

INTRODUCTION TO

Happy Mealtimes

IN CHILD CARE SETTINGS



PARTICIPANT'S WORKBOOK

Time: 4 hours



2016

Introduction to Happy Mealtimes in Child Care Settings

Time: 4 hours

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2016



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Introduction

Mealtimes are among the most important times for young children. Each meal serves as an invaluable opportunity for young children to develop new skills and healthy eating habits.

As a child care provider, you play an instrumental role in creating positive and supportive mealtime experiences for young children. When they have the support from you and their parents (or guardians), they are more likely to develop lifelong, healthy eating habits.

Training Resource Summary

Introduction to Happy Mealtimes in Child Care Settings is designed to provide good practices for creating positive experiences during mealtimes. More specifically, this training resource covers strategies for

- planning schedules and routines,
- implementing family-style meal service,
- creating safe environments, and
- aiding young children in developing healthy eating habits in preschool settings.

It is designed to be taught as a comprehensive four-hour training or as individual lesson trainings.

Training Resource Components

Introduction to Happy Mealtimes in Child Care Settings includes the following components:

- Note Pages
- Handouts
- Worksheets
- Reference Pages
- Pre- and Post-Assessments

Ground Rules

The following statements are ground rules and expectations for this training:

- Be a team player.
- Be respectful of everyone.
- Share ideas with the class.
- Be on time for all sessions.
- Stand up when your mind goes on vacation.
- Always ask for clarification if you do not understand.
- Turn your mind on and your electronic devices to silent or off.

Functional Area and Competencies

Functional Area V: Nutrition and Meal Management

Competency 5.2: Establishes a positive dining environment to foster appropriate social interaction and promote healthy eating behaviors.

Training Objectives

At the completion of this training, participants will be able to:

- Discuss strategies for planning schedules and routines for mealtimes.
- Explore methods and strategies for incorporating transitions in mealtime routines.
- Explore the advantages of implementing family-style meal service.
- List methods for implementing family-style meal service.
- Discuss the skills young children need to master family-style meal service.
- List a minimum of four methods for preventing choking incidents during mealtimes.
- Discuss methods for preventing allergic reactions during mealtimes.
- Explore four ways to create safe mealtime environments.
- Define common picky eating behaviors displayed by young children.
- Demonstrate a minimum of one method that negatively influences young children's eating habits.
- Discuss positive ways to help young children develop healthy eating habits.

Lesson 1: Implement Schedules and Routines

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Notes Page

Instructions: Use this worksheet to record your notes.

Objective: Participants will discuss strategies for planning schedules and routines for mealtimes.

Objective: Participants will explore methods and strategies for incorporating transitions in mealtime routines.

Mealtime Schedules and Routines

A schedule is a written outline, showcasing the “big picture” of the main activities throughout the day. A routine, on the other hand, is an action regularly done to complete the schedule. For example, before lunch each day, children wash their hands, set the table, and then, sit at the table. Although schedules and routines are not the same, they work best when they are used together.

A great mealtime schedule is designed based on the needs of the children and the facility's hours of operation. It allows children to eat every two to three hours. Also, a mealtime schedule allows children to have:

- smooth transitions into mealtimes,
- enough time to eat meals and snacks, and
- smooth transitions out of mealtimes.

A sample mealtime schedule for a child care facility, operating between 6:30 am - 5:30 pm, may serve:

- Breakfast at 7:00 am - 8:00 am
- Lunch at 11:00 am - 11:45 am
- Afternoon Snack at 2:15 pm - 2:45 pm

Sample Mealtime Routine

- Call for helpers - Children with daily jobs
- Transition activity - Song, restroom and handwashing
- Children sit as the food and beverage are placed on the table
- Children serve themselves with the assistance of adults
- Adults sit and eat with children
- Children and adults talk about various topics
- Transition activity - Song, dispose of plates and handwashing

Tips for Success

- Follow a consistent and predictable schedule and routine, yet be flexible when unpredictable interruptions occur.
- Create a visual mealtime schedule and routine for children to view.
- Review the mealtime schedule and routine with the children on a daily basis.
- Evaluate your schedule and routine regularly, to see if it is ideal for both you and the children in your care.

