



Family Wellness First: Nutrition

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Tips for Helping Kids Eat Healthier – Even the Toughest Cases!

Children's bodies respond quickly to their diet one way or the other. Feed them well and they'll thrive. Feed them poorly and they'll nose dive. The younger children are when they begin to eat harmful foods and miss out on the nourishing foods their body needs, the more likely they are to develop chronic disease in the future and at a younger age, whether they currently have symptoms or not.

Consequently, the best advice for helping children establish well-balanced eating habits is to start from the beginning by feeding them primarily whole, fresh, natural foods (80-100%), minimal amounts of naturally processed foods (0-20%), and absolutely no junk foods or fake-food brands. Keeping kids away from extreme tasting fake food is the only sure way to prevent them from developing a taste for it. If it's too late for that, as it is for most people today, systematically transition them off the undesirable foods and re-educate their wayward palates.

This is not as difficult as people sometimes think. I have seen scores of parents transform their children's dietary habits with little to no trouble. And yes, all of them thought "not my kids!" at first, just as many of you may be thinking now. Although some will fight and kick and scream initially, children learn, make changes, and adapt more easily than adults. Once made aware of, and taken off the foods that are overriding their natural sensibilities, kids are often surprisingly more attuned to their innate desire for initiating and maintaining a nutritious diet.

Make Eating for Health a Priority!

You must place the same importance on good nutrition in your household as you do on wearing seat belts in your car. Seventy percent of deaths in America are due to chronic degenerative disease and the average American loses 15 years of their life to these largely preventable diseases. So, statistically speaking allowing children to indulge in poor eating habits is even more dangerous than driving without their seat belts on. As you do with seatbelts, make your words and actions convey the danger of poor nutrition and the value of good nutrition to your children.



Don't rob your children of the opportunity to establish good eating habits that will serve them for a lifetime. Developing self-care skills is a critical and sorely neglected part of their education. You must rise to the occasion and make your responsibility bigger than your excuses. Make use of the following practical tips to help.

Top Ten Tips for Helping Children Eat Better:

1. Have a heart-to-heart talk and let them participate in decision making before you begin.
2. Make small, incremental changes over time and establish them as lifestyle habits.
3. Appeal to their interests when talking about the benefits of healthy eating – i.e. every child wants to be strong, healthy, fast, smart, nice looking, etc.
4. Educate them about wise food choices.
5. Involve them in food preparation as much as possible, at as early an age as possible.
6. Be an example by Eating for Health as much as possible yourself !
7. Don't keep tempting junk food in the house. Do keep plenty of healthy foods on hand.

Establishing and Advancing the Chiropractic Family Wellness Lifestyle

8. Encourage other parents, teachers and family members to make healthy foods available at school and social functions.
9. Pack a bag with nutritious foods when going out to avoid resorting to convenient, albeit poor-quality food choices.
10. Implement the Five Bites, Five Times method described below.

Five Bites, Five Times!

A tried and true method of helping to train children's – and adult's! – taste buds to like new, healthier foods, is to serve a food item on five different occasions and have them take five bites each time they have it. Why? Because the brain automatically repels unfamiliar tastes in the mouth as an innate defense mechanism that helps prevent us from eating poison berries, for example. Having at least five bites, five times, helps override this mechanism and develop tastes for healthier foods as they become more familiar. Explain this to your children and make a fun game out of seeing who likes what food the fastest.

Give some or all of the above tips a try. As you do, I guarantee you'll find that more and more healthy foods and habits will make their way into your family's lifestyle – no matter how great the initial opposition was to making changes.



Kelly Hayford, C.N.C. is the award-winning author of *If It's Not Food Don't Eat It!* As a former chiropractic assistant and junk-food junkie turned nutrition and health coach, Kelly has helped thousands restore their health, energy and natural weight.

For more information on *Eating for Health* including a **FREE REPORT** ~ *Secrets to Overcoming Unhealthy Food Cravings*, visit: www.kellyhayford.com/report or call 209-815-1444.

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