

# Planning Leads to Success



Planning for feeding will help you and your family have a stress-free experience.

Ask yourself these questions:

- What foods do I need to prepare meals and snacks? (Include a variety of healthy foods.)
- What do I need to buy? (Always write a shopping list.)
- When will I offer meals?
- When will I offer snacks?
- Where will we eat? What room will we eat in?
- What habits of mine do I want to pass on to my children? (Children will copy good and bad habits.)
- What traditions do I want to pass on to my children?
- What foods will I offer at each meal and snack?
- What drinks will I offer at each meal and snack?
- What rules will I set for my children?



*This project has been funded, at least in part, with federal funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the view or policies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. government.*

*In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.*

# Prepare Food and Serve it



Preparing and serving meals and snacks can be hard for you. You probably have a lot to do every day.

Sometimes it is very tempting to let your child decide what you will serve. Sometimes it just seems easier to serve something that is quick but not very healthy, or to pick up fast food. When you take the easy way out, you put your child in control. You also spend more money than you need to, and you do not serve what your child needs to be healthy.

Here are some ideas for quick, healthy meals:

- Soup and a sandwich
- Tuna salad on crackers and fruit
- Noodles and frozen or canned vegetables
- Macaroni and cheese and applesauce

Many quick foods are healthier and cheaper than fast foods. Just remember to include these foods on your shopping list.



## **If It Is on the Table, It Is for Everyone to Enjoy**

If you put food on the table, then let your child decide how much to eat. Remember, you served food that is safe and nutritious.

If you do not want your child to eat something, do not put it on the table and do not serve it to other family members. Do not make exceptions. It is important to be consistent when dealing with children.

## **Child-size Servings**

Child-size servings are small. Young children are overwhelmed if they see a lot on their plate. Put just a spoonful of food on your child's plate. He can get more of the food later. If your child can use a spoon, let him serve himself. Praise your child when he comes close to the right portion size. This way he will feel proud, and he will develop new skills.

*This project has been funded, at least in part, with federal funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the view or policies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. government.*

*In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.*

# Stress-free Feeding



You and your child have special jobs to make feeding a positive and stress-free experience. You should respect your child's ability to take care of his part of feeding. You also need to make sure you are doing your part.

## **Feeding Babies: You Provide and They Decide**

The jobs for parents and babies are easy:

- You provide breast milk or infant formula.
- They decide when and how much to have.

## **Feeding Toddlers and Older Children: The P's and C's**

The jobs for parents with older children are harder. Follow these rules to make the feeding experience easier for you and your child:

### **Parent's Jobs (the three P's)**

- Plan for positives.
- Prepare and put food on the table.
- Provide with patience.

### **Child's Jobs (the three C's)**

- Choose to eat.
- Choose what to eat.
- Choose how much to eat.



Imagine you are invited to a meal at a friend's home. The friend plans a menu, prepares the food and provides a nice setting for you. You go to your friend's home, and you are invited to sit at the table where an attractive meal is set out for you. You see some delicious familiar foods and some strange-looking foods.

- You choose if you want to eat.
- You choose what you want to eat.
- You choose how much you want to eat.

The choices are all up to you—the guest.

Allow your child to be a guest at meals and snacks. It will be a win-win situation for all involved. You and your child will be satisfied and feel good about the experience.

*This project has been funded, at least in part, with federal funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the view or policies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. government.*

*In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.*

# Feeding Toddlers and Preschoolers: Provide With Patience



Feeding your child well is hard work. It takes a lot of patience. The time and patience you give your child will pay off.

Sometimes you want to do what is easiest, but down the road it is not easier if it is not helping your child to grow well physically and emotionally. Children grow and develop at different rates. You do not want to rush this process. You want to support your child so he can develop skills and confidence. Supporting your child with patience will help you provide him with a stress-free eating experience.

## **Supporting Toddlers**

- Seat your toddler securely.
- Put him at the table with you or pull his high chair up to the table.
- Put safe and appropriate foods in front of him.
- Allow your toddler to begin serving himself as he is able.
- Sit with your toddler and eat with him.
- Cut food into small pieces he can handle.
- Help your toddler when he shows he needs help.
- Set limits. If your toddler throws food or pours milk on the floor, calmly end the meal for him. Also ask him to help clean up.



## Supporting Preschoolers

- Allow your preschooler to serve himself.
- Calmly teach him table manners, but remember that it takes time to develop these skills.
- Turn off the TV, phone and radio.
- Sit and eat with your preschooler at a table or counter.
- Model the behaviors you want to see him perform.
- Keep conversation pleasant.
- Help your preschooler when he asks for it.
- Serve your preschooler a variety of healthy meals and snacks.

*This project has been funded, at least in part, with federal funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the view or policies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. government.*

*In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.*

# Feeding Babies: Provide With Patience



Feeding your baby well is hard work. It takes a lot of patience. The time and patience you give your baby will pay off.

Sometimes you want to do what is easiest, but down the road it is not easier if it is not helping your baby to grow well physically and emotionally. Babies grow and develop at different rates. You do not want to rush this process. What you do want to do is support your baby so he can develop skills and confidence. Supporting your baby with patience will help you provide him with a stress-free eating experience.

## **Supporting Young Babies**

- Hold your baby securely.
- Feed him breast milk or infant formula only.
- Put a bib on him so you do not have to worry about wiping his mouth or chin as he feeds.
- Hold your baby so he can see your face.
- Pay close attention to him, but do not fuss with him too much.
- Be calm.
- Let him feed until he stops or shows signs of needing to take a break.