Mealtime Transitions

A smooth transition is ideal for mealtimes because it allows young children to gradually switch from major activities to mealtime and gradually switch from mealtime to the next activity. Additionally, smooth transitions help children respond better to mealtimes because they know and understand what will happen next.

Create a Plan

When establishing transition, begin by answering the following questions:

What do you need to do? _____

Where do you need to stand? _____

What will you need to say? _____

What will the kids do? _____

Transition Tips

- Provide verbal and nonverbal cues to alert children that a transition will soon occur.
- Plan simple activities children can do while they wait for other children to finish.
- Allow children to transition independently or in small groups.
- Individualize transitions for children who need additional assistance.
- Provide continuous feedback during the transition phase. Acknowledge children who are following through with the transition activity and encourage those who are not.
- Incorporate songs, games, rhymes, and finger play:
 - Songs, such as *Clean up, Clean up, Everybody Everywhere*
 - Games, such as *Simon Says* or *I Spy*
 - Rhymes, such as *Do you know what time it is?*
 - Finger play, such as clap hands three times if you can hear me

Mealtime Schedule

Instructions: Read the scenario below.

Scenario: A neighboring child care center, who participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), needs your assistance with creating a mealtime schedule and a potential routine for their pre-k program. Based on the hours of operation stated on your time card, create a potential schedule for each meal and snack. Then, choose a mealtime and create a routine the child care staff could follow. Remember, the CACFP allows for two meals and a snack **or** one meal and two snacks.

Mealtime Schedule	
Hours of Operation: _____	
Meal or Snack: _____	Time: _____
Meal or Snack: _____	Time: _____
Meal or Snack: _____	Time: _____
Mealtime Routine	
Meal or Snack: _____	
1.	_____
2.	_____
3.	_____
4.	_____
5.	_____
6.	_____
7.	_____

Excellence in Three: Lesson 1

Instructions: In the space provided, write three things you learned in this lesson. Then, write three ways you can apply the information in your child care setting.

What did you learn?	How will you apply the learned information?

Lesson 2: Serve Meals Family-Style

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Note Page

Instructions: Use this worksheet to record your notes.

Objective: Participants will explore the advantages of implementing family-style meal service.

Objective: Participants will identify and list methods for implementing family-style meal service.

Objective: Participants will discuss the skills young children need to master family-style meal service.

What Is Family-Style Meal Service?

In family-style meal service, all food is placed on the table in child-size serving bowls, with child-size serving utensils. All beverages are placed on the table, either in cartons or in child-size pitchers. Children and adults sit at the table together, and the children are encouraged to serve themselves with the assistance of adults. While eating meals and snacks in a family-style environment, children and adults socialize about various subject matters.

The Value of Family-Style Meal Service for Young Children

Family-style meal service helps children learn and practice a variety of social skills including sharing, taking turns, and saying “please” and “thank you.” In addition, it gives children the opportunity to develop both gross and fine motor skills by performing different tasks, such as helping set the table, pouring their own beverages, serving themselves, and passing foods in serving dishes to others. Additionally, children learn to:

- serve themselves without touching the food,
- eat off of their plates instead of the serving dishes, and
- eat from their eating utensils instead of the serving utensils.

Family-style meal service allows children to feel in-control of their eating. It allows children to decide what to eat and how much to eat during mealtimes. In addition, it allows children to take a small serving first and then take additional servings of food later in the meal. Children know they can “pass” on certain foods but change their minds and feel confident that additional servings are available throughout the meal.

Indirectly, family-style meal service encourages children to try new foods. Some children may need to be offered a new food 10-15 times before they will try it. However, they are more likely to try new foods if other children and adults are sitting with them and eating the new food.

The Value of Family-Style Meal Service for Child Care Providers

Family-style meal service offers four key benefits for child care providers. First, it allows child care providers to sit and enjoy meals and conversations with the children because all of the food is available at the start of the meal. More specifically, child care providers benefit from serving meals family-style because they do not have to leave the table unless more food is needed for second servings.

