



# EAT

Family Style Dining



**N** Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources  
NEBRASKA EXTENSION



## Videos to support Eat Family Style Dining



# WELCOME!

Visit this site for accompanying videos: <https://cehs.unl.edu/cyaf/eat-family-style-at-home/>

The Ecological Approach to (EAT) family style dining curriculum is based on best practices for using family style dining and responsive feeding developed from research and recommended guidelines for early care environments.

This program will help you to evaluate what you are doing well in using these best practices and where there is room for improvement. The information gained over the next 16 weeks can assist you and your director in planning healthy changes in the area of meal service and general nutrition practices at your center.

The EAT curriculum includes 7 interactive, online lessons. Each lesson takes approximately 1-2 hours to complete. Throughout the lessons, you will watch short videos and learn simple strategies to empower yourself to practice family style dining, implement responsive feeding and transform your mealtime into the most enjoyable part of the day!

You will be provided a coach to help guide you through the lessons and to help answer any questions that you might have along the way. After each of the 7 lessons, your coach will assist you in setting goals and selecting strategies to implement into your classroom. You will need to meet with your coach every other week (via Zoom) for approximately 1 hour.



REGISTER AS A USER  
FOR ACCESS TO EAT  
FSD LESSONS

MEET WITH YOUR  
COACH AND COMPLETE  
PRE-EVALUATION

COMPLETE LESSONS  
AND PRACTICE  
WHAT YOU LEARNED  
IN YOUR CLASSROOM







EDUCATION



LESSON ONE

# Role Modeling

“ They learn from watching you! Eat healthy foods and the kids will too! ”

# Role Modeling Objectives Notes Page

**Instructions:** Use the notes page to take notes that will support you in implementing concepts you learned in the lesson into your child care program.

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

1. Define and describe the benefits of role modeling healthy eating
2. Develop policies and goals that can be used to introduce role modeling into your own childcare facility
3. Apply role modeling concepts to assess common mealtime scenarios and overcome barriers

**OBJECTIVE 1.** What is role modeling healthy eating?

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**OBJECTIVE 2.** Describe the advantages of modeling healthy eating.

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**OBJECTIVE 3.** Identify the six tips for modeling healthy eating.

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2	
3	
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5	
6	

**OBJECTIVE 4.** List the four phrases that help and hinder modeling healthy eating.

1	
2	
3	
4	

**OBJECTIVE 5.** Find solutions to overcome the barriers for modeling healthy eating in your child care program.

BARRIER	STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME BARRIER

**OBJECTIVE 6.** Select sample policy language options below to suggest to your director what might be included in your parent handbook to support healthy role modeling goals.

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## Healthy Role Modeling Policy Suggestions

Sit at the table with the children at mealtime.

Eat the same foods as the children at mealtime.

At mealtime, eat the same food at least twice in front of the children.

Physically prompt children to try food by moving the bowl towards the child's line of sight.

Being positive about the foods served to children, even if you dislike them.

Repeatedly exposing children to a variety of foods.

# Strategies to Model Healthy Eating at Mealtime

What you say to the children at mealtime really matters!

## 1. Make Specific Comments.

A specific statement describing the taste and texture of the food helps point out the sensory qualities of the food. These statements encourage children to explore and try new foods and help children learn new vocabulary to describe foods.

## 2. Be Enthusiastic!

By being excited about healthy eating, children will become motivated to try different foods.

## 3. Make Specific Comments and Ask Questions.

A specific statement describing the taste and texture of the food helps point out its sensory qualities. These statements encourage children to explore, try new foods and learn new vocabulary to describe foods.

## 4. Use absolute comments by pairing a food at mealtime with its health benefit.

When offering a food to the child, pair it with its health benefit to encourage children to try the food for the list below. For example, "I drink milk because it makes my bones and muscles strong."

### Instead of This

I like to try new foods.

Fruit is good at breakfast.

Fruit is okay.

Broccoli is good.

These carrots are hard.

Some vegetables have seeds.

These strawberries taste delicious when dipped in chocolate.

I like soy milk more than milk.

### Say This

I've never had pineapple before, but I love sweet fruit and can't wait to taste it!

These mangoes look tender and juicy!

Mmm! I love bananas!

Cooked broccoli is delicious!

Do you hear the carrots crunch?

What do you see inside the cucumbers? Do the seeds of the cucumber or the grape peels taste different?

These strawberries have a bright red color and are so sweet and juicy! They give us energy!

I drink milk because it makes my bones and teeth strong!

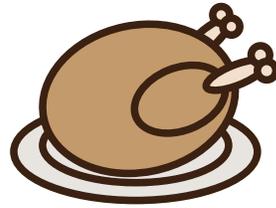
The following are examples of phrases for pairing foods with their health benefit.



## Grains

The grain group includes wheat, rice, oats, bread and pasta.

**Health Tip:** Make at least half of your grains whole grains.



## Protein

The protein group includes meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, beans, lentils, soy products, nuts and seeds.

**Health Tip:** Go lean with protein.

### Health Benefit Phrases

- Grains will give you energy!
- Helps you move!
- Helps you learn!
- Helps you run fast!
- Helps you jump high!

### Health Benefit Phrases

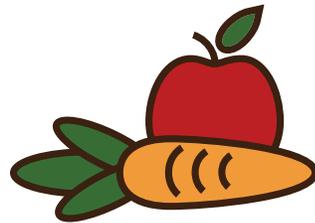
- Helps you grow!
- Helps you jump high and run fast!
- Helps you build muscles!
- Helps you move!
- Helps you learn!



## Dairy

The dairy group includes milk, milk products like cheese and yogurt, and milk substitutes like soy milk and almond milk.

**Health Tip:** Choose fat-free or low fat milk, yogurt and cheese.



## Fruits and Vegetables

The fruit and vegetable group includes all forms of fruits and vegetables from fresh, frozen and canned.

**Health Tip:** Make at least half your plate fruits and vegetables.

### Health Benefit Phrases

- Makes bones strong!
- Helps build muscle!
- Helps you move!

### Health Benefit Phrases

- Make you feel good!
- Keep you from getting sick!
- Are good for your skin and will make your hair shiny!
- Are good for your heart!
- Protect the body from disease!



Role modeling is ideal for encouraging healthy eating habits and also offers many opportunities for learning other skills such as table manners and fine- and gross-motor skills.

## Sample Letter to Parent

Dear Parent-

Please help us support your child's development of healthy habits. As part of a larger healthy eating initiative we ask that you please select or prepare a healthy food options that your child enjoys to bring with your child to the center as part of their birthday celebration.

We are excited to be part of your child's birthday recognition and want to model healthy eating practices to each day. Recommendations for healthier options might include:



- Your child's favorite fruits arranged in a rainbow order or as a favorite cartoon character
- Lower fat baked goods (ex. mini muffins), pre-school size
- Favorite dishes that aren't necessarily desserts- snack type items may work best, like frozen yogurt tubes
- Foods with special family or cultural significance
- Healthy foods cut into fun shapes or as a fruit kabob

You may also want to consider celebrating your child's birthday with favorite stories, music, games, or activities. We encourage you to set up a time to come to the center to read your child's favorite book as part of the birthday celebration.

Often the most important thing to your child is that you took the time to help plan something special. Please talk with the Director if you have questions or need ideas. We know that it's hard to break old habits like cake, ice cream, and candy, but give it a try, your child will be open to trying something new!

Adapted from NAP SACC Program content.

[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/healthymichigan/Nutrition\\_and\\_Physical\\_Activity\\_Policy\\_Examples\\_397973\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/healthymichigan/Nutrition_and_Physical_Activity_Policy_Examples_397973_7.pdf).









LESSON TWO

# Peer Modeling

“ They learn from watching their peers!  
When their peers try different foods,  
the kids will too! ”

# Peer Modeling Objectives Notes Page

**Instructions:** Use the notes page to take notes that will support you in implementing concepts you learned in the lesson into your child care program.

At the end of this lesson you will be able to:

1. Define and describe the benefits of peer modeling healthy eating
2. Develop practice and goals that can be used to introduce role modeling into your own childcare facility
3. Apply peer modeling concepts to assess common mealtime scenarios and overcome barriers

**OBJECTIVE 1.** Describe peer modeling as a strategy to encourage healthy eating in children

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**OBJECTIVE 2.** Identify the advantages of peer modeling.

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**OBJECTIVE 3.** Apply tips for practicing peer modeling at mealtime.

**OBJECTIVE 4.** Choose different ways in which you can use peer modeling at mealtime.

<b>1</b>	
<b>2</b>	
<b>3</b>	

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**OBJECTIVE 5.** Identify and apply strategies for managing food refusal and picky eating

BARRIER	STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME BARRIER

**OBJECTIVE 6.** Choose different ways in which you can use peer modeling at mealtime.

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**OBJECTIVE 7.** Select peer modeling goals for the week.

<b>GOAL 1</b>	
<b>GOAL 2</b>	
<b>GOAL 3</b>	



The child may be more likely to try a food if their peer offers to try them.

