

Nutrition Nuggets™

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

April 2017

Palmyra-Eagle Area School District



BEST BITES

Festivals of food

Explore new foods with your child by attending food festivals this spring. Whether they feature peaches or persimmons, crawfish or crepes, strawberries or salmon, these events showcase interesting foods from farmers, vendors, or restaurants. Look for ones with free admission—and enjoy the free samples!

Spring cleaning

With winter in the rearview mirror, April is a good time for active spring cleaning. Together, list indoor and outdoor tasks that will get everyone moving. For instance, your youngster might work with you to wash windows or move winter coats into storage. Outdoors, he could sweep porches or clear sticks from the yard.

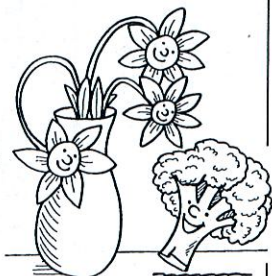


DID YOU KNOW? Three types of fitness are important for children (and adults): endurance, strength, and flexibility. Encourage your child to develop all three with a variety of activities. Aerobic sports like soccer or swimming will help improve endurance. Sit-ups and push-ups can build strength. And dancing, gymnastics, and yoga all promote flexibility.

Just for fun

Q: What kind of flower doesn't go in a vase?

A: Cauliflower!



Solutions for picky eating

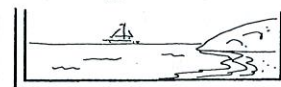
Help your youngster choose to be less choosy about food! Consider these strategies to add variety to his diet.

Pass dishes around

Rather than putting bowls in the middle of the dinner table, pass each one from person to person. When a dish is passed to your child, the aroma may tempt him to try it. Or he might be more likely to serve himself a little just because it's in his hands. If not, at least he'll see others take the food. And over time, his curiosity may get the better of him.

Use a "food chain"

Slowly offer your youngster a series of foods that build on ones he already enjoys. Say he loves boxed macaroni and cheese. Start by replacing the powdered cheese with the real thing ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup grated cheddar). The next time, add pureed butternut squash or broccoli



to the mac 'n' cheese. Finally, serve just the pureed squash or broccoli.

Try, try again

Your child won't touch steamed green beans? Offer raw green beans with a yogurt-dill dip. Eggplant a no-go? Make it into "fries." (Cut a 1-pound eggplant into strips $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch wide, and toss with $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt. Dip the pieces into 1 whisked egg white, then in breadcrumbs, and roast at 425° for 15 minutes.) In other words, try different ways of preparing foods, and eventually you'll hit on ones your youngster enjoys. ♥

Track family fitness—in color

Let your child encourage your family to get fit—15 minutes at a time. Here's how.

1. Have her choose colored beads to represent different physical activities. She can draw a key, such as "Blue beads = walking the dog" and "Red beads = shooting hoops." Then, each family member could decorate her own "fitness jar."
2. Each person should aim for at least four 15-minute bursts of physical activity a day. For every one, she puts a matching bead in her container. The goal is to exercise at least an hour a day, or 7 hours a week.
3. Ask your youngster to count the beads weekly. Empty your jars, and start exercising again! ♥