Second, it allows child care providers to act as role models, modeling appropriate mealtime behaviors, such as saying “please” and “thank you” when passing and receiving foods.

Third, family-style meal service provides opportunities for child care providers to help children develop positive attitudes about food. Additionally, it allows everyone to enjoy the same nutritious meals and snacks, potentially reducing the amount of food waste.

Lastly, child care providers can minimize distractions and redirect inappropriate behavior when sitting and eating meals family-style.

Family-Style Meal Service Is Advantageous

Instructions: List some other advantages of serving meals family-style.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Family-Style Meal Service Checklist

Instructions: Read each statement, and think about the practices in your child care setting. Decide if the answer is “Yes,” or “NO,” and then place a check-mark in the appropriate box.

Statement	YES	NO
Mealtime Routine		
Establish a mealtime routine with scheduled mealtimes and transition activities.		
Appropriate-Size Bowls and Serving Utensils		
Food is served in bowls of appropriate size that children can lift and pass.		
Serving bowls are of appropriate material, so they do not conduct heat and are not too hot to pass.		
Small size scoops, one-piece plastic tongs, and short-handled hard, plastic serving spoons are used during mealtimes.		
Mealtime Expectations		
Children and adults eat together at the table		
Children and adults come to the table at the same time.		
Children and adults wait until everyone is ready before the meal begins.		
Children and adults serve themselves and pass food to each other.		
Children and adults use inside voices.		
Passing Food Practice		
Adults model how to pass food during mealtimes and other appropriate times.		
Children have serving bowls and utensils in play areas.		
Children practice how to pass serving bowls with both hands.		
Children practice how to hold the bowl to keep fingers out of the food.		
Children practice how to use serving utensils.		
Children practice how to use scoops, tongs, and short-handled hard plastic serving spoons.		
Pouring Practice for Children		
Adults model how to pour beverages during mealtimes and other appropriate times.		
Children pretend pouring dry liquid such as sand or beans in play areas.		
Children practice pouring water and milk into child-size cups during mealtimes.		

Statement	YES	NO
Clean up Practice for Children		
Adults model how to clean up their eating area, placing their plate and cup in the designated area after meals.		
Children pretend clean up with sponge or cloth.		
Children pretend floor clean up with mini-mop.		
Children and adults clean up mealtime areas after each meal or snack.		
Additional Statements		

Family-Style Meal Service Process

Before mealtimes begin:

- Know which meal components are required for each meal or snack served.
- Review the planned menus and compare it to the meal patterns.
- Make sure there is a full serving of all meal components in the serving bowls and pitchers for all children and adults.
- Follow the mealtime schedule and routine, and transition into mealtimes.
- Properly wash hands and assist children in washing their hands.
- Properly supervise children.
- Allow children to help set the table.
- Place all foods on the table before the children are ready to sit down to eat.

During mealtimes:

- Make sure children are offered each menu item.
- Help children with serving as needed.
- Sit at the table and eat with the children.
- Do not force children to eat or to eat more food than they want.
- Offer the food again, later in the meal, to children who either did not want any or took only a very small portion of the food(s).
- Allow additional servings after everyone has been served.
- Make mealtime a happy time by making positive comments and happy facial expressions, such as smiles.
- Talk about foods, practice good table manners, and handle food safely.
- Properly supervise children.

At the end of mealtimes:

- Help children to clear the table.
- Properly wash hands and assist children in washing their hands.
- Properly supervise children as you transition from mealtimes.
- Transition to next activity.