## Peer Modeling Planning Steps for Mealtime:

1. Arrange the mealtime seating so that a child who does not like to try different foods is partnered with those who like trying different foods. Mix ages and genders if possible.
2. Ask children what they think of the food, particularly those children who try a variety of foods.
3. Praise a child who has tried new foods
  - a. **Praise the Action** - (task-oriented response from the teacher). For example, "Good job trying vegetables!" rather than, "Good job!" (Vague, general response).
  - b. **Praise Selectively** - Praise children for trying new foods that they have not tried before or don't like. Praise a peer model for trying a target food that another child at the table has not tried. Avoid praising children for trying foods that they already like.
  - c. **Avoid Praising Children for Cleaning their Plate** - If praised for finishing their food, children might ignore their fullness cues and overeat.
4. Ask a child who has not eaten the food to try it.

Instead of this (Vague)	Try This (Task-Oriented)
Good Job Bella!	Good job trying mangoes, Bella! Would you like to try some Max?
It makes me happy when you eat your fruits and vegetables.	Khaleel, I see you put some mandarin oranges on your plate. Max would you like to try them too?
Sarah ate all her vegetables. Good girl.	Good job trying broccoli, Max. How does it taste? Would you like to try some broccoli too, Bella? Tell us if it is crunchy or soft.
Max, all your friends are having milk. Why don't you try some milk too?	I see you are drinking milk, Bella. Milk makes our bones strong! Max would you like to try some milk too?

5. During family-style dining, teach peer models to ask, "Would you like to try some (name of the food)?" while offering the food to another child. The child may be more likely to try a food if their peer offers it to them.

Girl peer models are more effective than boy peer models at increasing food acceptance for observing children. Studies show that the greater the number of bites a girl peer model takes of her assigned food, the more bites the observing children have of that food.

Peer modeling is an effective strategy to encourage other children to try new foods and eat fruits and vegetables. Continued exposure to peer modeling is needed to be most effective.

**Refer to the chart to the right to help children eat new foods, eat healthy foods and avoid picky eating.**

## Managing Food Refusal

When a child refuses food, try these strategies:

### 1. Teach the child to refuse food politely.

- » When a child dislikes a certain food, tell them to refuse in a polite way by using phrases like "No, thank you," or "Maybe next time." Teach the child that they are not forced to eat, but they can refuse in a manner that will not discourage other children from trying the same food.

**2. Use intentional language with a child who refuses food.**

- » If a child has tried a specific food before and said they do not like it, respond with, "You do not like it yet. The next time you try it you might like it." This acknowledges that you understand that the child does not like the food but also encourages them to consider it again.

**3. Offer the child with two food choices.**

- » If a child refuses an offered food item, you can suggest another food choice. For example, if peas and carrots are available and a child refuses the peas, ask them, "Would you like some carrots?"

**4. Teach the child that everyone has likes and dislikes.**

- » Using phrases such as "Everyone likes different foods, don't they?" or "Which one is your favorite?" helps the child feel like they are making a choice. This takes away the pressure to try every food, and they will be more likely to try it next time. Feeling pressure to eat the food can lead to unhealthy attitudes about food or self.

**5. Use modeling healthy eating as an alternative to pressure and restriction.**

### Instead of this (Pressure, Restriction)

**Pressure to Eat**  
"Even if you don't like it, you have to take a no-thank-you bite."

**Pressure to Eat**  
"Come on, be brave, try one bite for mommy."  
"Can you put a tiny bit on your plate. Just try it, please."

**Restriction**  
"You won't get more crackers if you don't eat your veggies."

**Restriction**  
"You can't have so many cookies. It's not good for you."  
"No more candy for you. It will hurt your stomach."

### Try This (Gently Encourage)

**Model Healthy Eating**  
Children take the lead from you. Try different foods and the kids will eat them, too.

**Peer Modeling**  
Engage children's senses of sight, touch, and hearing as a step towards tasting the foods. (Refer to Lesson 3)

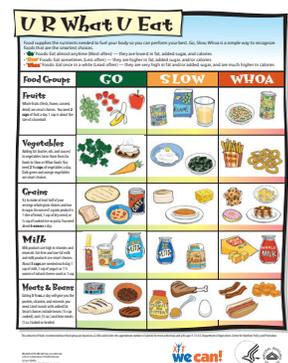
**Provide Repeated Exposure**  
Keep offering different foods to children. It might take multiple times before they try it.

**Teach children the three food categories (GO, SLOW and WHOA)**  
These help recognize foods that are better choices for a healthy body. GO foods should be eaten often; SLOW foods should be eaten sometimes; WHOA foods should be eaten sparingly.

## Parent Handouts

Share the following materials with parents to help guide them in learning more about nutrition concepts and peer modeling:

1. Behavioral Milestones for 2-5 year olds
2. Healthy Tips for Picky Eaters
3. U R What U Eat









EMOTIONAL AND RELATIONSHIPS



LESSON THREE

# SENSORY EXPLORATION

“ Children explore food through their sense of touch. They can feel different textures with their hands and tongue. ”

# Sensory Exploration Objectives Notes Page

**Instructions:** Use the note page to take notes you may find useful in your child care program.

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

1. Recognize the importance of engaging the children's senses
2. Develop goals that can be used to introduce sensory exploration into your own childcare facility
3. Apply sensory exploration concepts by using activities at meal and play time

**OBJECTIVE 1.** Describe how to engage children in sensory exploration about food.

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**OBJECTIVE 2.** Recognize the importance of engaging children's senses.

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**OBJECTIVE 3.** List the different ways for sensory exploration of food with sight.

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**OBJECTIVE 4.** Summarize the different ways to teach sensory exploration of food with touch.

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**OBJECTIVE 5.** Review the different ways for sensory exploration of food with smell.

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**OBJECTIVE 6.** Distinguish different ways for children to participate in the sensory exploration of food with hearing.

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**OBJECTIVE 7.** Illustrate different ways for sensory exploration of food with taste.

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**OBJECTIVE 8.** Indicate barriers for engaging children in sensory exploration in your child care program and write down strategies to address these barriers.

**BARRIER**

**STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME BARRIER**

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**BARRIER** (continued)**STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME BARRIER** (continued)


I'm still wondering about:

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## Putting it Together

### Children Love Exploring!

Engaging children in sensory exploration is a fun way of teaching children about nutrition. Doing so will get children to taste different foods. Young children have a natural desire to explore their environment, and tapping into this desire by helping them explore their senses with food will allow them to have a positive experience with trying new foods. Use the lesson below to lead your our sensory exploration in your classroom.

#### Find the fruit with the sense of touch

She first took a good look at the fruits and then closed her eyes and had me hand her over a fruit. Using just her **sense of touch she will name the fruit.**

Sometimes she has to use the texture of the skin and sometimes she has to use the shape and size to guess the fruit.

#### Find the fruit with the sense of smell.

We explored the fruit by simply smelling the fruit and the skin as well.



#### Talked about the Skin.

What fruits can be eaten with their skin? The kids tried to taste the orange and kiwi with their skin on and obviously went "ewww." On the other hand apple skins were extremely tasty. **We picked out the fruits with different skin color and the flesh color.** Watermelon would be a wonderful example for this.

#### Talked about the Seeds.

We **compared all the seeds.** Strawberry is the only fruit in the bin with seeds on the outside.

#### Vocabulary

I encouraged my preschooler to describe the fruits. How do they feel? How do they smell?

Great for **developing vocabulary.**

# Food Based Sensory Exploration

There are 5 basic senses:

1. Sight
2. Touch
3. Taste
4. Smell
5. Hearing

**Exploration of Senses:** When given food, encourage children to explore the food with their 5 senses. For example, give a piece of fruit to the children and engage children's senses by asking them to see, touch, smell, feel, and taste the fruits. Engaging children's senses helps them focus on the food and encourages them to try new foods. This can be done through mealtime conversations and interactions.

- **Colors:** red, yellow, blue, orange, green, purple, white. "This apple is a bright red color. But, apples can also be green or yellow."
- **Shapes:** round, oval, oblong, square, rectangle, triangle, long. "This zucchini is long and oblong shaped but we can cut it into round shapes or long strips."
- **Size:** big, small, little, large, tiny. "Look at these grapes! They are small compared to the pineapple slices."
- **Textures:** smooth, hard, rough, spiky, soft, crusty. "The surface of this pineapple looks rough and spiky. But it looks soft and juicy inside."
- **Consistency:** thick, runny, lumpy, watery, juicy. "The pineapple looks juicy," "the applesauce is runny and sweet today."

**Follow up questions to ask about food appearances:**

1. Does the \_\_\_\_\_ come in other colors?
2. Do the \_\_\_\_\_ you eat usually look like this?
3. How do these look at your house when you eat them? Are they cut, diced, cubed?

