

Child-Care Chatter

News and Information for Early Childhood Professional

It All Started in the Highchair

You can't open a newspaper or turn on the TV these days without seeing or hearing a story about the current epidemic of childhood obesity. So when we began updating our course on nutrition for young children, we decided to look at this problem a little more closely. What we found was disturbing.

A 2002 survey of 3,000 infants and toddlers concluded that these children were "consuming too many calories and eating inappropriate foods as young as four to six months." That's right, four to six months. For instance:

- 25% of the 9-to-11-month olds did not routinely eat a single serving of vegetables a day;
- By 9 months, mashed or fried potatoes were their most commonly consumed vegetable;

- By 12 months, 13% of them ate French fries every day; and
- 10% of 4-to-6-month-olds had some kind of dessert food or sweet beverage every day.

Substantial portions of their daily calorie and fat intake came from food with little or no nutritional value. Fortunately, infants under the age of 12 months tend to self-regulate their food intake. When they are full, they simply will not eat more.

After their first birthday, however, two circumstances make this a risky period in an infant's developing relationship with food. The first is that their rapid growth rate is about to hit the brakes. That means they will need fewer calories each day to fuel their reduced level of growth. It also means that adults may view their si-

multaneous reduced appetite as a sign of a "picky eater." And, that's the second risky factor.

Nothing is more dangerous to a toddler's waistline than an adult who is on a mission to get them to eat. They will go to all sorts of extremes to accomplish their goal, including the use of unhealthy snacks, "fruit" juices, and kid-pleasing alternatives like chicken nuggets and pizza.

The results? Recent data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey reveal that 26% of 2-to-5-year-olds are at risk of being overweight, and 14% are already considered overweight. That is double the percentage in the mid-1970s. And, just think. It all started in the highchair.

Source: Based on "Rethinking First Foods," by Pamela Paul, *Time*, June 12, 2006.



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What's New At MB&A?

We are pleased to tell our Georgia customers that we have made good progress in adjusting to the new DECAL policy for in-service training. As of this printing, 12 of our 18 original courses have been re-approved by

the state, and more are on the way.

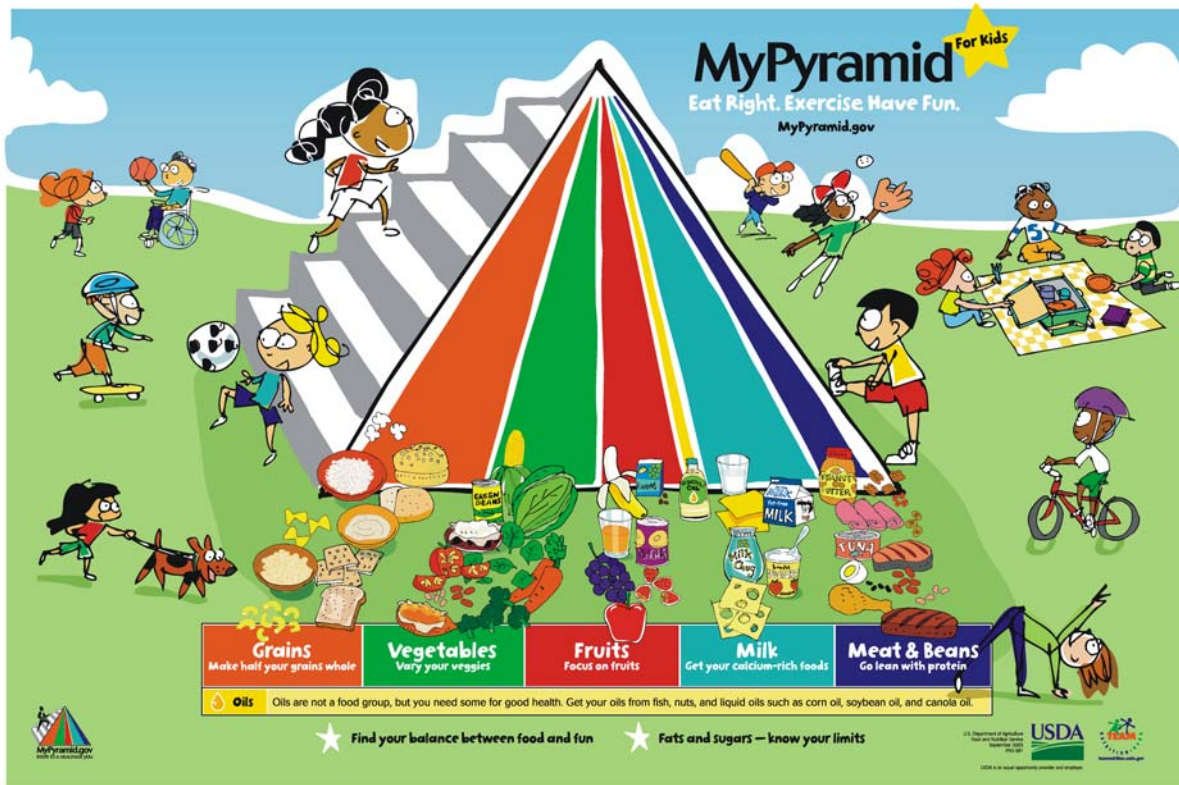
We have also scheduled to add five new courses over the coming weeks, including *Cognitive & Language Development of Mobile In-*