Tips for Implementing Family-Style Meal Service

- Create a family-style meal service policy to ensure that everyone knows what is expected at each meal or snack.
- Eat with the children, and set a good example. Children eat what they see others eating and enjoying.
- Have regularly scheduled meals and snacks. Children usually need to eat every 2-3 hours during the day.
- Make mealtime pleasant and relaxed. Children eat best when they do not feel pressured during mealtimes.
- Offer new foods regularly. It is normal for children to be hesitant about trying new foods. Children often need to see a new food 10-15 times before they want to try it.
- Introduce new foods with old favorites. Children are more likely to try a new food if they have choices.
- Encourage children to serve themselves.
- Avoid using games or bribes to get children to eat.
- Avoid forcing children to eat.
- When a child does not want to eat, make it clear that food will be available at the next regularly scheduled meal or snack but not before.
- Create a mealtime environment that focuses on positive communication.
- Let the children help plan and prepare simple meals and/or snacks. Setting the table can be a proud accomplishment for a child.
- Use books and activities to increase your child's interest in food and eating. Take a trip to the library, and look for children's books that tell a positive story about eating and healthy food choices.
- Plant a garden with the children in your care. Children enjoy eating vegetables they help grow. Choose fast-growing vegetables, such as lettuce or radishes.

Mealtime Tableware Supplies

Instructions: Use this tool to help identify developmentally appropriate items for the preschool age children in child care settings.

Tableware and Drinkware	Estimated Sizes
Plates	7 - 7.25 inches
Serving Bowls	6.75 - 8.75 inches
Bowls	2 - 4 inch diameter
Spoons	4 - 6 inches
Serving Spoons/Ladles	7 - 8 inches
Tongs	4 - 6 inches
Cups	8 - 10 ounces
Pitchers	12 - 14 ounces

Sample Parent Letter

Dear Family,

Next month, we will begin serving meals family-style, where children are encouraged to serve themselves from serving dishes while being helped by an adult when needed. This technique encourages children to try new foods in a pressure-free environment. In addition, it encourages children to select the foods of their choice and the total amount desired. A child may want to try new foods after seeing others choose those foods.

Table manners are also learned when meals are served family-style. The relaxed setting makes it easy for children and adults to talk to each other while eating meals and snacks. Most importantly, it encourages good eating habits for a lifetime.

We plan to use the following tips during mealtimes each day, and expect great results. You may find them useful at home:

- Keep mealtimes pleasant.
- Wash hands before coming to the table.
- Encourage children to select food by looking first and then selecting the piece they want, not by touching every piece.
- Remind children to take the food they touch when serving themselves.
- Encourage children to pass serving bowls to the right, without putting fingers into the bowl or touching the foods as they handle the serving dishes.
- Provide easy-to-use tongs, spoons, and scoops for serving foods.
- Serve all the food and beverages at the same time.
- Expect spills. Children are learning, and accidents will happen. Keep paper towels handy and wipe up spills without a fuss.
- Show children healthful eating habits and good table manners by what you do and say. Children learn by watching.
- Avoid comments about how much or how little a child has eaten.
- Expect some waste of food with children. Children naturally stop eating when they have had enough; respect the child's decision. Children know when they feel hungry and when they feel full.

We are excited about family-style meal service, and we encourage you to try some of these tips during mealtimes at home.

Sincerely,
Your Child's Teacher

Help Desk Caller

Instructions: Read the scenario below.

Scenario: Imagine you are a member of the CACFP Help Desk Team. Today, you received a call from Child Care Director, Sarah Young, regarding her challenges with implementing family-style meal service. She stated that in the past, she preferred to serve meals pre-plated because family-style meal service is too messy for the children in her care. However, now she is considering the new meal service and needs some advice. Help Sarah implement family-style meal service by answering the below.

1. Why should I implement family-style meal service?

2. What are some key steps for implementing family-style meal service?

3. What advice would you offer someone who has never implemented family-style meal service?

Mastering Skills

Instructions: Identify some creative ways to teach children how to pass, pour, handle, and serve themselves food during mealtimes. Activities may be structured and led by adults or unstructured and led by children. List the activities in the appropriate space below.

Skill Needed	Activity
Passing and Handling	
Pouring	
Serving	

Excellence in Three: Lesson 2

Instructions: In the space provided, write three things you learned in this lesson. Then, write three ways you can apply the information in your child care setting.

What did you learn?	How will you apply the information learned?