## Sensory Exploration of Food: Touch

1. **Feel the foods with fingers or mouth.** Encourage children to feel food with their fingers or tongue. This will help children determine the texture of food through different modes of touch.
2. **Teach vocabulary of different food textures.** Engage children in discussion based on food textures and teach them the vocabulary used to describe different food textures.
  - » Hummus is smooth and creamy.
  - » Raw carrots are hard and crunchy.
  - » Oranges are so juicy.
  - » This glass of milk feels cold.
  - » Soup in this bowl is thick and creamy.
  - » This slice of bread feels soft and spongy.
3. **Ask questions about different textures.** During your discussion, ask children questions about different food textures. You can also make statements to describe the different textures to children.
  - » How does the milk feel in your mouth?
  - » Do the peas feel hard or soft?
  - » What do you think of the texture of this apple?
  - » I think that these green beans are really crunchy.
  - » When I bite into this celery, it feels crispy.
4. **Compare different textures.** Make texture comparisons between different food items.
  - » **Compare modes of feeling.** Ask if the food feels the same with their fingers and their tongues.
  - » **Compare textures.**
    - Soft vs. Firm/Hard
    - Smooth vs. Rough
    - Thick/Creamy vs. Watery
    - Slippery vs. Sticky

- Chewy vs. Crunchy
- » **Compare foods of different texture.**
  - “This hummus feels so creamy on my tongue but this carrot is crunchy when I bite it.”
- » Compare foods of same texture.
  - “This celery is firm and crunchy. What else is crunchy? I think this apple is firm and crunchy too.”

## Sensory Exploration of Food: Smell

1. **Engage children’s sense of smell as a step towards tasting the food.** Smell produces flavor and is associated with taste. Smells are often associated with the taste of food, and smell and taste produce flavor. Below are some ways to talk about the taste and smell of food.
  - » Doesn’t this chicken smell **sweet** and **smoky**?
  - » This rice smells so **fragrant**.
  - » I love lemons, they smell so **fresh**!
  - » Oranges have a **citrusy** smell.
  - » Root vegetables like sweet potatoes have an **earthy** smell.
  - » This slice of cheese has a **sharp** smell.
  - » The bowl of berries smells **fruity** and **tart**.
2. **Engage children in active discussion about the smell of different foods.**
  - » You can compare smells of different and similar foods. For example, compare how celery and cucumber smell alike or different.
  - » You can also compare the smell of the same food item, but in different forms. For example, compare the smell of a whole orange, a cut orange, and orange juice. Or, compare the smell of a raw and ripe banana or mango.

## Sensory Exploration of Food: Taste

After engaging all the other non-taste senses, children are often very excited to get to taste the food item.

1. Engage children’s sense of taste.
  - » After exploring the other four senses, you can enhance children’s experiences with food tasting. There are five basic types of tastes:
    - Sweet: carrots, apples, oranges, cherries
    - Sour: lemon, lime, oranges
    - Salty: crackers, pretzels, soy sauce
    - Bitter: bitter gourd, citrus peel, olives, kale
    - Savory: cheese, tomatoes, bread
2. Engage children in an active discussion about taste.
  - » Use the five basic taste types to talk to children about the taste of food. You can also use other words like buttery, fruity, tangy, cheesy, juicy.
    - This orange is so sweet and juicy.
    - This pineapple has a sour and tangy taste.
    - I think the cracker has a buttery taste.
  - » You can also compare tastes of food and discuss how they might taste similar or different.
    - This pita bread taste savory. How about this cheese? Do you think it tastes savory too?
    - This apple is sweet and this lemon is sour. What do you think?

# Sensory Lesson Plan

## Objective

Educate children about different fruits and vegetables by tapping into their senses of smell, sound and taste.

**Time Needed:** 10-15 minutes

**Note:** This lesson can be done weekly with different fruits and vegetables each week. You could also use one fruit or vegetable daily for five days. Alternatively, you can do a touch version of this game. Have children reach into the bag and touch the items with their eyes closed instead of smelling them.

## What You Will Need

1. Three to five different fruits/vegetables.
  - » Try to get items with stronger smells. Get two of each item so you can keep one whole.
    - Examples: banana, lemon, garlic, onion, celery, mango, raspberry
  - » You can mix the fruits and vegetables for one lesson or split them up into separate lessons using the same plan.
2. Non-Translucent bags or solid boxes
3. Have extra cut-up samples of the fruits and vegetables for later tasting.

## Step-by-Step Guide

1. Place one item of the fruit/vegetables (whole items to begin the lesson) in individual bags.
2. Have children sit in a circle.
3. Explain to them that there are fruits/vegetables in each bag. They have to close their eyes while a supervisor goes around the circle with the bag for each child to feel the item.
4. Next go around with bags of the cut items and ask the children to smell the items.
5. After everyone has a turn, the supervisor asks them to open their eyes.
6. Ask the children to describe what they smelled.
  - » **Questions about smell:**
    - “What did that smell like?”
    - “Do you think it smelled \_\_\_\_\_ (sweet, sour, tangy, fruity)?”
    - “Was the smell strong or light?”
7. Ask the children what they thought the item was.
  - » The supervisor graphs or lists the children’s guesses on big paper. After children answer, take the items out of the bag and see if the children can match up the cut and whole items.
8. Pass the cut and whole item around. Start a discussion about the item’s smell and texture and differences between the outside of the fruit and the inside.
 

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» <b>General questions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– “What is this called?”</li> <li>– “Is this a fruit or a vegetable?”</li> <li>– “Have you ever tried this?”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» <b>Questions about smell:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– “How does it smell?”</li> <li>– “Does it smell fruity, tangy, sharp, sweet or sour?”</li> <li>– “How does the cut item smell compared to the whole item?”</li> <li>– “How does the smell of this item compare to the smell of another item?”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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9. Pass the whole item around again so the children can touch it. Encourage them to feel the different items. Ask them to shake and tap the food items and listen to the sound they make.
 

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» <b>Questions about sound:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– “What does it sound like when you tap it?”</li> <li>– “Does it make any sound on its own?”</li> <li>– Use different sound words like tap, thunk, donk and thud.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» <b>Questions about texture:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– “Does it feel hard or soft?”</li> <li>– “How does it feel in your hand?”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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10. Pass around fresh cut samples for the children to taste. Help them make a connection between the foods they smelled earlier by pointing out the specific item and encouraging the children to taste it now.
 

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» <b>Questions about taste:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– “What does this taste like?”</li> <li>– “Is it _____ (sweet, sour, savory, bitter, fruity, juicy)?”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– “How does it feel on your tongue? Does it feel _____ (smooth, hard, crunchy, creamy)?”</li> <li>– “How does this item taste compared to that item?”</li> </ul>
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backside of fruit and seed punch out activity

# Fruit and Seed Flash Card Activity

Punch out each flash card below and match seeds to plant, fruit and cut versions of the fruit items.

Seeds	Plants/Trees	Whole Fruits	What do they look like on plate!
 <p>Seeds are inside the fruit</p>	 <p>Peaches grow on trees!</p>	 <p>Whole peach</p>	 <p>Juicy canned peach on your plate!</p>
 <p>Seeds are outside of fruit!</p>	 <p>Strawberry plants are so small</p>	 <p>Whole strawberries</p>	 <p>Strawberries cut into pulpy red pieces!</p>
 <p>Seeds are mostly at the center!</p>	 <p>Orange trees are big!</p>	 <p>Whole oranges!</p>	 <p>Orange cut into wedge shapes!</p>
 <p>Seeds are inside of fruit!</p>	 <p>Cantaloupe plants are small too!</p>	 <p>Whole cantaloupe</p>	 <p>Small pieces of cantaloupe</p>

# Vegetable and Seed Flash Card Activity

Punch out each flash card below and match seeds to plant, fruit and cut versions of the fruit items.

Seeds	Plant	Whole Vegetable	What do they look like on plate!
 <p data-bbox="167 604 386 636">Bell pepper seeds</p>	 <p data-bbox="483 604 784 667">Bell peppers are hanging on the stems</p>	 <p data-bbox="898 604 1084 667">There are four different colors!</p>	 <p data-bbox="1255 636 1442 667">Wow! Delicious!</p>
 <p data-bbox="199 1045 354 1077">Celery seeds</p>	 <p data-bbox="508 1045 760 1108">Celery plants have leaves on their head!</p>	 <p data-bbox="906 1045 1068 1077">Whole Celery</p>	 <p data-bbox="1230 1045 1466 1108">Celery cubes are very crunchy to eat.</p>
 <p data-bbox="183 1476 370 1507">Zucchini seeds</p>	 <p data-bbox="540 1465 727 1497">Zucchini Plant</p>	 <p data-bbox="898 1455 1084 1486">Whole Zucchini</p>	 <p data-bbox="1206 1455 1498 1539">Zucchini on your plate! Look, the inside is white in color!</p>

backside of vegetable and seed punch out activity

## **Notes**

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LESSON FOUR

# Self Regulation

“ Create a healthful eating environment that is responsive to children’s hunger and fullness cues. “

# Self Regulation Objectives Notes Page

**Instructions:** Use the note page to take notes you may find useful in your child care program.

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

1. Recognize the importance of supporting children's self-regulation in eating.
2. Develop policies and goals that support children's self-regulation in eating in your childcare facility.
3. Identify solutions to overcome challenges to supporting children's self-regulation in your classroom

**OBJECTIVE 1.** Why is it important to encourage children's self-regulation in eating?

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**OBJECTIVE 2.** Identify strategies that support children's self-regulation in eating in your childcare facility.

Identify five strategies that support children's self-regulation in eating at mealtime.

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Identify three activities to support children's self-regulation in eating outside mealtimes

ACTIVITY	MATERIALS	PROCEDURES
Dramatic Play		
Small Group		
Language and Literacy		

**OBJECTIVE 3.** List the different ways for sensory exploration of food with sight.

### CHALLENGES

### SOLUTION

It is hard for children to self-regulate their food intake. They will eat too fast or too much to know if they are hungry or full.