## Supporting Older Babies

- Continue to provide breast milk or infant formula.
- Provide opportunities at meals and snacks for your baby to use a cup.
- Sit directly in front of your baby when you are spoon-feeding solids.
- Provide safe and appropriate solids. Introduce only one new food each week.
- Pay close attention to your baby's cues and go at his pace when feeding him.
- Present each food calmly and positively, even if it is a food you do not like.
- Allow your baby to be messy. Set up the feeding area for messiness.
- Allow your baby to try feeding himself more as he is able.
- Sit and eat with your baby.

*This project has been funded, at least in part, with federal funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the view or policies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. government.*

*In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.*

# Tips for Stress-free Feeding



Planning, preparing and providing meals can become an unpleasant task. Mealtimes can increase your level of stress. Use the following tips so you and your family will have a more enjoyable feeding experience.

- Plan in advance what you will serve.
- Make a list before you leave and only shop for those items.
- Remember that healthy meals can be simple and quick.
- Set a schedule for meals and snacks. Follow it as closely as possible.
- Do not try to change everything at once. Changes take time.
- Sit at the table for meals and snacks. Turn off the TV, phone and radio.
- Start the meal in a positive way: say a blessing, talk about something good that happened during the day and say something nice about family members.



- Set rules for the table: no arguing, no complaining about the food and do not bring up problems.
- Decide how long your child needs to sit at the table—15 to 20 minutes is reasonable.
- Do not let your child return to the table once he leaves. If he chooses not to eat, ask him to sit and keep you company.
- Remember that your child knows when he is hungry and when he is full. Let him choose to eat and choose how much to eat.
- Remember that your job is to offer a variety of healthy foods. Your child will be cautious about trying new foods. Let him choose the foods he wants to eat.
- Be a good role model for your child.

*This project has been funded, at least in part, with federal funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the view or policies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. government.*

*In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.*

# Babies and Cups



Drinking from a cup is a big step for your baby. Take the time to teach your baby to drink from a cup.

## **When Is my Baby Ready to Drink From a Cup?**

Your baby can begin learning to drink from a cup when he is between 6 months old and 7 months old. He must be able to sit up well.

## **What Kind of Cup Should I Use?**

- He can learn to drink from an open cup.
- He will need your help.
- Give him sips slowly.
- Sit with your baby when he drinks.

## **What Should I Put in the Cup?**

- Start with water.
- Only put an ounce in the cup.
- Babies must learn to sip and drink—not just suck.
- Give him water until he can do this.
- Then, try breast milk or formula.
- Babies should not be given soda, sweet tea, sports drinks or other sweet drinks.



## **How Much Juice Should I Give my Baby?**

- Babies do not need juice.
- Babies need vitamin C, which they can get from fruit.
- If your baby is older than 6 months and does not eat fruit, 2 ounces to 4 ounces of vitamin C-fortified juice is enough.
- Babies do not digest juice well and may have diarrhea from drinking too much of it.
- Many babies drink too much juice and become picky eaters.

## **Can I Put my Baby Down to Sleep with a Bottle or a Cup?**

Never put your baby to bed with a bottle or a cup. This may cause him to have cavities and ear infections.

*This project has been funded, at least in part, with federal funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the view or policies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. government.*

*In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.*

# Toddlers and Beverages



It is important to help your family be healthy. Giving your toddler beverages can help him stay healthy.

## **What Kind of Cup Should I Give my Toddler?**

- Your toddler should drink from an open cup.
- He does not need a cup with a spout.
- Extended use of baby bottles or cups with spouts can cause cavities and problems learning to talk.
- If you have to use a cup with a lid, use one with a straw.

## **What Beverages Should I Give my Toddler?**

- Toddlers need milk and water.
- Do not give him soda, sweet tea, sports drinks or other sweet drinks.
- Between meals and snacks give him water to drink.
- Toddlers should sit to drink.



## Should I Give Juice to my Toddler?

- Toddlers do not have to drink juice.
- Toddlers need vitamin C, which they can get from fruit.
- If your toddler does not eat fruit, 4 ounces to 6 ounces of vitamin C-fortified juice is enough.
- Toddlers may get diarrhea from drinking too much juice.
- Many toddlers drink too much juice and become picky eaters.
- Most juice boxes contain 9 ounces of juice—more than your child should have in a whole day.

*This project has been funded, at least in part, with federal funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the view or policies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. government.*

*In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.*

# Picky Eaters



Many young children are picky eaters. Feeding a picky eater can be frustrating. Use the following lists to help your child change from a picky eater to a good eater.

## Plan

DO	DO NOT
Plan menus for meals and snacks and shop ahead of time.	Rely on fast food.
Schedule meals and snacks.	Allow your child to grab what he wants whenever he wants it.
Offer new foods and previously refused foods.	Serve only the foods you know your child likes.
Make a family rule to eat meals and snacks at the table.	Allow your child to take food to other rooms in your house.
Keep water available for your child to drink between meals and snacks.	Allow your child to drink juice or other sweetened beverages between meals and snacks.



## Prepare

DO	DO NOT
Prepare the same meal for the whole family. Make sure there is something in the meal your child will usually eat.	Get up and prepare something else if your child is not eating what you served.
Turn off the TV and have pleasant conversation with your child.	Allow distractions, such as letting your child eat in front of the TV.
Allow your child to help make the food and set the table.	Miss an opportunity to teach your child new skills.

## Provide

DO	DO NOT
Let your child serve and feed himself.	Worry too much about neatness or your child making a mess.
Present new foods positively and eat them yourself.	Pressure or force your child to eat.
Allow your child to touch and smell foods.	Expect your child to accept new foods right away.
Teach your child table manners—to say “Please,” “Thank you” and “No, thank you.”	Allow whining, crying, begging or complaining at the table.
Sit and eat with your child.	Have your child eat without a parent or caregiver.

*This project has been funded, at least in part, with federal funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the view or policies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. government.*

*In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.*