Lesson 3: Implement Food Safety Practices

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Note Page

Instructions: Use this worksheet to record your notes.

Objective: Participants will list a minimum of four methods for preventing choking incidents during mealtimes.

Objective: Participants will discuss methods for preventing allergic reactions during mealtimes.

Objective: Participants will explore four ways to create safe mealtime environments.

Choking and Young Children

Children under the age of four are at the greatest risk of choking. In fact, almost 90 percent of the children who die from choking incidents are under the age of four. During this age, children have small airways that can easily be partly or completely blocked by food or objects. Knowing the symptoms, methods for prevention, and steps for organizing your mealtime areas will reduce the risk of choking incidents in your child care program.

High Risk Foods

Any food or object can cause choking; however, foods with the following features pose the highest risk:

- Round
- Hard
- Small
- Thick and sticky
- Smooth
- Slippery

Choking Symptoms

When choking, a child may display the following symptoms:

- Panic
- Inability to breath
- Inability to talk or make noises
- Gasping or wheezing
- Change in skin color (blue or purple tone)
- Loss of consciousness

Foods that may be a risk for choking include the following foods:

- Hot dogs (whole or sliced into rounds)
- Raw carrot rounds
- Whole grapes
- Hard candy
- Nuts and seeds
- Raw peas
- Hard pretzels
- Chips
- Peanuts
- Popcorn
- Marshmallows
- Spoonful(s) of nut butter
- Chunks of meat

Four Corners

Instructions: List one idea for implementing each practice in your child care program. Then, write your ideas on the labeled flip chart paper, posted around the room.

Ensure the foods are safe to eat.

• _____

Arrange the tables with safety in mind.

• _____

Serve meals when children are seated.

• _____

Serve food on safe tableware.

• _____

Food Allergy Fact Sheet

What is a food allergy?

A food allergy is the immune system mistakenly reacting to a particular food or ingredient as if it were a threat to the body. The proteins in food that trigger the reaction is called an allergen.

What are the symptoms of a food allergy reaction?

Symptoms can happen within a few minutes or up to a few hours after the allergen being eaten and can be seen or felt in different parts of the body. The following responses are common symptoms of a food allergy reaction:

- Itching
- Hives and rashes
- Difficulty breathing
- Hoarse or squeaky voice
- Swelling of the face, eyes, or tongue
- Pulling or scratching at the ears or tongue

What is anaphylaxis?

Anaphylaxis is a serious reaction that happens quickly. Anaphylaxis can involve many different parts of the body. The most severe symptoms can restrict breathing and blood circulation and may cause death.

What are the most common foods that cause allergic reactions?

The most common foods include the following foods:

- Milk
- Eggs
- Peanuts
- Tree nuts (for example walnuts, almonds, cashews, pistachios, and pecans)
- Wheat
- Soy
- Fish
- Crustacean shellfish (for example shrimp, lobster, and crab)

How are food allergies diagnosed?

A doctor can diagnose food allergies by using a variety of tests.

How are allergic reactions treated?

Reactions should be treated according to the student's Food Allergy Action Plan/Emergency Care Plan. Antihistamines and other medicines can be used. In severe cases, the medicine epinephrine should be given as soon as possible. Always call 911!

How can an allergic reaction be avoided?

The best way to avoid a reaction is to avoid the food that causes it. Develop a system for checking ingredient labels carefully and have a plan to limit the ways in which the child could have contact with allergens, including airborne allergens.

What is cross contact?

Cross contact happens when a food containing an allergen comes in contact with a food or surface that does not contain an allergen.

Always refer to your local or state regulatory agency as the procedures may vary.

Words and Signs Children May Use During an Allergic Reaction

Children may not be able to explain clearly symptoms of an allergic reaction or know that they are experiencing an allergic reaction. Therefore, children will explain an occurring allergic reaction in their own words. Children may make the following or similar statements when experiencing an allergic reaction:

- “This food is too spicy.”
- “My tongue is hot.”
- “My tongue feels like there is hair on it.”
- “There’s a frog in my throat.”
- “My lips feel tight.”
- “My mouth feels funny.”
- “My mouth itches.”
- “It feels like something is stuck in my throat.”
- “It feels like there are bugs in my ear.”
- “It feels like there is a bump in the back of my throat.”