We will not get reimbursed by CACFP if a child does not take the full servings of each food group as required by the CACFP meal pattern. If the child is allowed to eat what they want, they may take only one or two foods.

It is hard to let children have seconds of the foods offered at mealtime because of limited food availability.



# Strategies for Supporting Children’s Self-Regulation in Eating

## 1. Teach children to describe their feelings of hunger and fullness.

- Teach children vocabulary to describe hunger and fullness. For example, ask children “Are you hungry?” before a meal and “Are you full?” towards the end of the meal.
- Acknowledge physical feelings associated with hunger and fullness. For example, my stomach makes a growling noise when I’m hungry

## 2. Be a role model by describing your own feelings of hunger and fullness.

- Children tend to follow their care giver’s lead. When you describe your own feelings of hunger and fullness, and when children see that you are regulating your food intake, they will model your actions.
- **For Example One Could say:**
  - “I am hungry. I can hear and feel my stomach rumble. It’s growling! I’m ready for lunch now.”
  - “My stomach no longer feels hungry, so I am going to stop eating.”

## 3. Choose responsive and firm comments when communicating with children.

- What you say makes a difference. Be responsive by using comments that help children to pay attention to their own hunger and fullness. Below are some examples:

FEEDING PRACTICE	INSTEAD OF SAYING... FIRM	SAY THIS... FIRM AND RESPONSIVE
<b>Offering Large or Preset Portions</b>	“You may have only two strawberries at lunch today.”	“Start with two strawberries today, so that all your friends can have some. If we run out of strawberries and you are still hungry you can have some green beans or pears.”
<b>Trying the Food</b>	“Take a no-thank-you-bite.”	“The apple smells sweet. Do you want to try a bite and tell me if it is sweet?”-
<b>Eating the Food</b>	“Eat your green beans and fruit now. You had enough bread already”  “You did not eat anything, and you will be hungry later. Eat at least a few bites of fruit.”	“If you are still hungry, you can try the green beans or the fruit.”  “You can eat until your tummy feels full. How does your tummy feel?”
<b>Using Food as a Reward</b>	“You already had chicken. If you eat some salad, then you can have more chicken.”	“We have to share chicken with all our friends. If you are still hungry, you may try some other food. Would you like a fruit or milk?”
<b>Finishing the Food</b>	“That’s great! You cleaned your plate! Mommy will be so happy today.”  “Are you done?”  “A happy plate is a clean plate.”	“It is okay if you want to stop eating when your body is telling you that you are full. But if you still feel hungry, you may eat some more now because we will not have snack until later.”  “You’ve stopped eating. Are you full? Does your body have what it needs?”  “It is okay to stop eating if you are full, even if there is food left on your plate.”

#### 4. Trust and respect children's feelings of hunger and fullness when they display them or tell you about them.

- Children can regulate their energy intake by themselves, and it is important that you trust this ability and respect their feelings when they say or show signs of hunger or fullness.
- Understand that children may eat more on some days, and less on other days. They may eat more during a particular meal and less in the next. For example, when children have had a big breakfast, they may not eat much during lunch. On the other hand, they may eat more at lunch if they have had their breakfast early.

#### 5. Create a structured and pleasant mealtime environment.

- It is important that children feel like eating is a pleasant experience and a time to share with you and their peers. Having a predictable routine and structure for snacks and lunch can help children know that food will be available when they are hungry.
- **Here are some ways to have a structured mealtime:**
  - Hand washing
  - Setting the table
  - Set clear expectations regarding when and where children should eat
  - Allow children a choice of what they eat, but serve healthy options to children
  - Involve children in cleaning up the messes
- More importantly, make the mealtime a relaxed environment with responsive conversations where you are supportive of children's feelings and needs.



### What is your Mealtime responsibility?

It's important to observe a division of responsibility during mealtimes. Children are responsible for deciding if they eat, what they eat, and how much they eat. Caregivers are responsible for when and where children eat.

# Supporting Children's Self-Regulation During Play- Lesson Plan

## Dramatic Play

### Materials-

Plastic play food items, play sized bowls, cups spoons, forks, table-setting placement, table and chairs

### Procedures-

Allow children to pretend play in the dramatic play area. They can practice mealtime routines, like "cooking", "setting the table", and "having a meal" with their friends.

- Talk about hunger and fullness cues as children are playing
- Play with the children and model the language presented in this lesson. For example, the teacher can say, "I am feeling full ,so I am going to stop eating, and put my plate away."



## Language & Literacy: Reading Children's Literature- Full Book Provided with Program Resources and Handouts

### Materials-

Books that reach concepts of hunger and fullness

Tummy Talks<sup>21</sup> (Included in your workbook)

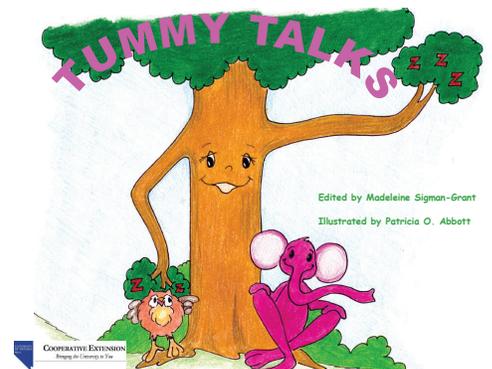
The Very Hungry Caterpillar<sup>22</sup>

### Procedures-

Read these books with children to teach children about hunger or fullness.

After reading the books, discuss the hunger and fullness shown by the characters in the boo. Then have them talk about their own experiences with hunger and fullness using the statements below:

- When I wake up in the morning, I feel...
- Just before lunch, I feel...
- After playing outside, I feel...
- After a birthday dinner, I feel...
- After I eat a snack, I feel...
- After a big breakfast, I feel...
- When I finish a meal from a fast food restaurant, I feel...
- After I eat an apple or banana, I feel...



## Small Group: Art Activity

### Materials-

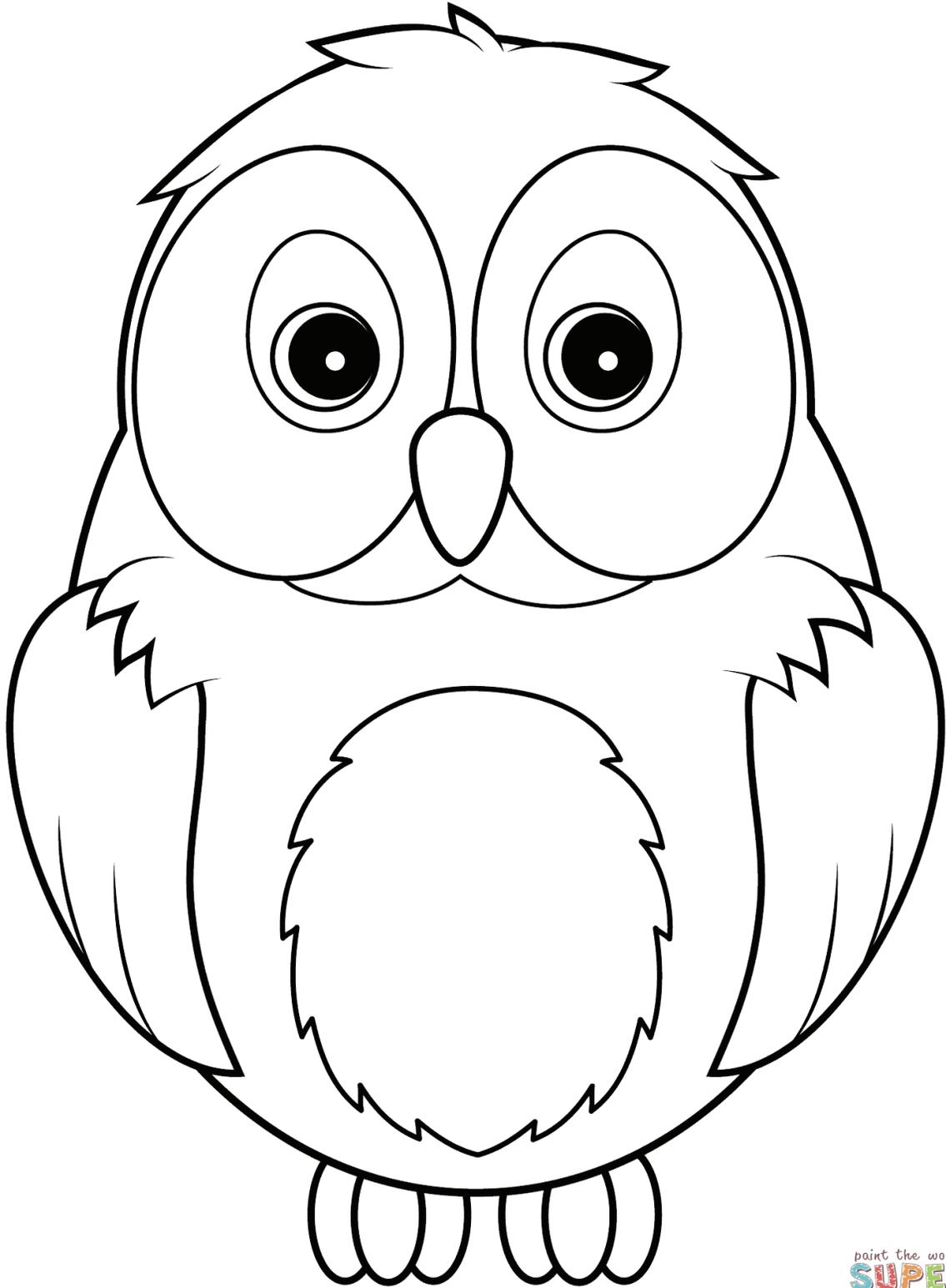
Owl coloring sheets (on next page) and crayons, markers or colored pencils.

