

WDS, Inc.
Child Care Resource & Referral

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A publication of Workforce Development Services/Child Care Resource & Referral

Volume 3, Issue 1

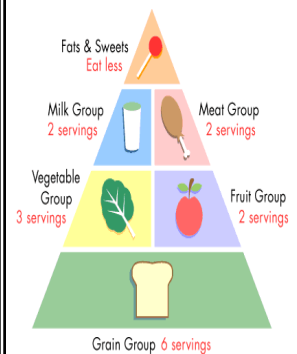
April-June 2009

When Eating Habits Change

As your baby grows into a toddler, her eating habits and what she needs to eat will change. She will begin to feed herself, and may rebel against what you are serving. Toddlers often struggle with parents over food. All this is normal. Here are some common concerns about toddler eating habits.

The Concern	The "Why"
Toddler eats less; drinks less milk' refuses vegetables; seems to prefer cookies, bread, and crackers.	Your child isn't growing nearly as fast in his second year. Expect a gain of only five or six pounds. Carbohydrates and sweets become more popular because toddlers like quick snacks which give quick energy. Try to avoid "empty" calorie foods and keep enough healthy foods available for meals and snacks.
Can't sit in a high-chair for more than ten minutes.	A toddler's curiosity keeps her moving. Expect things and activities to be much more interesting than food. Toddlers are quick eaters, too; she can eat all the nutritious food she needs in ten minutes. Think ahead and offer her the most nutritious foods first!
Wants to decide for himself what, when and how he will eat.	The first steps toward independence are usually taken at mealtime. A toddler wants to make choices and decisions for himself. He shows this during mealtimes by refusing certain food, insisting that foods not touch or making other demands. Respect his need to make some decisions for himself.
Insists on eating only one food for every meal and snack.	Food fads are common as your toddler learns she has control over what she eats. She may stick with only one food for days and then switch to another. Be patient, this won't last and it won't hurt your child's health. Keep offering a variety of foods, but let her make the choice.
Mealtimes are messy.	Food is fun for experiments and toddlers like experiments. Food can be squashed, stacked, dropped, and mixed. If this bothers you, make simple rules about playing with food. Pay attention and remove food when he is finished eating to prevent too much playing.
Evening meals are often a disaster.	Being tired, growing up and the changing sleep habits of a toddler can lead to a meltdown at dinner time. Try offering better breakfasts and lunches and plan nutritious early snacks if your child is too cranky to eat at the end of the day.

Food Time is Fun Time and should be a Peaceful Time for Baby & You



Choking Hazards for Children Age 2 and Under

- ✓Popcorn
- ✓Grapes
- ✓Hard Candies
- ✓Hot Dogs/Polish Sausages
- ✓Doritos
- ✓Corn Chips
- ✓Marshmallows
- ✓Raisins
- ✓Nuts
- ✓Uncooked vegetables

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Avoiding Mealtime

Madness:

Hints for Peaceful Meals

- Drinking it is not the only way to get milk into a child's diet. Serve things that have milk as an ingredient—soups or macaroni and cheese, for example
- Cereal for dinner and cheese cubes for breakfast are fine. Avoid the trap of specific foods only at specific meals.
- Fruits and vegetables have similar food value. Serve what your child will eat, but every once in awhile offer other options to try.



Helpful Tips for Parents

- Be flexible in your expectations around food and babies. Toddlers want to decide for themselves what, when, and how much and how often they eat.
- If you are worried about what your child is eating, keep track over a week or so of meals, not just one or two. Chances are things will even out over the course of time.
- Aim for mealtimes that are calm, upbeat family times. This can be a wonderful time to laugh and talk with your child. It's also a good time to listen to what baby has to say to you. (try not to be rushed, turn off the TV, use kind words, etc.)
- Be a good role model for baby. Eat healthy foods and snacks.
- Don't get into food battles with your child. This helps you avoid power struggles now and eating problems later.

Need help paying for child care? Contact your local Voucher Program



Lake County

219-757-1957

Porter County

219-531-2595

LaPorte County

219-879-6950

Note: this is an income based program. Call your local voucher agency for more details on eligibility guidelines.