

# TEACHING CHILDREN ABOUT NUTRITION DURING MEALS

A WORKBOOK TO ACCOMPANY THE PREVENTING CHILDHOOD OBESITY VIDEOS

Website: <http://TeachKidsNutrition.org>



## TEACHING CHILDREN ABOUT NUTRITION DURING MEALS

This workbook accompanies five online videos that instruct early care providers and parents to teach children about nutrition during meals, through conversation about the foods being eaten.

Each video lasts about two minutes. These videos are entitled:

- Video 1: Teaching Taste, Texture, and Color
- Video 2: Teaching Nutritional Benefits of Eating Healthy Foods
- Video 3: Teaching Portion Size
- Video 4: Teaching Verbal Praise
- Video 5: Putting it All Together

These videos can be viewed at

<http://TeachKidsNutrition.org>. This purpose of this workbook is to help you gather your thoughts about what you saw in each video and prepare you to educate children about nutrition during meals and create a positive experience with food.



There are 22 questions throughout this workbook. Each question requires a written response.

There is no right or wrong answer to these questions – simply watch the videos and pay attention to the examples. Then, think about how you could apply what you saw. The entire workbook (including watching the 5 videos) should take about 1 hour to complete.

You can learn more about the development of these videos by clicking on this link (or by copying and pasting it into your browser: <http://TeachKidsNutrition.org>). Then, click on the video *Introduction to Teaching Children About Nutrition During Meals*.

## VIDEO 1: TEACHING TASTE, TEXTURE, AND COLOR

Let's begin by watching the video: *Teaching Taste, Texture, and Color*. You can watch the video by clicking on this link (or by copying and pasting it into your browser):

<http://TeachKidsNutrition.org>

(Then, click on the video *Teaching Taste, Texture, and Color*)

As mentioned in the video, adults can educate children about the taste, texture, and color of foods through conversations at meal times. Adults can *ask questions* and *make statements* about the foods being eating. Let's review taste, texture, and color of foods.

### Taste

There are 5 types of taste. They are:

1. Sweet – most oranges taste sweet
2. Sour – most plain yogurt tastes sour
3. Salty – salted pretzels are salty
4. Bitter – unsweetened chocolate tastes bitter
5. Savory – salmon is an example of a savory food

The video you just watched talks about *asking questions* and *making statements* about taste.

Please read items 1, 2, and 3, and then write your answers in the blanks provided.

1.) Write down a food you typically eat with children:

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2.) Write down a question you might make about this food's taste (either a specific or general question):

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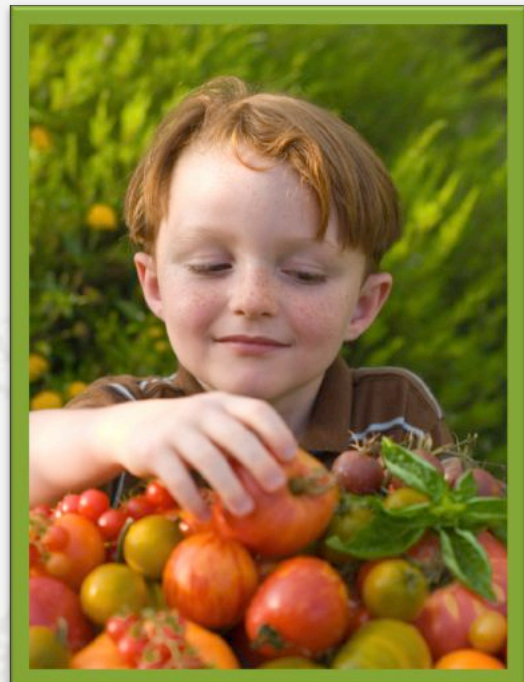
3.) Write down a statement you might make about this food's taste (either a specific or general statement):

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## Texture

There are many different words to describe the texture of foods. Some of these words are:

- Soft
- Smooth
- Thick
- Firm
- Slippery
- Sticky
- Hard
- Rough
- Spongy
- Furry



The video you just watched talks about *asking questions* and *making statements* about texture.

Please read items 4, 5, and 6, and then write your answers in the blanks provided.

4.) Write down another food you typically eat with children:

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5.) Write down a question you might make about this food's texture (either a specific or general question):

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6.) Write down a statement you might make about this food's texture (either a specific or general statement):

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## Color

There are 6 colors to consider when talking about food. You may also consider "white" a color.

These colors are:

1. Red
2. Yellow
3. Blue
4. Orange
5. Green
6. Purple

White (the absence of color)

The video you just watched talks about *asking questions* and *making statements* about color. Please read items 7, 8, and 9, and then write your answers in the blanks provided.

7.) Write down another food you typically eat with children:

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8.) Write down a question you might make about this food's color (either a specific or general question):

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9.) Write down a statement you might make about this food's color (either a specific or general statement):

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Now that you have watched the video and brainstormed statements and questions about the taste, texture, and color of foods, try talking about the food you eat at your next meal with children – make statements, ask questions, and have great conversation about food!

## VIDEO 2: TEACHING NUTRITIONAL BENEFITS

Now, let's watch the video: *Teaching Nutritional Benefits*. You can watch the video by clicking on this link (or by copying and pasting it into your browser):

<http://TeachKidsNutrition.org>

(Then, click on the video *Teaching Nutritional Benefits*)

Let's begin to think about how you could teach children about nutritional benefits during the meals you eat with them. Remember to focus on tangible benefits that children can understand, especially:

- How the foods they eat affect their body
- How the foods they eat allow them to do activities they enjoy

ChooseMyPlate.gov from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides information on the health benefits and nutrients of foods from each of the food groups: fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy (<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/>). A few nutritional benefits of foods in each of these food groups are listed below for you (the

adult). Remember when you communicate nutritional benefits to children, keep it simple!