### Procedures-

Ask children to color in how the owl's stomach would look- before lunchtime, when he/she is very hungry.

- Then talk about how the owl's stomach would look during lunchtime and at the end of mealtime.
- Ask the children, "Which owl's stomach best matches your stomach's fullness right now?"
- Use the





# Writing a Policy Regarding Responsive Feeding

## Why Have a Written Policy:

Having a policy in the parent handbook is a great way to communicate with parents about center-level practices.

## Goal:

Create a healthful eating environment that is responsive to children's hunger and fullness cues

## Recommendation

Early childhood educators should practice responsive feeding

### Potential Actions for Responsive Feeding Include:

- Adults sit and eat the same foods as the children
- Allow children to serve themselves
- Allow children to decide how much they eat
- Work with children to understand their internal signals of hunger and fullness
- Respect children's internal cues of hunger and fullness, once expressed

While being responsive, it is also important that adult caregivers are firm: they set certain expectations regarding mealtime and consistently follow through on these.

### Potential Actions for being Firm Include:

- Children always wash hands before eating
- Children are involved in mealtime by setting the table and cleaning up
- Adults decide where, when children eat and what foods are served to the children
- Adults follow through on the expectations regarding responsive feeding



# Parent Handouts

Share the following materials with parents to help guide them in learning more about nutrition concepts and peer modeling:

1. Mealtime Moves and Countermoves
2. Ellyn Satter's Division of Responsibility in Feeding
3. How to Build your Child's Self-Regulation at The Dining Room Table

## Mealtime Moves and Countermoves

Even if your child agrees to the rules ahead of time, he will experiment to be sure the rules are really the rules. Your reaction can pull you into being controlling, into trying to do his part with the division of responsibility. At that point, your child is likely to become contrary and eat poorly. This table gives some ideas for how to stick to the division of responsibility in response to your child's experiments.



Your CHILD'S Move	YOUR Move
He says, "I am not hungry."	You say, "You do not have to eat; just sit with us for a while."
She is too worked up and busy to eat.	Spend a few minutes with her just before the meal reading a book or washing hands. Set a 5-minute timer.
He cannot take time to eat.	Arrange for him to be hungry by not letting him eat between times.
She is too hungry to wait for meals.	Have sit-down snacks between meals.
He is messy. He drops, throws, or smears food for fun or to get a rise out of you.	Give him one warning, then have him leave the meal. Don't let him come back.
She does not want to stay at the meal until you finish eating.	Let her leave when she gets full. She will stay at the table longer as she gets older and learns to enjoy conversation.
He is naughty or otherwise disruptive at the meal.	Have him leave. He is full or he would eat—and behave!
She comes back right after the meal, begging for a food handout.	Don't give her food until snack time. Ignore any tantrums. Give her a time-out if she persists.
He gets down, but wants your attention, to sit on your lap, to eat off your plate.	Pat him on the head and send him away. Teach him to play quietly while you eat.
She does not eat "enough" at mealtime.	Only she knows how much is enough. Don't let her eat or drink, except for water. Plan a snack for a set time and stick to it.
He says, "Can I get the peanut butter? I can put peanut butter on my bread."	You say, "No, that is like making a separate meal. You do not have to eat anything if you do not want to, but you do have to settle for this meal."
"Why or why not?"	"Because those are the rules."

For more about the division of responsibility, see Ellyn Satter's [Feeding with Love and Limits](#). [Feeding with Love and Limits](#) is available in Spanish. For more about the division of responsibility, see Ellyn Satter's [Secrets of Feeding a Healthy Family](#). For the evidence, read [The Satter Feeding Dynamics Model](#).

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## ELLYN SATTER'S DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITY IN FEEDING

Children have natural ability with eating. They eat as much as they need, they grow in the way that is right for them, and they learn to eat the food their parents eat. Step-by-step, throughout their growing-up years, they build on their natural ability and become eating competent. Parents let them learn and grow with eating when they follow the Division of Responsibility in Feeding.

### The Division of Responsibility for infants:

- The parent is responsible for *what*.
- The child is responsible for *how much* (and everything else).

Parents choose breast- or formula-feeding, and help the infant be calm and organized. Then they feed smoothly, paying attention to information coming from the baby about timing, tempo, frequency, and amounts.

### The Division of Responsibility for babies making the transition to family food:

- The parent is still responsible for *what*, and is becoming responsible for *when* and *where* the child is fed.
- The child is still and always responsible for *how much* and *whether* to eat the foods offered by the parent.

Based on what the child can do, not on how old s/he is, parents guide the child's transition from nipple feeding through semi-solids, then thick-and-lumpy food, to finger food at family meals.

### The Division of Responsibility for toddlers through adolescents

- The parent is responsible for *what*, *when*, *where*.
- The child is responsible for *how much* and *whether*.

Fundamental to parents' jobs is trusting children to determine *how much* and *whether* to eat from what parents provide. When parents do their jobs with *feeding*, children do their jobs with *eating*.

### Parents' feeding jobs:

- Choose and prepare the food.
- Provide regular meals and snacks.
- Make eating times pleasant.
- Step-by-step, show children by example how to behave at family mealtime.
- Be considerate of children's lack of food experience without catering to likes and dislikes.
- Not let children have food or beverages (except for water) between meal and snack times.
- Let children grow up to get bodies that are right for them.

### Children's eating jobs:

- Children will eat.
- They will eat the amount they need.
- They will learn to eat the food their parents eat.
- They will grow predictably.
- They will learn to behave well at mealtime.



For more about raising healthy children who are a joy to feed, read Part Two, "How to raise good eaters," in Ellyn Satter's *Secrets of Feeding a Healthy Family*. For the evidence, read [The Satter Feeding Dynamics Model](#).

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## How to Build Your Child's Self-Regulation at The Dining Room Table

by [drdavewalsh.com](#) (posts/163)

By guest blogger Kiyah Duffey, Ph.D. - August 15, 2013



"You have to finish what's on your plate before you can have dessert."

It's something that many of us likely heard as children, and have possibly even used with our own kids. Warning our children to learn not to be wasteful (or ungratefully) with their food is understandable, but it

turns out that ultimatums like this may have some unintended, and possibly lasting negative consequences.

### Parenting Style & Self-Regulation

The ways in which we interact with our children, our [parenting style](#), has the broadest influence on a child's behavior because it creates the emotional climate within which a child makes decisions about his or her actions.

Our parenting style influences the development of self-regulation, the ability of a child to govern him/herself, in very specific ways. Studies have shown that self-regulated children have parents who:

Providing [consistent messaging](#) and following through with promises also helps children establish self-discipline and a willingness to delay gratification. These [executive function](#) skills set our kids up for success in school and life AND are important for establishing healthy eating behaviors.

### The Link to Health Eating Habits

How we approach feeding our kids, which is closely related to our overall parenting style, has a huge influence on our children's ability to self-regulate food intake. This is something we should pay attention to. The inability to listen to internal cues of hunger and satiety can lead to overeating, eating in the absence of hunger, and ultimately to health consequences like overweight and obesity. In contrast, strong self-regulation usually leads to healthier eating.

Though it is tempting to micromanage our kids' eating, numerous studies have shown that highly directive and/or controlling feeding practices are linked to lower self-regulation and [higher weight status](#) among children.

Children who are instructed to "clean their plates" tend to be [less responsive](#) than children who were taught to focus on internal cues of hunger and fullness. Children whose parents were more focused on external cues of consumption, rather than trusting their children's ability to accurately identify feelings of fullness, had lower self-regulation and greater eating in the absence of hunger. Low maternal support paired with high levels of control was associated with [emotional eating](#) which extended all the way into young adolescents.

In other words, parent's short term food goals may end up having long-lasting, and potentially negative, consequences down the road.









LESSON FIVE

# Children Serve Themselves

“ When children serve themselves they learn social, emotional and self-help skills. Mealtimes are pleasant and enjoyable. ”

# Children Serve Themselves Objectives Notes Page

**Instructions:** Use the note page to take notes that will help to support you implement concepts learned into your child care program.

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

1. Recognize why it is important for children to serve themselves and select their own portions.
2. Implement self-service during mealtime in your childcare facility.
3. Identify solutions to overcome challenges for self-service in your classroom. Develop policies and goals that support children's self-regulation in eating in your childcare facility.

**OBJECTIVE 1.** Why is it important for children to serve themselves and select their own portions?

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**OBJECTIVE 2.** Identify five strategies for implementing self-service at mealtime.

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

**OBJECTIVE 3.** Identify solutions to overcome challenges for self-service in your classroom.

## Barriers Related to Children Serving Themselves

Challenges	Solution
It is hard to let children serve the food themselves because it will be messy and unhygienic.	
It is hard to let children serve themselves because they are too young.	
It is hard for me to allow children to serve themselves because it entails more time and work.	