Always refer to your local or state regulatory agency as the procedures may vary.

Managing Food Allergies

1. Create a food allergy policy for your child care program.
 - Form a food allergy team to write a food allergy policy.
 - Develop an emergency plan specifically for your child care facility.
 - Notify parents about any reactions or exposures to an allergen.
 - If outside foods are allowed, limit to pre-packaged foods with complete ingredient lists.
 - Check all food labels for allergens.
 - Require all children to wash their hands when entering the building and before and after meals and snacks.
 - Keep information about children with food allergies confidential.

2. Create an individual food allergy plan for each child with a food allergy.
 - Obtain completed medical statements from parents/guardians (forms available from your State agency or sponsoring organization). Talk with parents/guardians if you need clarification.
 - Work with parents to create a plan to treat a reaction if it occurs.
 - Keep the plan where you can refer to it as needed.
 - Obtain any necessary medications from parents. Be sure you understand when and how to give each medication.
 - Keep medications in a location that is secure, but accessible in an emergency.

- Work with parents to create an affordable plan using the menus and resources that you have.
3. Take actions to avoid exposure to food allergens.
 - Wash hands with soap and warm running water before and after each task. Using water alone or hand sanitizer alone does not remove food allergens.
 - Wash, rinse, and sanitize all utensils and cookware after each use.
 - Wash, rinse, and sanitize food contact surfaces before and after each use.
 - Use designated cutting boards and designated work areas to prepare food for children with food allergies.
 - Store foods so that allergy-safe foods do not come in contact with other foods.
 - Clean and sanitize tables and chairs before and after meals and snacks.
 - Create a way for staff to be able to identify children with food allergies.
 - Prevent trading or sharing food, food utensils, or food containers.
 - Avoid foods that a child is allergic to in art projects or cooking activities.
 - Limit food to specific areas in the facility.
 - Ask parents to approve items such as body lotions, sunscreens, shampoos, and creams, as some may contain allergenic ingredients that could be ingested.
 4. Inform staff about food allergies.
 - Train staff on the food allergy policy and each child's individual food allergy plan.
 - Train staff on symptoms of an allergic reaction.
 - Instruct staff on when and how to give medications.
 - Ensure confidentiality of children's medical information.
 5. Read food labels for allergens.
 - Most food labels list the major eight food allergens using their common name (milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, wheat, soy, fish, and crustacean shellfish).
 - Check labels for warning statements such as "may contain," "produced on shared equipment," or "produced in a plant that uses." These foods should not be served to children with food allergies.
 - When shopping, check ingredient labels for allergens on every product.

Always refer to your local or state regulatory agency as the procedures may vary.

Clean and Sanitize for Mealtimes

For mealtime safety, it is important to know the meaning of the terms, clean and sanitize. Each step helps protect children from germs (bacteria or viruses) that cause illness, and together, these steps can kill harmful germs.

Clean means to make a dish or surface free from visible food, crumbs, or dirt. A surface must be clean before it can be sanitized or disinfected.

Sanitize means to kill harmful germs with either high heat or a chemical solution. When sanitizing tables and chairs, use a sanitizing solution that kills germs.

How to Clean and Sanitize Surfaces

Clean and sanitize tables and chairs before and after each use. Follow these steps to keep these surfaces clean and free from germs.

Step 1: Remove food or crumbs.

Step 2: Clean with warm, soapy water; and rinse with fresh water and a clean cloth.

Step 3: Saturate the surface with a sanitizing solution, such as a mixture of one-fourth (1/4) cup of household chlorine bleach and one gallon of warm water.

Step 4: Spray surface with solution (use the heavy spray setting), and wipe the surface to spread evenly.

Step 5: Allow surface to air dry.

Always refer to your local or state regulatory agency as the procedures may vary.

