Helping Your Child Maintain a Healthy Weight

In the United States, at least one child in five is overweight and the number continues to grow. Overweight children are at risk of becoming overweight adolescents and adults. This can lead to health related problems such as heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure and some forms of cancer.

Most of what your child eats depends on what you bring home from the market. Instead of selecting pre-packaged, sugary or high fat foods, choose foods that are low in fat and high in fiber.

Here are a few helpful Do’s and Don’ts:

- Don’t make your child eat when he or she isn’t hungry.
- Don’t use food (especially dessert) to give comfort or as a reward.
- Do offer a variety of healthy foods.
- Do involve your child in food shopping and preparation, making mealtime a pleasant experience.
- Don’t eat at fast food restaurants more than once a week.
- Do limit watching TV and encourage movement and activity.
- Do be your child’s best example by moving regularly and maintaining a healthy diet yourself.

Source: University of Vermont Extension

Banana Walnut Oatmeal
Makes two 2-cup servings

Ingredients:
1 cup non-fat milk
3/4 cup water
1 cup quick oats
1 banana, mashed
1 tablespoon pure maple syrup
1 tablespoon chopped walnuts
Additional maple syrup to taste

Directions:
1) In a saucepan over medium heat, combine milk and water; heat until almost boiling.
2) Add oats and cook 1 to 2 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3) Remove pan from heat and stir in banana and 1 tablespoon of maple syrup.
4) Divide between two bowls. Garnish with walnuts and a little more maple syrup. Serve.

Nutrition Facts:
280 Calories (per serving);
3.5g Total Fat; 5mg Cholesterol;
70mg Sodium; 6g Dietary Fiber;
22g Sugars; 11g Protein.

Source: University of Vermont Extension
**Division of Responsibility in Feeding**

Children are born wanting to eat, knowing how much to eat and will grow in the way that nature intended. Understanding the Division of Responsibility in Feeding will help your child to eat well and grow to be the person they are meant to be.

- **Parents responsibilities:**
  - Choose and prepare the food
  - Provide regular meals and snacks
  - Make eating times pleasant
  - Teach children about food and mealtime behavior
  - Not let children graze for food or beverages between times
  - Let children grow up to get bodies that are right for them

- **Children’s responsibilities:**
  - Children will eat
  - They will eat the amount they need
  - They will eat an increasing variety of food
  - They will grow predictably
  - They will learn to behave well at the table

For a further explanation of the Division of Responsibility in Feeding, visit EllynSatter.com.

*Lisa McCoy, MS, RDN, Extension Educator, FCS-Healthy Living*

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**Kids in the Kitchen**

Kids love to help prepare food, and like to eat the foods they make.

What kids can do depends on their age.

- Two year olds can scrub veggies & fruits, tear lettuce and snap beans.
- Three year olds can help put spreads on bread, shake & stir and pour liquids.
- Four and five year olds can beat eggs, measure dry & liquid ingredients, mash potatoes and roll cookie dough.

Be prepared for a messy kitchen! It’s part of learning.

Letting them help in the kitchen encourages them to eat a variety of foods.

Source: Eating Smart Being Active Cookbook

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**Design—A—Parachute**

Make a parachute out of a plastic shopping bag, yarn, a paper cup and scissors.

- Cut a circle out of the grocery bag (use a large dinner plate to draw the circle).
- Cut your string into four even pieces, each one about 12 inches long.
- Make a small hole on four corners of the circle and tie a piece of string to each hole.
- Tie the other ends of the strings to a small weight. Be sure the strings aren’t tangled!

You can test your parachutes by dropping it with eggs. (Or, if you are inside you may want to test it using something else, like pennies!)

Source: Eating Smart Being Active Cookbook

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**Newsletter prepared by:**

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The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) helps families. Eat better, Feel better, and Cut food costs. To find out more about EFNEP contact:

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http://pbskids.org/zoom/activities/sci/parachute.html