



A cooking and nutrition Fact Sheet

August 2010

Feeding My Preschooler

Just try it!

It is very normal for young children to refuse some foods. Here are some ways to help your child accept different tastes and textures:

- Offer a new food along with a familiar food.
- Offer new foods first, at the beginning of a meal, when your child is most hungry.
- Let your child see you tasting and enjoying new foods.
- Ask your child to taste the new food.
- Allow your child to spit out a food she doesn't like.
- Try avoiding labeling foods as "foods he likes" and "foods he doesn't like".
- Keep trying! It might take 12 times before your child accepts a new food.

Physically active kids...

- stay healthy
- learn good habits early in life
- have a positive outlet for their natural energy
- support healthy minds
- struggle less with maintaining a healthy weight

Family Meals

Family meals help to create strong family bonds. Families feel more connected to each other when they eat together.

Make family mealtimes fun!

- Keep it simple.
- Enjoy positive table talk.
- Listen to your children.
- Turn off the T.V., radio, computer and phones.
- Remember, kids love to eat what they help to cook! Make preparing the meal a family affair.



2-year olds can:	3-year olds can:	4- to 5- year olds can:
wash veggies and fruit	add ingredients	peel bananas
tear lettuce	stir	peel hard-boiled eggs
wipe tables	spread peanut butter	measure dry foods
place things in trash	name and count foods	set the table



Prevent choking!

All children are at risk for choking, but children under the age of 4 years are more likely to choke because they:

- Like to put objects in their mouths.
- Have narrow throats or airways.
- Cannot chew as well as older children - may not have a full set of teeth.

Foods that may cause choking:

Hot dogs and sausages
Tough meat
Chunks of meat or cheese
Thick “globs” of peanut butter
Nuts and seeds

Large pieces of raw fruits and vegetables
Carrot sticks or baby carrots
Cherry tomatoes
Whole grapes
Raisins

Hard or sticky candy
Chewing gum
Marshmallows
Popcorn
Chips

The Sweet Tooth

It may seem impossible to get your kid to like broccoli but convincing them to eat sweets is as easy as pie. Kids just tend to like sugary foods.

Unfortunately, too much sugar can cause cavities and weight problems in small children. Here are some tips to enjoy sweets in moderation:

- **You’ve heard it before - out of sight, out of mind - the same thing is true for sweets!**
- **Enjoy eating smaller servings of sweet foods every once in a while.**
- **Offer nutritious snacks with a sweet taste.**
- **Consider sweet drinks such as soda and fruit drinks as sometimes foods - not for every day - and save caffeinated drinks for adults!**
- **Limit fruit juice to 6 ounces or less each day - eat a piece of fruit instead.**



Eat Safe

- Cut foods into small pieces - no larger than ½ inch.
- Cook vegetables until slightly soft.
- Spread nut butters thinly
- Have your child sit while eating; stay with them until they are finished.
- Show your child how to chew and swallow small amounts of food.

Contact Us

Visit www.msuextension.org/nep for more information.

Nutrition Education Programs
SNAP-Ed / EFNEP

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