

Health Happenings

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(a Monthly Newsletter by RN, CYSS Nurse)

Developing healthy eating habits for the "picky eater" can be quite the challenge,- both for you and them. Children have a natural preference for what they eat most often. The challenge is to make healthy choices *desirable*. The best move you can make is to start your child off on the right dietary foot by being a strong role model; after all, children are born imitators. If you're questioning if they'd like a taste, make sure your plate is filled with healthy choices! A few tips to promote healthy eating in your child are:

- Get your child involved in food purchases and preparation. Let them choose! Inspiring them with empowerment can make a huge impact on your child's lifelong relationship with food.
- Keep healthy foods available and accessible. Make fruits, vegetables, whole grain snacks and healthy beverages your staples. Many of these can be purchased at the local farmer markets,- so the children receive a lesson in sustainable agriculture, too.
- Cook and eat-in more often. Eating a home-cooked meal is generally healthier for the whole family and sets a great example about the importance of food. Sitting down together to dine is comforting and provides a great opportunity for family time bonding.

Finally, be patient! Taking time to instill healthy eating habits while young provides a foundation for beneficial lifelong health. Now, go ahead... give yourself a pat on the back for successfully accomplishing another chapter in "Parental Responsibility 101"!