

Encouraging Healthy Habits

Good nutrition and physical activity are important for healthy growth and development.

During the early years, young children tend to thrive when they have balanced, nutritious meals and snacks. The nutrients found in these promote cognitive, physical, and social development. In addition to good nutrition, young children who are physically active are less likely to be overweight or suffer from other chronic illnesses. Above all, making good nutrition and physical activity can help young children to have a healthy start in life.

Plan nutritious meals that taste good and children love to eat. Talk about what makes food nutritious. Tell them how food provides vitamins that help their body grow, however, make sure not to use foods that are high in calories and low in nutrients. It may take time for them to start eating the healthy foods, you serve. Consider having children to purposely move around more to increase their activity level. You could have “movement time” when you blow the whistle.

During that time children would be able to move around or even dance for one minute.

Provide Healthy Eating Experiences

Children should know that regardless of what the day may bring, everyone is allowed to choose from the food you offer. They should feel confident that it will not be taken away as a punishment, nor will it be given as a reward. Remember, never use food to punish or reward behaviors.

Promote Physical Activity

Eating healthy is not the only factor in developing healthy habits. The combination of a healthy diet and physical activity will improve the overall well-being of children. Physical activity is important and should be encouraged daily. Teach them simple movements that can be done inside or outside.

Activities can vary from hula hooping or playing with appropriate size balls to riding a tricycle or running in place. Ask the children what they like to do to be active. Whatever activity you choose, make sure it is safe for everyone. To further encourage physical activity at home.

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