ants, Physical & Emotional Development of Young Infants, Nurturing and Caring for Young Infants, Meeting the Challenge: Roles and Responsibilities of the Child-care Provider and Temper, Temper: Working with An-

gry Children.

We want to thank everyone for their patience and support over the past months. Both are greatly appreciated.

MyPyramid for Kids



In 2005, the U.S. Department of Agriculture published a new food pyramid for children. This new pyramid looks quite different from the one with which most of us are more familiar. MyPyramid for Kids reminds us to be physically active and to make healthy food choices.

For instance, the person climbing the stairs reminds us to run, swim, bike, or simply climb stairs each day.

The different sized stripes remind us that we need to choose more foods from the widest stripes but to eat some foods from each group

each day.

To download a free copy of this colorful and informative poster, go to www.mypyramid.gov/kids/index.html.

You'll also find instructional material, games, puzzles and other helpful information at that site.

Carole's Corner



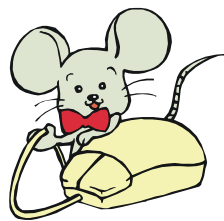
An obvious sign of spring and warm weather is the behavior in an early childhood classroom.

It's usually good to remind ourselves of some basic classroom management techniques to avoid mayhem in the classroom. Remember, prevention is so much easier than intervention. Let's take a look at some very basic ideas for classroom management.

- **Don't talk over them.** When giving instructions, wait for the entire group to be quiet and then give directions.
- **Stick to an established routine.** If you don't think this matters, try abandoning an established routine and watch what happens.
- **Position yourself strategically.** When working with a small group, position yourself with your back to the wall, not the rest of the class.
- **Walk around and interact with the children.** This even works on the highways. Ever notice how traffic slows when a police officer is present? It is the power of proximity. One educator puts it this way, "Either you work the crowd or the crowd works you."
- **Smile and say something positive to every child every day.** The better they feel about themselves in your classroom, the better their behaviors will be.

Jimmie's Journal

While re-searching this edition of *Child-Care Chatter*, I found a number of web sites that provide a wealth of information about childhood nutrition, as well as fun and tasty recipes designed to please children.



Here are just a few:

- www.nncc.org/Nutrition/recipe.kid.html
- www.iptv.org/kids/grownups/resources/downloads.cfm

- http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/childcare_recipes.html
- www.kidshealth.org/parent/recipes/index.html
- www.americanbean.org/RecipeBook/Home.htm
- www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/other/sp_recip.htm
- www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/index.htm#recipes (select "Heart Healthy Home Cooking African American Style.")

Bon Appetite and Healthy Eating!