Handwashing Steps

1. Always begin by wetting hands with warm running water.
2. Apply soap.
3. Then, vigorously scrub hands together to make a lather and scrub well for 20 seconds. Scrub the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails. Sing or hum the Birthday Song or ABC Song from beginning to end twice, and you will have scrubbed your hands together for 20 seconds. This method is a good way to help children learn how long to scrub their hands.
4. Rinse hands thoroughly under running water.
5. Dry hands with a paper towel and use it to turn off faucets. If you have to touch doors to exit the restroom, use the paper towel to turn the doorknob to open the door.
6. Then, dispose the paper towel in a foot-operated trashcan.

Excellence in Three: Lesson 3

Instructions: In the space provided, write three things you learned in this lesson. Then, write three ways you can apply the information in your child care setting.

What did you learn?	How will you apply the learned information?

Lesson 4: Focus on Healthy Habits

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Note Page

Instructions: Use this worksheet to record your notes.

Objective: Participants will define common picky eating behaviors displayed by young children.

Objective: Participants will demonstrate a minimum of one method that negatively influences young children's eating habits.

Objective: Participants will discuss positive ways to help young children develop healthy eating habits.

Common Picky Eating Behaviors

Instructions: Think about the children in your care or those previously in your care. List some of the common picky eating behaviors you have witnessed during mealtimes. Then, share your responses with two or three participants.

- _____
- _____
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Negative Influences and Eating Habits

Pressuring children to eat increases the likelihood that they will:

- overeat and not listen to their hunger cues,
- develop a dislike for the food or flavor, and
- reduce their desire to try other foods.

Bribing and rewarding can cause children to dislike the food altogether and crave, regardless if it is served using forms of bribery.

Restricting specific foods can negatively affect children's ability to self-regulate. More specifically, when children are not allowed a variety of foods, rather sometimes foods or anytime foods, they may face challenges with listening to their hunger cues and regulating how much of the restricted food they should eat.

Making negative facial expressions towards certain foods cause children to pass on those foods because young children tend to model the behaviors of those around them.

Speaking negatively about foods can cause children not to eat certain foods.

Phrases That Help and Hinder

Phrases That Hinder	Phrases That Help
<p>“Eat that for me.”</p> <p>“If you do not eat one more bite, I will be mad.”</p> <p>Phrases like these teach children to eat for your approval and love. This can lead children to have unhealthy behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs about food and about themselves.</p>	<p>“This is kiwi fruit; it’s sweet like a strawberry.”</p> <p>“These radishes are very crunchy!”</p> <p>Phrases like these help to point out the sensory qualities of food. They encourage children to try new foods.</p>
<p>“You’re such a big girl; you finished all your peas.”</p> <p>“Jenny, look at your sister. She ate all of her bananas.”</p> <p>“You have to take one more bite before you leave the table.”</p> <p>Phrases like these teach children to ignore fullness. It is better for children to stop eating when full or satisfied than when all of the food has been eaten.</p>	<p>“Is your stomach telling you that you’re full?”</p> <p>“Is your stomach still making its hungry growling noise?”</p> <p>“Has your tummy had enough?”</p> <p>Phrases like these help children to recognize when they are full. This can prevent overeating.</p>
<p>“See, that didn’t taste so bad, did it?”</p> <p>This statement implies to children that they were wrong to refuse the food. This can lead to unhealthy attitudes about food or self.</p>	<p>“Do you like that?”</p> <p>“Which one is your favorite? Everybody likes different foods, don’t they?”</p> <p>Phrases like these make children feel like they are making the choices. It also shifts the focus toward the taste of food rather than who was right.</p>
<p>“No dessert until you eat your vegetables.”</p> <p>“Stop crying and I will give you a cookie.”</p> <p>Offering some foods, like dessert, in reward for finishing others, like vegetables, makes some foods seem better than others. Getting a food treat when upset teaches children to eat to feel better. This can lead to overeating.</p>	<p>“We can try these vegetables again another time. Next time would you like to try them raw instead of cooked?”</p> <p>“I am sorry you are sad. Come here and let me give you a big hug.”</p> <p>Reward children with attention and kind words. Comfort them with hugs and talks. Show love by spending time and having fun together.</p>

Make the Cut

Instructions: Read the scenario below.