## Barriers Related to Children Selecting Their Own Portions

Challenges	Solution
It is hard to let children select their own portions because they either serve too much or too little food	
It is hard to let children select their own portions because they will only choose their favorite food.	
It is hard to let children select their own portions because our meals and snacks arrive already pre-portioned.	

## Children Serve Themselves - Strategies

In family style meal service, foods and beverages are placed in common serving containers, such as child sized serving bowls and pitchers, and placed on the table where children eat. Foods are passed around the table and children serve themselves 'what' and 'how much' they would like to eat.

Observing the division of responsibility is fundamental to family style meal service.

Caregivers' Responsibilities	Childs' Responsibilities
What foods are offered	If they eat (they may choose not to eat)
When foods are offered	What they will eat
Where food is offered	How much they will eat

## Strategies for Helping Children Serve Themselves- Provide Child-Friendly Tools and Environmental Support

1. Provide dishware that is easy for children to handle. Examples include:
  - » Child-sized, light weight, unbreakable utensils
  - » Shallow serving bowls that hold about 4 cups
  - » Small pitchers that hold about 1-4 cups
  - » Measuring cups or scoops for serving
  - » Short-handed tongs with 4-6 inches in length
  - » Eating plates with 7-8 inches' diameter
  - » Drinking glasses that hold 1 cup
2. Reduce spills and messes
  - » Fill pitchers partially full to reduce the weight of the pitcher so that it is easy for the child to hold.
  - » Encourage children to fill their cups only half full to reduce spills.

- » Keep cleaning supplies such as paper napkins, a child-sized broom, and dust pan near the table.
- » Provide a tub for dirty dishes and trash close to the meal table and at the child's level.
- » Remember, spills are a way in which children learn. Respond to spills in a consistent and supportive manner and have the child clean up the spill along with you.
- » Use colored serving utensils and white eating utensils so that children can remember to avoid licking or eating from colored utensils.
- » Provide two sets of measuring cups and tongs for serving in the classroom, in case of contamination.
- » Reserve half servings of each food in additional bowls, in case of contamination or second helpings.
- » Keep extra helpings of food on a cart or table nearby.
- » Label carts where top racks are to stock food and bottom racks are for dirty dishes.

## Strategies: Provide Physical and Verbal Assists for Self-Service

### Before Meals

Plan effective pre-meal transitions.

- Teach and supervise proper hand washing techniques.
- Show children how to set the table.
- Provide placemats labeled with pictures, shapes, and words to provide physical cues about where to place items.

### During Meals

Teach children to serve themselves by providing them physical and verbal assistance.

#### Physical Assists:

- Use hand-over-hand physical prompts to guide children as they scoop and pour
- Provide physical assists that steady utensils, plates, and cups for children as they self-serve

#### Verbal Assists

- Provide clear directions and verbal prompts to children while modeling
- "Hold the milk pitcher like this. Watch me."

Here are some suggestions to guide children while they are selecting their portion size:

1. **If the child is over-serving**, you can provide verbal guidance while cueing children to their internal signals of hunger. It is important for caregivers to provide verbal guidance when children are serving themselves.
2. **For example**
  - » "Take one scoop now and you may have another if you are hungry later."
  - » "Your friends still need to serve themselves. Then, after everybody has some, you can get more if you are still hungry."



### After Meals

Plan effective post-meal transitions

- Show children how to clear the table.
- Walk with children to place their dirty dishes in a tub or sink. Keep the trash container for food waste and tub for dirty dishes nearby to increase children's independence and reduce spills.
- Supervise hand washing

Celebrate success in self-service progress!!

- Developing self-serving skills provides children with a sense of confidence that is important for success.
- Verbal encouragement such as saying, "You did it! You scooped the peaches out of the serving bowl and put them on your plate!" can reinforce their efforts to serve themselves.

# Teaching Children Self-Serving Skills During Play

Concepts	Scoop and Pour	Stir	Level and Cut	Use Tongs	Clean Up
Materials: Sand, Water, Table	measuring cups, scoops and cups, pitcher, bucket	spoons, cups	plastic knives, cups	small manipulatives to put into sand or water, tongs or bilateral scoops	dustpan, brush
<b>Exploration</b>	Allow children to explore the materials. Ask questions that encourage children's exploration with their senses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do the tongs feel?</li> <li>• What colors do you see?</li> </ul>				
<b>Introduction</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. State any relevant rules and directions and model them as appropriate</li> <li>2. Ask questions that get children thinking about the functions of the tools and materials               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What kinds of movements/sounds do these tongs make?</li> <li>• What kinds of things can we do with these materials?</li> </ul> </li> </ol>				
<b>Define</b>	We scoop food and pour drinks.	We stir with spoons.	We level and cut with knives.	We pick up food with tongs.	We clean up after we eat.
<b>Practice &amp; Understanding</b>	Practice self-service skills while asking children questions that encourage their understanding of the tools/materials and how they work:				
<b>Practice (actions)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move sand from one area to another</li> <li>• Use a variety of scoop/spoon sizes</li> <li>• Scoop using one spoon versus two spoons.</li> <li>• Scoop alone versus with a partner</li> <li>• Practice pouring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stir the water quickly and slowly</li> <li>• Engage in pretend play</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use other tools to level and cut sand in addition to knives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scoop/pick up the manipulatives using tongs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sweep sand into a dustpan using a brush</li> </ul>
<b>Understanding (questions)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What will happen if we add water to this bucket that is full?</li> <li>• What makes this pitcher heavy?</li> <li>• How do you know when to scoop and when to pour?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does the stirring do to the water?</li> <li>• What happens if you stir too fast?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which tools level the sand the best?</li> <li>• What kinds of things need to be cut/leveled?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you see in the water that you can pick up with your tongs?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can you put the water in the dustpan using the brush?</li> </ul>

## Developmental Milestones

### 3-4 Months

- Uses a whole hand grasp

### 4-5 Months

- Moves objects from hand-to-hand

### 6 Months

- Reaches for objects

### 9 Months

- Grasps objects from hand-to-hand
- Uses a pincer or finger grasp
- Demonstrates an interest in feeding himself or herself

### 12 Months

- Communicates using words to ask for or name food that they might want

### 14 Months

- Eats with fingers

### 15 Months

- Can feed himself or herself with a spoon

### 19 Months

- Can drink from an open cup

### 2-3 Years Old

- Learning self-serving skills:
  - » Spills are common
  - » Can use a spoon and serve themselves items, such as bread
  - » Drinks from a cup

### 3-4 Years Old

- Practicing self-serving skills:
  - » Can manipulate objects faster
  - » Can follow simple requests, like "Please use your napkin."
  - » Serves themselves and sets the table
  - » Pours liquid from a pitcher into a container with increasing accuracy and control
  - » Imitates peers' eating behaviors
  - » Eats most foods independently

### 4-5 Years Old

- Refining self-serving skills:
  - » More independent and rarely spills food or drinks
  - » Knows what table manners are expected
  - » Eats with a fork

### 5-6 Years Old

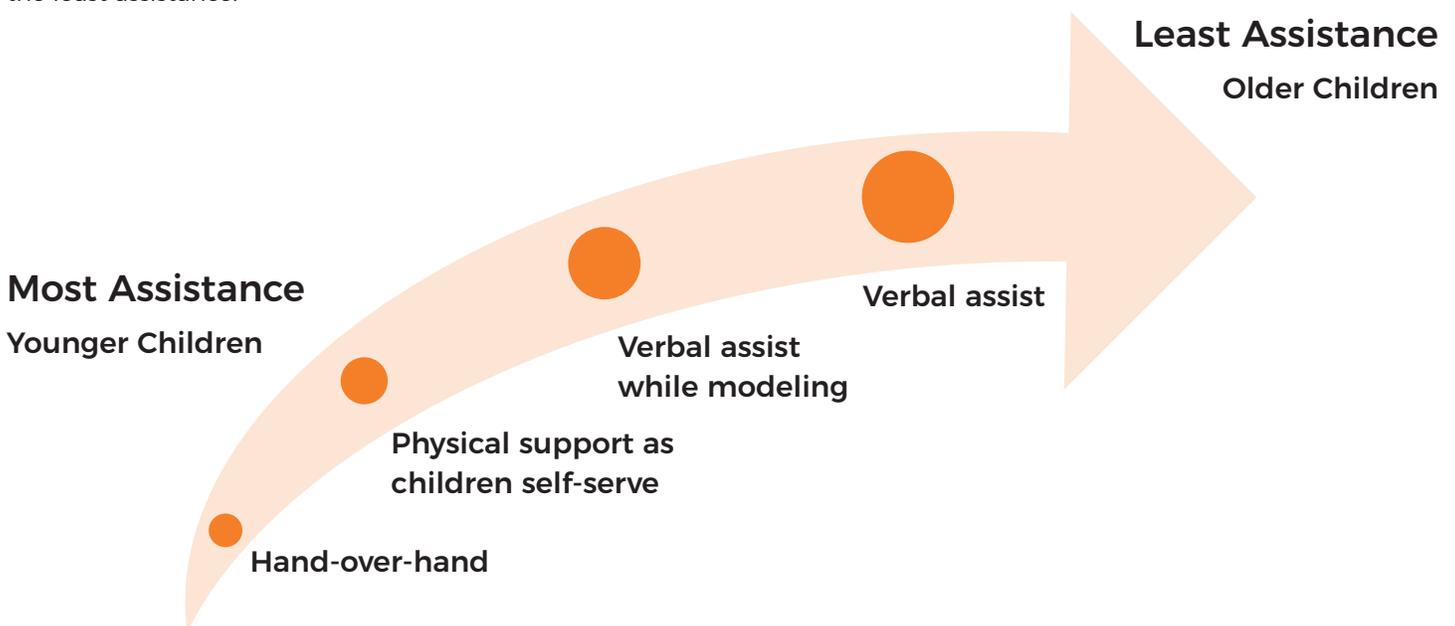
- Skilled at feeding themselves:
  - » Self-serve and eat with little supervision or guidance
  - » Uses a knife on soft food and can spread foods with a knife

#### Remember:

- Motor development is sequential, from top to bottom (cephalocaudal development) and from the inside out (proximodistal development).
- But, development takes place at different times in children. Children's individual development may vary from these milestones listed above.
- Children tend to demonstrate mastery of self-help skills between ages of six and eight.

