

Family Style Meals: 101

Nutrition Education in the Classroom

Agenda

- Definition and benefits of family style meals
- Specific roles in family style meal service
- Strategies to support family style meals
- Nutrition Education and family style meals

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eat
right. Academy of Nutrition
and Dietetics

Family Style Meals are important!

- By two years of age, children assume the eating practices of their family.
- Teachers are important partners for encouraging healthy habits.



Components of family style meal service

▶ Child involvement

- Washing and setting the table
- Bringing food to the table
- Pass or share food
- Clean up

▶ Adult modeling

- at least one adult sitting and eating the same foods with the children
- Table manners, trying new foods, food safety

▶ Children choose whether to eat, what to eat, and how much to eat.

▶ Child sized serving bowls, plates, and utensils

▶ Small groups of 5-7

Family style meals and infants

Infants younger than 6 months should be:

- ✓ Fed only breast milk or formula
- ✓ Held while being fed
- ✓ Fed on demand

Never prop a bottle or give bottles to children in cribs or allow them to walk around with bottles.



Family style meals and infants

- ✓ One on one personal interaction
- ✓ Feeding times should be safe and relaxed
- ✓ Offer foods gradually
- ✓ Allow babies to feed themselves and explore new textures and colors.



Family Style Meals with toddlers



https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=ElpanmnPhAg

Benefits for children

- Builds independence
- Provides structure
- Enhances development of:
 - Motor skills
 - Language skills
 - Social skills
- Provides opportunities for child-teacher interaction
- Self-esteem
- Food is not used as a reward or punishment



Benefits for Teachers

- Creates a positive atmosphere for the teacher to eat
- Opportunities to talk with the children
- Reinforce other lessons such as taking turns
- Decreases food waste
- Improves mealtime behavior



Why Family Style Meals?

Opportunities to build healthy habits

5x

Children who are overweight or obese as preschoolers are 5 times as likely as normal-weight children to be overweight or obese as adults.



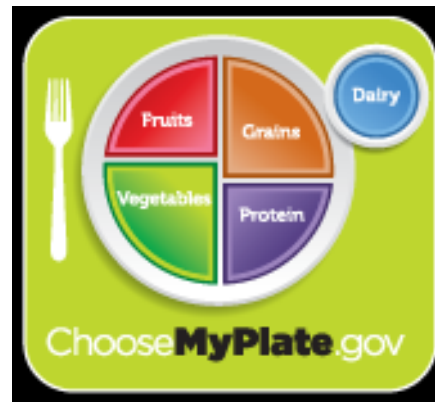
Vital^{CDC}**signs**[™]

www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns

Why Family Style Meals?

Opportunities to build healthy habits

- Introduces and encourages children to new foods
 - Encourages teachers to model healthy eating
 - Provides opportunities for nutrition education
- ▶ Teaching serving sizes
 - ▶ Offers variety of healthy foods
 - ▶ Teaches food safety



You may need to introduce a food **10-15 times** before a child will accept it!

Role of the teacher

- Create a positive eating environment
- Encourage healthy eating
- Model healthy eating and table manners
- Follow the child's lead in making feeding choices
- Address learning goals

Role of the teacher:

Create a positive eating environment

- Avoid the “clean your plate” mentality
- Encourages children to listen to their own hunger and satiety cues
- Can create positive affects on child’s food preference

Role of the teacher: Encourage healthy eating

- ▶ To introduce new foods, teachers use strategies* such as:
 - ✓ Make food
 - ✓ Keep offering new foods
 - ✓ Be a good role model by eating new foods with children
 - ✓ Let children choose new foods
 - ✓ Help children learn about new foods
 - ✓ Try offering one new food at a time
 - ✓ Avoid forcing children to try new foods

Role of the child

Children can:

- Choose what foods will be eaten from those offered
- Decide how much to eat
- Request smaller portions or decline any food item
- Decide later in the meal to try foods they have declined earlier
- Request second helpings after all children have had their first serving

Strategies to support family style meals

- Practice!
- Establish rules and discuss them with the children before mealtime
- Be prepared for spills
- Let the children help.
- Keep extra serving utensils nearby
- Slowly build their skills
- Get parents involved
- Transitions

Strategies to support family style meals

- Appropriate serving utensils
- Use pictures to build language skills
- Sit younger children near adults to facilitate serving
- Allow children to take the lead
- Allow enough time
 - Schedule lunch and breakfast for at least 45 minutes.
 - Schedule snacks for at least 30 minutes



Nutrition education and family style meals

During mealtime

- Reinforce other activities
 - Sharing
 - Colors, shapes
 - Other activities i.e. a nutrition related book your group is reading
- Practice conversation and social skills
- Ask questions

Other opportunities

- ▶ Practice cooking and meals skills
- ▶ Introduce food with fun activities
- ▶ Introduce food with books
- ▶ Teach children how to plant a garden
- ▶ Allow children to help cook



A simple framework to remember healthy habits





HAWAII 5 2 1 0
LET'S GO!



5 2 1 0
Every Day!
HEALTHY HABITS FOR HEALTHY COMMUNITIES



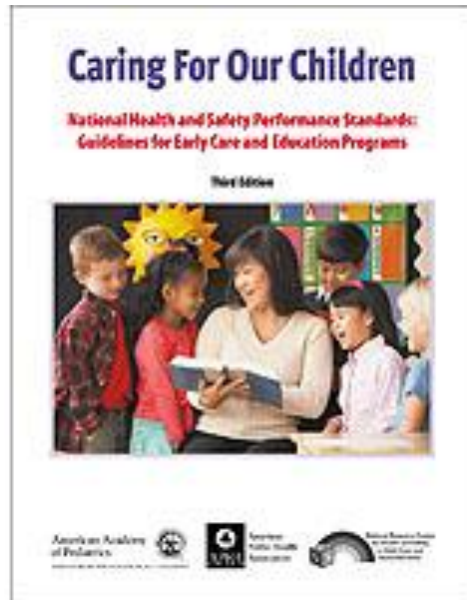
READY, SET, GO!
5 2 1 0
5210Kitsap.org

- 5** FRUITS & VEGGIES
- 2** HOURS OR LESS OF RECREATIONAL SCREEN TIME
- 1** HOUR OR MORE OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
- 0** SWEETENED DRINKS
- 10** HOURS OF SLEEP

5 2 1 0
Healthy NH



5, 2, 1, 0 Messages are Consistent with:



Acknowledgement

Content for this Family Style Meals 101 Slide set was adapted from the American Academy of Pediatric Institute for Healthy Childhood Weight