Scenario: Center-Verse Production is bringing a new play to town called *Fear Not*. This play is about helping young children overcome their fear of new foods. On Tuesday, they will begin casting local child care providers for this play. Center-Verse Production has agreed to compensate all child care providers with brand new, state of the art, mealtime tableware and equipment to those who make the cut. The key to making the cut is to show how some behaviors can negatively influence children during mealtimes. Create a skit or dialogue to audition for the play that shows how your assigned topic might negatively influence children during mealtimes.

Assigned Topic: _____

Understanding a Child's View of Mealtime

Children naturally want to try new foods when regularly offered.

Tip: Present new foods along with well-liked foods to encourage children to try new foods. Children may need to see a new food offered 10-15 times before they try it.

Children want to feel in control of their eating.

Tip: Allow children to choose from the variety of nutritious foods.

Children respond well to support and encouragement from adults.

Tip: Children's meals should be served in a pleasant and comfortable setting. Adults should be supportive but not demanding about what children eat.

Children may eat different amounts of food from day to day.

Tip: Allow children to decide how much to eat. Some days they will eat more than others. They know when they feel hungry and when they feel full. Additionally, children will usually not eat food they do not want.

Children are responsible for deciding which foods and how much they will eat at mealtime.

Tip: A division of responsibility helps to make mealtimes pleasant. Adults are responsible for providing nutritious foods in a pleasant atmosphere. Children are responsible for deciding which foods and how much to eat. Avoid commenting about how much a child has eaten or using phrases that hinder the development of healthy eating habits.

Tips for Helping Young Children Develop Healthy Eating Habits

- Plan age-appropriate activities.
- Help children learn through hands-on activities.
- Make it more than just an activity. Relate the activity to learning about food (where it comes from and the importance of eating nutritious foods).
- Use everyday materials for arts and crafts, such as cereal boxes or clean, empty milk cartons.
- Have fun!
- Introduce new foods with favorite foods.
- Offer one new food at a time.
- Make learning about new foods fun through celebrations.
- Allow children to explore foods.

Excellence in Three: Lesson 4

Instructions: In the space provided, write three things you learned in this lesson. Then, write three ways you can apply the information in your child care setting.

What did you learn?	How will you apply the information learned?

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Key Terms

Allergen: A protein in food or an ingredient that triggers an immune response in a person who has a food allergy.

Anaphylaxis: A severe allergic reaction that can cause death.

Appearance Avoidance: To avoid certain foods because of how it looks, smells, or feels.

BPA-Free: Does not contain bisphenol A (or BPA). BPA is an industrial chemical that has been used to make certain plastics and resins. There is concern that BPA may cause health effects on the brain, behavior, and prostate gland of fetuses, infants, and children.

CDC: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Clean: To make a dish or surface free from visible food, crumbs, or dirt.

Danger Zone: The temperature zone in which bacteria multiply rapidly; between 40 °F and 140 °F.

Family-Style Meal Service: Meals in which tables are set with plates and utensils and food is passed in small containers from which the children serve themselves. Beverages are served in small pitchers so children can pour beverages themselves.

Food Allergy: An abnormal immune response that occurs when the body reacts to a certain food as if it is a harmful substance.

Food Jag: To eat only favorite foods for a period of time.

Food Intolerance: A reaction to food that does not involve the immune system.

Lactose Intolerance: A common food intolerance that results in the inability to properly digest the sugar in milk.

Obesity: In children, it is defined as a Body Mass Index (BMI) at or above the 95th percentile for children of the same age and gender.

Overweight: In children, it is defined as a Body Mass Index (BMI) at or above the 85th percentile and lower than the 95th percentile for children of the same age and gender.

Sanitize: To kill harmful germs with either high heat or a chemical solution.

Transition Activities: Small activities between major activities that can be implemented during any change of activities. For example, using a song between cleanup time and handwashing for lunch.

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