



March Health Newsletter

Nurse Katie M. Fisher-Walz's "Healthy Eating" Strategies for Picky Eaters:

We all, at times, have difficulties with picky eaters in our families. Toddlers and preschool-age children, in general, oftentimes go through periods where nothing truly tastes good, except cookies and candy! 😊 These helpful tips/strategies are designed to help your child reach for the "good stuff," instead of junk food!



Katie Fisher-Walz's "Healthy Eating" Strategies for Picky Eaters

"Spring-Forward" with this Healthy Meal for Your Family

Treating Spring-time Allergies in Your Children

Spring-Inspired Exercises for the Whole Family

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1. **Be a good role model-** Plan, prepare and enjoy regular family meals based on nutrient-rich food group foods Milk, Vegetables, Fruits, Grains and Meat/Beans. Your child watches what you eat, so make sure you're a good example of healthy choices yourself!

2. **Establish routines-**When it comes to mealtimes and snacks, consistency makes young children feel secure. Be sure to allow children enough time at the table, aim for 20 minutes, and try to create a calm and nurturing setting. It is difficult for a child to focus on their eating when distractions are present.

3. **Offer healthy snacks-**Young children have small stomachs. They need to eat less, and more often. Regularly scheduled healthy snacks are like "mini-meals". They can provide up to one-quarter of the nutrients your child needs each day as well as enough calories to sustain them through a busy day of school and/or play. Try to combine foods from at least two food groups that partner protein and carbohydrates sources. Peanut butter and whole-grain crackers or fresh fruit chunks mixed into low-fat yogurt make great snacks with staying power.

4. **Make physical activity a part of your family's health routine-** Children should be active at play for at least one to two hours each day. Consider options like a simple outing to the park to play or more organized classes or age-appropriate sports. And don't forget to limit television time for young children...that's a healthy habit you'll want to establish early!

“Spring-Inspired” Exercises for the Whole Family:

Spring is on the horizon, and we are all excited to get out in the, hopefully soon-to-come, warm, spring weather! It is still cold out, though, so it is a good rule of thumb to have plenty of indoor exercises in your “parenting arsenal” to keep your children entertained during the month of March. Here are some fun, family-centered activities that you and your children can do to keep busy. ☺

Treating Spring-Time Allergies in Your Children:

1. **Use anti-allergen mattress and pillow protectors.** I highly suggest you invest in a good cover for your children's mattresses and pillows to protect them from allergens, particularly dust mites! Make sure you are changing bed sheets often. Linens should be changed and washed once a week.
2. **Have kids change clothes when they get home from daycare/school or after being outside.** When your children walk in the door after a day out, it's a good idea to have them change clothes so they don't sit around in clothes that have pollen or other allergens on them.
3. **Wash hands and face often, especially after being outside.** This is always a good habit, but especially important after playing outside or coming home from a day out on the road. Allergens will stick to you without you realizing it and the next thing you know, kids are rubbing their eyes, nose, or putting their hands in their mouth.

Bowl-a-Rama-

Small, empty water bottles and a rubber ball are all you need to transform the family room into a bowling alley, with the exception of the silly shoes, of course! Six bottles should suffice for bowling pins; if the bottles fall over too easily, fill them up with a little water or dry pasta for some extra weight.

Disco Down-

Disco has been dead and resurrected so many times, I'm not sure if it's in or out anymore! I do know, though, that young children love to dance to it, even if they think that the "Bee Gees" is some sort of sugary snack you've been denying them! Dim the lights, close the blinds, hand each child a flashlight, for the "Disco Effect," and a small scarf to twirl around. Cue up some classic tunes like "Dancing Queen," by ABBA, and "I Will Survive," by Gloria Gaynor, and watch the disco magic unfold. ☺

Masking-Tape Marvels-

Who would have thought that a simple roll of masking tape could provide so much fun? Make a hopscotch pattern or mock balance beam on the living room floor.

Build It Together!-

I had long intended to build a birdhouse using plans purchased on the Internet. I had the wood planks waiting in the garage. When a bad-weather day arrived, I got my young cousin interested in the project and broke open the box. We built a birdhouse in about three hours, and he truly enjoyed it. Make it even more fun by giving yourselves fun, creative builder names. He was "Jack-the-Incredible Builder!"

Slow-Motion Tag-

Chasing my 2 year old cousin around the house, especially if I do it in slow motion, and tickling her when she gets caught, can keep her endlessly amused for hours. Make it even more fun by playing music when you run around the house, and doing fun dance moves, like the "Electric Slide" or the "Macarena," when trying to catch your child! ☺



“Spring-Inspired” Family-Friendly Recipe:

Easter Ham Pie:

Ingredients:

- 2 9" pastry crusts
- 8 oz. thin, low-sodium sliced ham
- 5 oz. frozen spinach, thawed
- 3 eggs at room temperature
- 2 cups shredded Mozzarella cheese
- 15 oz. Ricotta cheese
- 1 small red bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 1 small green bell pepper; thinly sliced
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. chopped basil leaves
- Lemon pepper; to taste

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line pie pan with 1 crust. Sauté peppers and ham in olive oil for 3 minutes and season with pepper. Whisk 2 eggs and ricotta in large bowl. Spread mixture into pie crust. On paper towels, pat spinach dry - then scatter on top of mixture. Sprinkle peppers and ham over spinach and top with mozzarella then basil leaves. Cover with second pie crust and trim edges. Cut vents in top of crust and brush top with 1 beaten egg. Bake 50-60 minutes, or until golden brown. Let set about 15 minutes before serving.

Easter Fruit Salad with Mint

Ingredients:

- 1 pint of fresh blueberries
- 1 cantaloupe, cubed
- 1 quart of strawberries, halved
- 1 honeydew melon, cubed
- 4 kiwi fruits, peeled and sliced
- 1/4 cup honey
- 1 cup no-pulp orange juice
- 3 sprigs fresh mint

Directions:

Place all of the prepared fruit in a large bowl that has a cover. Mix the honey and orange juice and pour over the fruit--top with the mint and mix very gently. Chill for at least 4 hours or more. Remove the mint before serving.