### **Fruits and Vegetables**

- Vitamin C is found in foods such as oranges, kiwi and broccoli. It is important for growth and repair of body

tissues. Vitamin C helps heal cuts and wounds, and keeps teeth and gums healthy.

- Diets rich in potassium may help to maintain healthy blood pressure. Fruit sources of potassium include bananas, prunes and prune juice, dried peaches, apricots, cantaloupe, honeydew melon, and orange juice.
- Some vegetables and fruits contain fiber, such as beans, pears, and apples. These vegetables and fruits may reduce the risk of obesity, diabetes (type 2), and other chronic diseases.

### Grains

- Magnesium is found in whole grains; it is used in building bones and releasing energy from muscles.
- Selenium is also found in whole grains; it is important for a healthy immune system.
- The B vitamins thiamin, riboflavin, and niacin play a key role in metabolism – they help the body release energy.

### Proteins

- Proteins function as building blocks for bones and muscles (remember to limit or avoid proteins high in saturated fat and cholesterol).
- Vitamin B helps build tissues.
- Magnesium is used in building bones and in releasing energy from muscles.
- Zinc is necessary for biochemical reactions and helps the immune system function properly.

### Dairy

- Calcium is used for building teeth and bones.
- Intake of dairy products is linked to improved bone health.
- Intake of dairy products is also associated with a reduced risk of type 2 diabetes and other diseases.



Now, consider a food from each food group that the children in your early care center or your home, eat often. Then, write how that food:

- Affects their body
- Allow them to do activities they enjoy

Please read items 10, through 17, and then write your answers in the blanks provided.

10.) Write down a fruit or vegetable you typically eat with children:

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11.) How you would describe the nutritional benefit(s) of this fruit or vegetable to a child?

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12.) Write down a grain you typically eat with children:

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13.) How you would describe the nutritional benefit(s) of this grain to a child?

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14.) Write down a protein food you typically eat with children:

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15.) How you would describe the nutritional benefit(s) of this protein food to a child?

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16.) Write down a dairy product you typically eat with children:

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17.) How you would describe the nutritional benefit(s) of this dairy product to a child?

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## VIDEO 3: TEACHING PORTION SIZE

Now, let's watch the video: *Teaching Portion Size*. You can watch the video by clicking on this link (or by copying and pasting it into your browser):

<http://TeachKidsNutrition.org>

(Then, click on the video *Teaching Portion Size*)

As a general rule, adults should give children who are between 2 and 5 years old about 1 tablespoon for each year of the child's age.

So, if a child is 4 years old, he should receive a portion of about 4 tablespoons for each food item. For more specific guidelines on portion size, see the USDA's ChooseMyPlate.gov (<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/>).



The video describes 3-step process for teaching children about portion size during meals.

Step 1: Set a portion rule and model the portion

- For example: *Please take 2 spoonful's of grapes* (then you model this by taking two spoonful's of grapes)

Step 2: Have the child serve himself or herself.

Step 3: (If the child finishes the first serving and wants a second) Prompt the child to attend to his or her hunger cues

- For example: *When you listen to your tummy, is it telling you that you're still hungry?*

Please read items 18 and 19 and then write your answers in the blanks provided.

18.) Think of one food you might eat with children in the next day or so.

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19.) Now, determine the portion of that food for the child(ren) you will be eating with. You can use the USDA's Website to estimate the portion size (<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/>) or you can use the general rule of giving children who are between 2 and 5 years old about 1 tablespoon for each year of the child's age. In the space below, write the verbal rule you will set for the child(ren):

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## VIDEO 4: VERBAL PRAISE

Now, let's watch the video: *Verbal Praise*. You can watch the video by clicking on this link (or by copying and pasting it into your browser):

<http://TeachKidsNutrition.org>

(Then, click on the video *Verbal Praise*)

As the video mentioned, it is important for children to have positive experiences with healthy foods. One way to help make eating healthy foods a positive experience is to use verbal praise. Verbal praise simple means saying positive things about a child's behavior. You could verbally praise any positive interaction with food, including:

- Conversation about food
- Serving behavior
- Eating behavior

Here are 3 examples of verbal praise:

- *Yes, this yogurt is sour, great description* (Conversation about food)
- *That was exactly two spoonfuls of grapes, thank you for serving yourself!* (Serving behavior)
- *Good job trying that orange!* (Eating behavior)

Now, think back to a recent meal with a child. Then, list 3 praise statements you could have made (or did make). Remember you can praise almost anything related to food.

20.) Verbal praise statement 1:

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21.) Verbal praise statement 2:

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22.) Verbal praise statement 3:

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## VIDEO 5: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Now, watch the final video: *Putting it All Together*. You can watch the video by clicking on this link (or by copying and pasting it into your browser):

<http://TeachKidsNutrition.org>

(Then, click on the video *Putting it All Together*)

Now that you have completed this workbook, have a colleague in your early care center (if you are in childcare) or another adult in your home (if you are a parent) take a look at the answers you provided and give you feedback. If there is anything that this person feels you could improve on (or anything this person does not agree with) work together to revise your answers.

Enjoy the healthy foods you serve to your child(ren), and have a great conversation about the healthy foods you are eating!

# CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL & MEDICAL CENTER'S

## PREVENTING CHILDHOOD OBESITY COMMUNITY GRANT

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