

Tips for Childhood

SUPPORTING YOUR GROWING CHILD

Many caregivers wonder if their child is growing too much or not enough. It is normal for children to go through periods of fast growth followed by a slow down. Use these tips to help support your child's growing body and create a lifetime of healthy habits.

Work Together at Mealtimes

When caregivers do their part with feeding, children can do their part with eating.

Your Role

What foods are served

Include 1 or 2 foods your child enjoys but do not make separate dishes.

When meals are offered

Provide meals and snacks at regular times.

Where your child eats

Make mealtimes positive and family friendly.

Your Child's Role

Whether to eat

Choose from the foods you serve.

How much to eat

Eat how much they want without pressure.

Learn to eat

Enjoy meals and eat well for their bodies.



You might worry your child will eat too much or not enough. Children have strong cues that tell them when they are hungry or full. Trust that your child will practice balance over time.

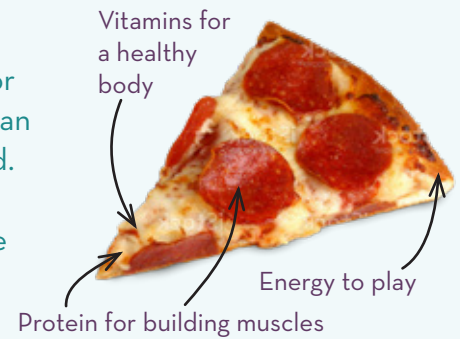
Offer Foods Without Pressure

The following mealtime tips can help your child eat mindfully and reduce stress around food.



Include a variety of foods in your child's diet to provide energy for learning and playing.

Avoid labeling foods as "good" or "bad." All foods can nourish your child. Forbidding foods makes them more appealing.



Avoid judgment or pressure on how much your child eats. It is normal for your child to eat more during growth spurts.

Try offering treat foods as part of meals rather than serving them separately. Children might eat more at first, but the food will become less desirable over time.



Support Your Child's Body Image

Help your child build confidence and accept their body, no matter their size.



Talk less about how your child looks and more about what makes them special. Praise their artistic skills, bravery, humor and kindness.



Set a good example by enjoying foods in a nonjudgmental way. Your child pays attention to how you talk about your body and what you eat.



Encourage your child to move in fun ways that they enjoy. Join them as they move, jump and dance!

If you have questions about how your child is growing, talk with your child's health care provider or WIC nutritionist. WIC is here to help.



Scan here to learn more about raising a healthy eater.



This institution is an equal opportunity provider.
© 2023 All rights reserved. Stock no. 13-06-16717 Rev. 3/23