepare healthy snacks for your children. When you provide snacks, fruit snacks are some of the best for your children. Do not allow your kids to eat processed snacks such as potato chips. Instead introduce healthier options such as healthy dips and dried peaches.

Another important issue that parents face is the issue of alcohol. Many parents have expressed anxiety on how to address the issue of alcohol in their homes. Some of the tips include establishing an open communication with your children that will allow them to share with you honestly. Secondly is to set realistic expectations for your child about alcohol. This will set the boundaries which when crossed have consequences.

Healthy living is a fun activity that you can encourage your family to adopt. This will ensure that your family members will live healthier, more fulfilling lives. Go healthy today!

Thank you for reading this book on how to help your kids eat healthier.

I hope you found it useful and would be very happy if you could post a review to let me know your thoughts about the book. Best regards – The Author

Table of Contents

[Introduction: The importance of making your kids eat healthy](#)

[Chapter 1. How To Feed A Picky Eater](#)

[Chapter 2. Ideal Portion Sizes For Kids](#)

[Chapter 3. Proper Snacks For Childhood Weight Control](#)

[Chapter 4. Vitamins For Children](#)

[Chapter 5. How To Talk To Your Child About Alcohol](#)

[Chapter 6. Essential Nutrients For Kids](#)

[Chapter 7. Healthy Drinks For Kids](#)

[Chapter 8. Get Your Kids Involved](#)

[Chapter 9. Conclusion](#)