

Nutrition Nuggets

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

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BEST BITES

Festive cornucopias

This Thanksgiving, let your child add healthy mini cornucopias to your holiday table. He could fill waffle cones with plain non-fat Greek yogurt and add fruit and nuts (perhaps grapes, cut-up oranges, and walnuts). He can tie a colorful ribbon around each cone—the decorations will make a perfect appetizer or dessert.



Strike a pose!

Your youngster can use her own body weight to hold poses that will build strength in her arms and legs. Challenge her to do a handstand against the wall, get into a plank position, or balance on one foot. Make it a family contest to see who holds each pose the longest.

DID YOU KNOW?

Nearly two-thirds of children drink a sugary beverage every day.

Instead of buying soda or sports drinks, fill a pitcher with water each morning, and ask your youngster to decide on a healthy add-in (cucumber slices, frozen strawberries). Refrigerate, and have him fill a water bottle, then keep it with him to drink and refill throughout the day.

Just for fun

Q: What reads and lives in an apple?

A: A bookworm.



Turn the tables on picky eating

“Mac and cheese again? You had it yesterday and the day before—and the day before that!” Sound familiar? Encourage your youngster to eat a wider variety of foods with ideas like these.



Be matter-of-fact

Your child may need to be exposed to a new food 10–20 times before she’ll accept it. Keep trying! Have her put a small serving on her plate every time you serve a food. If she says she won’t like it, tell her that’s okay—she might change her mind later. She’ll be more likely to take a bite (or two) if there’s no pressure.

Appeal to her senses

“This lentil curry is delicious!” Let your youngster see you enjoying a new dish, and invite her to get to know it. Ask her to think of foods she likes that are the same color or that have a similar

smell or texture. Maybe she’ll say lentil curry looks similar to Grandma’s baked beans. She’ll be more comfortable tasting the food if it feels a little more familiar.

Find winning combinations

Pair food your child loves with one she’s not crazy about or hasn’t tried. The combination of flavors may turn her into a fan. For example, top fish with sweet pineapple rings. Or offer her just about any vegetable with melted cheese, and watch her dig in. ●

Add learning to family walks

Turn an ordinary walk around the neighborhood into a learning adventure for your child. You’ll all get exercise—and he’ll explore math and science. Here’s how.

Collect (free) math supplies. Your youngster can carry a bag for gathering acorns, colorful leaves, pinecones, and other natural objects from the ground. Then, he could sort, count, and graph the items.

Observe nature. Encourage your child to carry a notebook and look for animals and plants on your walk. He might sketch and jot down notes about spiders, chipmunks, pine trees, and chrysanthemums. ●

