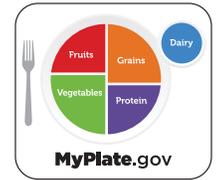


MYPLATE LESSON

CREATE
FOOD, FUN & READING



Dear Parent,

Your child attended a Food, Fun, & Reading lesson today. Food, Fun, & Reading gets children excited about trying nutritious foods through reading and fun activities. Today's lesson provided an overview of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) MyPlate. This lesson was the first in a six-lesson series. The other five lessons will each focus on a different USDA MyPlate food group. Please see the attached handouts for more information, including MyPlate tips for parents, a kid's activity sheet, and kid-friendly recipes to try at home.

Mealtime with young children can sometimes be challenging for parents, especially when children are reluctant try new foods. To encourage children to enjoy a variety of nutritious foods and develop a healthy relationship with food, child feeding expert Ellyn Satter, RD, recommends that parents take responsibility for some of the aspects of eating and children be in charge of others.

Parent's Tasks

- Offer a variety of nutritious foods for your child to choose from at meals and snacks.
- Offer a new food along with familiar foods. Set an example by eating a variety of foods yourself.
- Offer meals and two or three snacks at set times during the day, and minimize snacking and drinking juice in between.

Child's Tasks

- Decide what to eat out of the foods offered.
- Decide how much to eat.
- Listen to hunger and fullness to guide eating, which means sometimes eating more and sometimes eating less.

USDA's MyPlate is a visual tool that parents can use to choose nutritious foods to offer their children. MyPlate is divided into five food groups: Fruits, Vegetables, Protein, Grains, and Dairy. A healthful eating pattern includes nutritious choices from each group. See the attached MyPlate Tips for Parents handout for key messages about nutritious choices from each food group. Here are some tips to get you started.

- Include colorful fruits and vegetables at meals and snacks. MyPlate recommends filling half our plates with these nutritious foods. Add butternut squash to a favorite pasta dish or soup; try mashed butternut squash or sweet potatoes; or try oven-baked sweet potato fries. Keep baby carrots and cut, bite-size vegetables and fruits in the refrigerator. Serve these foods with a low-fat ranch or yogurt-based dip for a nutritious afternoon snack.
- Add more whole grains to meals. Try replacing half of the regular pasta in a dish with whole grain pasta. Or, experiment with different whole grain breads, such as tortillas or English muffins.
- Offer nutritious dairy choices. Fat-free or low-fat yogurt or reduced-fat string cheese make a great snack. Top the yogurt with cut fruit or berries and pair the string cheese with whole grain crackers.

Sincerely,

The Create Better Health Team

REFERENCES

Satter, E. (2016). The Satter division of responsibility in feeding. Ellyn Satter Institute. <https://www.ellynsatterinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/sDOR-tasks-cap-2022-Ellyn.pdf>

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). (2023, August 24). MyPlate. <https://www.myplate.gov>

