

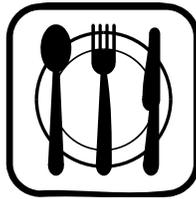


Healthy Beginnings

Make the Most of Mealtimes!

Help children develop fine motor skills:

- ✗ Let children help you prepare food
- ✗ Provide child-size spoons, forks, knives, and serving utensils
- ✗ Let children serve themselves
- ✗ Offer foods that challenge a child's eating skills
- ✗ Provide plenty of encouragement while a child is practicing eating skills



Serve as a role model for children:

- ✗ Show children how to wash their hands before mealtimes
- ✗ Show children how to use utensils and how to behave at the table
- ✗ Talk to children:
 - about foods (i.e. colors, names, etc.)
 - about why foods are good for their bodies (i.e. fruits and vegetables help us to have healthy hair and skin)



Trust children to eat as much as they need:

- ✗ Offer children a variety of healthy foods
- ✗ Be patient when encouraging them to try new foods
- ✗ Relate new foods to familiar foods
- ✗ Allow children to stop eating when they are full
- ✗ Feed children often – they need 3 meals and 2-3 snacks a day

Source: "Best Practices for Serving Foods to Groups of Children," Janice Fletcher and Laurel Branen, University of Idaho