Take-Home Guide

Welcome to Every Body Eats!
What’s in the food we eat? Is breakfast really that important? Are you eating enough fruits and vegetables? You’ll find out the answers to these questions and more in this exhibit about the science of healthy food choices.

When you’re finished exploring, take this guide home and use these fun activities to help you put your new knowledge into action!

Family Activities

Let kids prepare food for the family. Help in the kitchen may be closer than you think! Many kids love to be involved in preparing food. Make sure to supervise them, help them find tasks they can feel successful at, and pay attention to safety (for example, kids should cut fruits or vegetables with plastic or butter knives, and adults should run the stove). Some ideas for kid-friendly cooking: salads (vegetable or fruit), sandwiches, smoothies, or kabobs. Challenge them to create their own recipe and include at least 3 vegetables or 2 fruits, or 3 different colors, etc. Encourage them to be creative! Another idea: have them measure, peel, or mix ingredients for a recipe you cook.

Find fun ways to involve children in shopping. Have them make their own list (or give them one) of items they are responsible for as you make your way through the store. These could be the ingredients for a recipe they’ve created or chosen. Other ideas: have kids read and compare nutrition labels while you shop, then choose which products you buy based on the “expert” recommendations from their nutrition “research;” create a food or nutrition label scavenger hunt; or have kids pick out one new produce item to try on each shopping trip.

Track your family’s eating for a week. Create a chart to record what everyone eats together, plus snacks and individual meals such as lunches at school or work. When you’re finished, create a family nutrition plan that sets goals for numbers of fruit and vegetable servings and limits foods with added sugar or excess fat. Check your progress each week.

For Parents and Caregivers

Creating healthy habits can be fun for the whole family. Whether you involve kids in preparing food or help them create a family nutrition plan, you’ll drive home the message that you care about them making healthy choices. Practicing healthy choices at home will not only have a big influence on your kids’ choices later—it also makes for great family time!

Involving kids in activities such as selecting recipes, shopping, and preparing food is fun and has the added benefit of empowering them to take control of their own nutrition choices. Remember that adults are important role models. Research shows that what parents eat has more effect on children’s food choices than other messages kids may hear about healthy eating.

For Kids

Become your family’s nutrition expert! Sometimes adults feel too busy to make healthy food choices. They need your help! Here are some ideas to get you started:

Plant a garden.
You don’t even need a yard! You can grow some vegetables indoors or on a porch with a special type of garden called a container garden. Find out how to set one up at www.omsi.edu/everybodyeats/containergarden

Create edible art.
Make colorful sculptures out of fruits and vegetables. Try faces or animals. You can also make art with toppings on homemade pizza or sandwiches. After you show off your creation, have fun eating it!

Host a “Kids Cook” night (or morning!)
Use your imagination and make a healthy recipe with an adult’s help. A few ideas: super colorful burritos, homemade veggie pizza, cookie cutter shaped blueberry pancakes, and fruit salad with vanilla ice cream for dessert.

Other resources

These books and websites have great activities and nutrition information for kids and adults:
- www.omsi.edu/everybodyeats More nutrition resources and online exhibits for kids.
- www.kidnetic.com Games for kids and parent information in Spanish and English.
- www.nutrition.gov Tons of nutrition information for children and adults.
- How to Teach Nutrition to Kids by Connie Liakos Evers. A great book packed with creative ideas for fun family activities.

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