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Recipe for Healthy Fun

Banana Freezer Pops

Ingredients

- 2 ripe medium bananas
- 1 6-oz can frozen orange juice concentrate, thawed (3/4 cup)
- 1/4 cup water
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 8 (3-oz) paper or plastic cups
- 8 wooden sticks or plastic spoons

To Assemble:

1. Peel bananas and break into pieces. Place in food processor or blender.
2. Add orange juice concentrate, water, honey, vanilla; process until smooth.
3. Pour mixture into cups and cover each with aluminum foil. Insert stick or spoon handle through foil and into mixture.

4. Place cups on a tray; freeze until firm, about 3 hours. To serve, remove foil and slide the pops out of the cups.

Peppy Purple Pops: Omit the honey and vanilla, and substitute grape juice concentrate for the orange juice concentrate.

Source: *Kids' Treats*, Publications International, Ltd., 2005.

No More "Clean-Your-Plate Club"

Obesity expert, Robert Kushner, professor of medicine at Northwestern University, says, "Many of my patients come from the clean-your-plate club."

The Clean-Your-Plate Club is a concept that has become obsolete.

Instead, we should be following the guidelines suggested in the booklet, "Healthy From the Start," published by the nonprofit group, Zero to Three (zerotothree.org). Here are some key points:

- **Don't force children to eat.** They need to learn when to stop eating.
- **Don't use food as a reward.** Avoid deal making like, "If you eat three more peas, you can have ice cream." To do so teaches them that they can get a prize for doing anything, and it encourages overeating.
- **Don't ban foods.** Studies indicate that children who are denied access to certain foods, like sweets, are

more likely to gorge on food than others.

- **Provide variety.** Serve a variety of foods, some of which are favorites and some not-so-favorite.
- **Limit table time.** You cannot expect to keep a toddler's attention at the table for more than 10 to 15 minutes.

Adapted from "Not Hungry? No Problem" by Daren Springen, *Newsweek*, January 29, 2007.

Seven Savvy Serving Strategies

Whether it's your child, grandchild or a child in your class, you are likely to face the challenge of getting a young child to eat healthy foods. Here are seven strategies for making that task easier and more successful.

1. Accept a division of control— Serve healthy foods that children are likely to enjoy, but let them decide how much to eat. Avoid the "clean plate club." Even the youngest children have the ability to recognize when they are hungry, full, and whether a particular food is appealing to them.

2. Exploit the 12-21 month "window of opportunity"— From 12 to 21 months of age, most children will try to put anything and everything in their mouths. It's a good time to let them experiment with a variety of healthy foods.

3. Use the power of variety— Children over 8 months old are naturally adventurous eaters. Ex-

plot their desire for variety by offering healthy choices of different fruits, vegetables, and entrees. Also vary the appearance, taste and texture of the food you serve.

4. Overcome rejection with the "rule of 15"—

After about 21 months of age, most children begin to reject new foods. Instead of giving in, apply the "rule of 15." Research shows that most children have to try a new food 10 to 15 times before they will learn to like it. Introduce new foods by offering the child small portions and encouraging him or her to try it. If the child rejects the food, don't bribe him, plead with him, or otherwise force him to eat it. Just wait a few days and try again.

5. Create bridges of familiarity— When faced with a new food that looks, taste and has a texture they haven't experienced before, children are likely to reject it. Overcome this rejection by offering them new food that appears famil-

iar. For example, if a child rejects roast chicken, try starting with chicken nuggets, then barbecue chicken, and finally roast chicken.

6. Use imitation—

When it comes to food, parents and caretakers are a child's first role models. They learn to enjoy and eat what they see us eat, whether that is ants in Africa, raw fish in Japan, snails in France or French fries in the U.S.

7. Get them involved—

Children are naturally curious about food. Let them plant seeds, harvest the food, and help prepare simple foods. Make learning about healthy foods part of your curriculum.

Adapted from Roberts, Susan B. and Melvin B. Heyman, "How to Feed Babies and Toddlers in the 21st Century," *Zero to Three*, 2000/August-September, 24-28.