## Physical and Verbal Assists

Remember that hand-over-hand physical prompts provide children with the most assistance and verbal assists provide the least assistance.



# Identifying Teaching Strategies

Fine Motor Skill	Mealtime Instances When Fine Motor Skills Could Be Evident	Observation 1	Individualized Strategies	Observation 2
Child uses a developmentally appropriate grip or grasp	Holding and handling utensils, plates, and cups			
Child maintains control of objects	Bringing food from a serving dish onto his or her plate or from a plate to his or her mouth			
Child demonstrates increasingly precise eye-hand coordination	Transferring food from a serving dish onto his or her plate without spills			
Child's strength and dexterity are becoming more controlled and/or advanced	Transferring/serving food with fewer spills and/or less assistance			
Child demonstrates developmentally appropriate wrist stability and wrist rotation	Picking up and holding milk or water pitchers			
Child sets down items with control that is developmentally appropriate	Child returns pitchers or bowls to the table after serving himself or herself			
Child demonstrates developmentally appropriate bilateral coordination when performing appropriate tasks	Using both hands when pouring milk or water from a pitcher Holding a plate steady while child serves food			

## Glossary

**Dexterity** Used when referring to motor skills of the hands and fingers.

**Bilateral coordination** Used both hands together to perform a task.

**Eye-hand Coordination** Focusing and coordinating eye movement and visual input to control and direct the hands.

**Wrist Stability** Used, with wrist rotation, to control hand movements.

**Wrist Rotation** Used, with wrist stability to control hand movements.

**Pincer Grasp** Using the thumb and index finger to pick up an item.









LESSON SIX

# Praise and Rewards

“ Clear rules create predictability and provide structure and consistency for children. Since rules and expectations can encourage, teach and reinforce behavior, you do not have to rely on rewards. ”

# Praise and Rewards Objectives Notes Page

**Instructions:** Use the note page to take notes that will help to support you implement concepts learned into your child care program.

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

1. Define and describe the benefits of implementing effective praise and reward strategies.
2. Develop policies and goals that can be used to introduce non-food praise and rewards strategies into your own childcare facility
3. Apply Praise and Rewards concepts to common childcare scenarios and overcome barriers

**OBJECTIVE 1.** Describe the importance of avoiding food-based rewards?

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**OBJECTIVE 2.** Describe the advantages of praise over food-based rewards?

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**OBJECTIVE 3.** Identify the tips for effective praise and rewards

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	

**OBJECTIVE 4.** Mention appropriate mealtime rules that provide structure and consistency for children.

NUMBER	PHRASE THE RULES
1	

NUMBER

PHRASE THE RULES (continued)

2	
3	
4	
5	

**OBJECTIVE 5.** Mention a few rewards to use that can be effective.

REWARDS

WHEN DO YOU PLAN TO USE THIS REWARD


**OBJECTIVE 6.** Find solutions to overcome challenges associated with using praise and rewards effectively.

BARRIER

STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME BARRIER


**OBJECTIVE 7.** Find solutions to overcome challenges associated with using praise and rewards effectively.

# Using Praise Effectively

STRATEGY	INSTEAD OF SAYING	SAY THIS
<p><b>Be specific to the child and the behavior.</b></p> <p>Praise statements should be individualized to the child and the specific behavior you are praising. Vague statements do little to tell children about what they did well or that it was deserving of praise.</p>	<p><b>Vague Praise</b></p> <p>“Good job!”</p>	<p><b>Specific Praise</b></p> <p>“Sarah, you tried kiwi for the first time. Good job!”</p>
<p><b>Praise the child’s actions.</b></p> <p>Praise statements should focus on the child’s behavior that you would like to reinforce. By praising children’s behaviors, you tell children exactly what it means to try a new food</p>	<p><b>General Praise</b></p> <p>“You’re a good taster!”</p>	<p><b>Praise the child’s behavior</b></p> <p>“You tried honeydew! You licked it and tasted it!”</p>
<p><b>Comment on the child’s progress.</b></p> <p>Praise statements should comment on the child’s progress. It is not enough to just say, “Good job eating your peas!” Give children praise that focuses on their progress with trying new foods.</p>	<p><b>No progress</b></p> <p>“You’re eating your peas!”</p>	<p><b>Comment on the child’s progress</b></p> <p>“You’re eating your peas! That’s the second new food you’ve tried this week!”</p>
<p><b>Be judgement-free when praising.</b></p> <p>It’s important to avoid evaluating children’s behaviors when you praise them.</p> <p>When praise includes personal judgement like “I am so glad you tried chick peas”, it suggests that the caregiver will like the child better if he/she tries the food.</p> <p>The caregiver’s relationship with a child should not depend on what or the amount that a child eats. Using personal judgement in praise will decrease a child’s intrinsic motivation to try new foods.</p>	<p><b>Personal Judgement</b></p> <p>“I am so glad you ate all the fruit.”</p> <p>“Mommy will be so happy today because you tried broccoli.”</p> <p>“You ate all your vegetables. You are such a good girl.”</p>	<p><b>Judgement free</b></p> <p>“You tried cauliflower for the first time! Did you like the texture? We served steamed cauliflower today not raw.”</p>
<p><b>Praise children for trying any amount of food.</b></p> <p>Praise children for their willingness to try new foods, even if they do not eat all of the food. This means that you should praise children for trying any amount of a new food. This can include licking, smelling or chewing a food even if it is not swallowed. Praise the effort, rather than the outcome</p>	<p><b>Praising for eating or finishing the food</b></p> <p>“Good job! You finished all the food on your plate.”</p> <p>“Come on be brave. Try one bite of strawberry.”</p>	<p><b>Praising for willingness to try the food</b></p> <p>“You tried your beans! You licked it and chewed it slowly.”</p> <p>“You smelled the strawberries! Good job! Maybe you will try them next time.”</p>
<p><b>Praise Children For Food That They Have Tried For The First Time.</b></p> <p>Do not praise children for eating food that they already like. This can cause children to dislike the already-liked food because they may perceive the reward for an already liked food as artificial or negative.</p>	<p><b>Praising Already-Liked Foods.</b></p> <p>“You really like pears and are eating them first. They’re so good for you! Good job!”</p>	<p><b>Praising New Foods.</b></p> <p>“You’re trying the carrots for the first time!”</p>
<p><b>Be Sincere.</b></p> <p>Children know when adults are not being genuine. Use sincere reinforcement by using children’s names when you praise them and being enthusiastic, avoid general statements like “good job.”</p>	<p><b>General Praise</b></p> <p>“Nice job.”</p>	<p><b>Genuine Praise</b></p> <p>“Kya, you tried beets for the first time!”</p>

# Creating Appropriate Meal Time Rules

STRATEGY	INSTEAD OF SAYING	SAY THIS
Rules must benefit children's development.	"You must take a 'no-thank-you-bite.' "Clean your plate."	"Say, 'No, thank you' if you don't want the vegetables. Saying 'no thank you' is respectful."
Rules must be positively stated.	"Don't chew with your mouth open." "Don't get up from the table."	"Keep your mouth closed because food can fall out." "Sit at the table until you are ready to put your plate away. It's important to sit down while you are eating."
Rules must be reasonable for children to follow.	"No talking while we eat."	"Use a soft voice. It's important to hear what all our friends at the table have to say."
Rules must be definable.	"Be good in the bathroom while you're washing hands."	"Only two friends at a time at the sink. It's important to respect each other's bodies."

## Using Rewards Effectively

### Use Rewards Effectively by Avoiding these Four Rewards with Children

#### 1. Food-based rewards

- Avoid food-based rewards even if you are rewarding children with healthy foods. Food-based rewards can lead to fussy eating behaviors, over-eating and obesity.
- Instead of using food-based rewards, try role modeling and sensory exploration to encourage children to try different foods.

#### 2. Avoid "if-then" contingency

- Telling the child if you do this, then you can get that; is viewed as a bribe or threat by the child. It reduces their intrinsic motivation and should be avoided.
- If the child is distracted at meals because they want dessert or want to do another activity, avoid using the if-then contingency statement.
- Instead you can remind the child to pay attention to their internal feelings of hunger and fullness.

