

Food for Thought

September 2020

Healthy Eating Routines for Families

With getting in the back to school routine, it's a great time to develop a good eating routine with your children. These seven rules for healthy eating will help you raise a healthy eater by defining what the parent is in charge of, and what the child is in charge of in relation to meals and snacks:



1. **Responsibility** – a parent's responsibility is to provide nutritious food and regular mealtimes and snack times. Let your child make choices from a variety of good foods. A child's responsibility is to decide how much and whether to eat.
2. **Respect** – respect a child's need to be guarded about trying new foods. Encourage, yet never force a child to try something new. It can take up to 10 to 15 exposures to a new food before your child decides to taste it.
3. **Resist** – resist power struggles. Don't make mealtimes a battle. Choosing to eat is your child's job. Your job is to provide healthy food and to keep the atmosphere relaxed.
4. **Reinforce** – reinforce good eating habits. Set a good example by eating and enjoying a variety of healthy foods. Your child learns by watching you!
5. **Recognize** – learn to recognize correct portion sizes. Offer your child the correct portion sizes. Better yet, let your child serve them self the amount that is appropriate for them.
6. **Relax!** – Providing healthy foods, regular times for meals and snacks, and a calm, relaxing environment will help set the pace for healthy eating.
7. **Remember** – Family meals are extremely important for you and your family. It is a perfect time to engage in conversations about the day.

Tips for Creating a Family Meal Routine:

- Keep it simple. Family meals only need family members + food!
- It doesn't need to be dinner – any meal can be done as a family meal.
- Make it easy. Make foods that are easy to prepare and serve. Try putting dishes on the table for "family style" serving. Everyone can dish their own. It's less work for you.
- No table, no problem. If you don't have a table big enough for everyone, try doing meals "picnic style" on the floor.
- Use conversation starters to help making talking easier. Here are some to get started.
 - What were you good at today?
 - If you could have one super power, what would it be?
 - What was your favorite part of the day today?
 - What are you looking forward to doing tomorrow?
 - What do you know today that you didn't know yesterday?
 - What would you change about your day today?



Peanut Butter Balls

- 1 can (15 oz.) great northern beans (drained and rinsed)
- 1/3 cup honey
- 1 tablespoon vanilla
- 1 ¼ cups peanut butter
- 1 ½ cups oats



1. Mash the great northern beans with a fork in a bowl until smooth.
2. Add the honey and vanilla. Stir.
3. Add peanut butter. Stir until blended.
4. Stir in the oatmeal.
5. Wash hands. Use a tablespoon to scoop up some of the peanut butter mixture. Shape the mixture into balls (makes 50 balls).
6. Store leftover balls in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

Note: You can store peanut butter balls in the freezer. Lay them out on a cookie sheet and freeze. Then store in a freezer bag. Thaw for 5 minutes before serving.

Frozen Pudding Sandwiches

- 2 cups non-fat milk
- 1 package (1-1.5 ounces) fat free, sugar free pudding mix (chocolate and vanilla)
- 1 cup creamy peanut butter
- 50 graham cracker squares (25 sheets broken in half)

1. Stir milk, pudding mix, and peanut butter together with a whisk or fork. Stir until mixture is smooth and thick.
2. Use a tablespoon to spoon pudding mixture onto 25 of the graham cracker squares. Top with the rest of the 25 graham cracker squares to make sandwiches.
3. Place sandwiches on a baking sheet and put in the freezer. Freeze until firm (about 3 hours). Put sandwiches in a freezer bag or airtight container and store in the freezer.

Sources: https://ucanr.edu/sites/hhf/Building_Healthy_Eating_Habits/Mealtime_Routines/; <https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/recipe> retrieved 08/31/20

Eat Smart Idaho can help you learn how to eat well for less. For information on Eat Smart Idaho classes, contact the Nutrition Instructor in your county:

Panhandle: Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai & Shoshone Counties
208-446-1680

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