#### 3. Avoid rewarding children for already liked foods

- Avoid rewarding children for trying the foods that they already like.
- If you want to give a child a non-food reward be selective and reward children for trying only new foods.

#### 4. Avoid rewarding children for finishing the food

- Rewarding children for the quantity of the food they eat or finishing their food can override their internal feelings of hunger and they may tend to over-eat to receive the reward.



## Rewards to Use

If you choose to use rewards, it is important that you select non-food items such as rewards that focus on fostering relationship and create classroom rituals. Special activities in the classroom can also be used as a reward, such as reading a favorite book or doing a particular art project. Consider the following options.



### 1. Non-food rewards

- Use action rewards like high-fives, hugs, tickles, gentle swings and lifts to reinforce positive behavior.

### 2. High interest rewards

- High-interest rewards are activity-based or special opportunity rewards that are interesting to a particular child. Some examples include:
  - Reading a book
  - Choosing the song for Music & Movement time
  - Extra outside recess time
  - Being the designated helper for a specific task or activity. Children enjoy being active, making movement a good reward.
  - Dancing or marching during classroom transitions.
- Be sure to choose a reward that the child will be excited about. Low-interest rewards are ineffective at encouraging desired behavior.

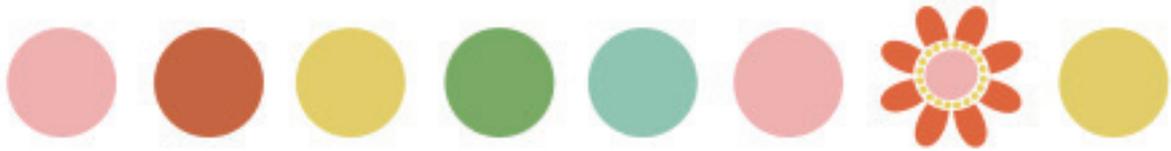
### 3. Gateway to health rewards

- Children enjoy being active, therefore movement can be used as a reward. Some examples include:
  - Fun movement for classroom transitions, like dancing or marching

### 4. Be selective when rewarding children

- It is important to limit the frequency that you provide rewards to children, so they don't come to expect rewards.
- Do not offer non-food rewards frequently. Use rewards only for special occasions or events. If you had a class party every day, the fun would wear off! Make rewarding children for trying new foods an exciting and special event.
- When you are thinking of rewarding a child ask yourself two questions:
  - “Is the child’s behavior really worthy of the reward?” Specifically, has the child really tried a new food for the first time or is there progress towards a desired behavior? If the answer is yes, then ask yourself the second question.
  - “Is this reward really appropriate?” Avoid food based rewards. But, you can reward children with non-food rewards such as High Fives, high interest rewards or rewards that promote movement and activity.



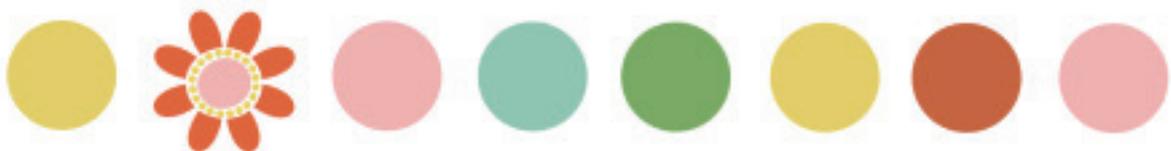


# Reward Chart for \_\_\_\_\_

	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>						
<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>						
<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>						
<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>						
<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>						

my reward will be:

15 minutes of extra Recess on Friday!!



# Parent Handouts

Share the following materials with parents to help guide them in learning more about praise and rewards:

1. What Experts Say About Food Rewards
2. 10 Tips to Cut Back on Your Kid's Sweet Treats
3. Alternatives to Using Food as a Reward

## What Experts SAY ABOUT FOOD REWARDS

**American Academy of Pediatrics:**  
Food should be used as nourishment, not as a reward or punishment. In the long run, food rewards or bribes usually create more problems than they solve.

**American Academy of Family Physicians:**  
Food should not be used for non-nutritive purposes such as comfort or reward. Do not provide food for comfort or as a reward.

**American Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics:**  
Do not use food as a reward. When children are rewarded with sweets or snack food, they may decide that these foods are better or more valuable than healthier foods.

**American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry:**  
Do not use food as a reward.

**American Psychological Association:**  
Avoid using food as a reward for good behavior. Making unhealthy food a reward for good deeds promotes the idea that healthy food isn't as appealing as junk food or something to look forward to.

**Let's Go!**  
Prohibit the use of food as a reward.

**Yale Medical Group:**  
Using food as a reward or as a punishment can undermine the healthy eating habits that you're trying to teach your children. Giving sweets, chips, or soda as a reward, often leads to children overeating foods that are high in sugar, fat, and empty calories. Worse, it interferes with kids' natural ability to regulate their eating and it encourages them to eat when they're not hungry to reward themselves.

listen up!



Adapted from Frellick, A., Courtney, A. The Use of Food as a Reward in Classrooms: The Disadvantages and the Alternatives, 2014.

### 10 tips cut back on your kid's sweet treats

**10 tips to decrease added sugars**

**Limit the amount of foods and beverages with added sugars your kids eat and drink.** If you don't buy them, your kids won't get them very often. Sweet treats and sugary drinks have a lot of calories but few nutrients. Most added sugars come from sodas, sports drinks, energy drinks, juice drinks, cakes, cookies, ice cream, candy, and other desserts.

- 1 serve small portions**  
It's not necessary to get rid of all sweets and desserts. Show kids that a small amount of treats can go a long way. Use smaller bowls and plates for these foods. Have them share a candy bar or split a large cupcake.
- 2 sip smarter**  
Soda and other sweet drinks contain a lot of sugar and are high in calories. Offer water, 100% juice, or fat-free milk when kids are thirsty.
- 3 use the check-out lane that does not display candy**  
Most grocery stores will have a candy-free check-out lane to help them out. Waiting in a store line makes it easy for children to ask for the candy that is right in front of their faces to tempt them.
- 4 choose not to offer sweets as rewards**  
By offering food as a reward for good behavior, children learn to think that some foods are better than other foods. Reward your child with kind words and comforting hugs, or give them non-food items, like stickers, to make them feel special.
- 5 make fruit the everyday dessert**  
Serve baked apples, pears, or enjoy a fruit salad. Or, serve yummy frozen juice bars (100% juice) instead of high-calorie desserts.
- 6 make food fun**  
Sugary foods that are marketed to kids are advertised as "fun foods." Make nutritious foods fun by preparing them with your child's help and being creative together. Create a smiley face with sliced bananas and raisins. Cut fruit into fun and easy shapes with cookie cutters.
- 7 encourage kids to invent new snacks**  
Make your own snack mixes from dry whole-grain cereal, dried fruit, and unsalted nuts or seeds. Provide the ingredients and allow kids to choose what they want in their "new" snack.
- 8 play detective in the cereal aisle**  
Show kids how to find the amount of total sugars in various cereals. Challenge them to compare cereals they like and select the one with the lowest amount of sugar.
- 9 make treats "treats," not everyday foods**  
Treats are great once in a while. Just don't make treat foods an everyday thing. Limit sweet treats to special occasions.
- 10 if kids don't eat their meal, they don't need sweet "treats"**  
Keep in mind that candy or cookies should not replace foods that are not eaten at meal time.

USDA United States Department of Agriculture  
Center for Nutrition and Prevention  
Go to [www.ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov) for more information.

DO TipSheet No. 15  
June 2011  
USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

## Alternatives to Using Food as a Reward

One in five children is overweight or obese by age 6. The rates have doubled in children and tripled in adolescents in the last 20 years. An overweight 4-year-old is 20 percent more likely to become an obese adult, an overweight teen, 80 percent.

While there are many reasons for this increased obesity rate, one that providers can control is using food to reward, comfort or punish the children in their care. The following statements are common examples of these negative methods:

- "If you pick up the toys, I will give you each a cookie." (reward)
- "I know you got hurt when you fell down, here is a piece of candy." (comfort)
- "Eat all of your peas or we will not go to the playground." (punishment)

### Non-Food Alternatives

Avoid these kinds of statements and instead consider non-food alternatives as rewards. Some rewards that work well with young children individually or as a group:

- Sit by friends
- Eat lunch outdoors/ have a picnic
- Teach the class
- Eat lunch with a teacher or the director
- Have extra art time
- Be a helper in another class
- Enjoy class outdoors
- Dance to favorite music in the classroom
- Have an extra recess
- Provider can perform special skills (i.e. sing)
- Play a favorite game or puzzle
- Field trips
- Walk with a favorite provider during a transition
- Provider can read a book of that child's choosing

### Normal Consequences

Even more effective than rewards is the delivering of consequences when a child behaves in a way other than the expectation that had been clearly explained. Look for opportunities to provide "normal consequences" whenever possible. "Normal consequences" usually refers to temporary limitations a provider sets that connect with the problem behavior that just occurred. Examples include:

- "You threw that block so you may no longer play in the block area today."
- "You two were fighting over that toy so neither of you may play with it today."
- "All of the caps were left off of the markers in our Art Area this morning so they have all dried out. We will not have markers to use for a while."



“ The Head Start, The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and The National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education recommend that adult caregivers should not use food-based rewards with children.”



