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About the Author

Robert Grubbs has worked in the childcare field for over twenty years, starting in 1980.

He wrote his ebook to emphasize the importance of good nutrition and why we should select a variety of foods to supply all the nutrients children need each day.

"Nothing can be more important than ensuring the health and safety of our kids. As parents, we must do everything that we possibly can to help our children grow into strong and healthy adults".

Robert Grubbs has done extensive research on the subject and consulted with friends and family for their input and ideas.

"Cooking For Kids" was written as a guide to assist parents in meal preparation and to better understand the importance of good nutrition.

Robert Grubbs is also a published songwriter. He lives in Forrest City, Arkansas with his wife and two kids.

1. Introduction

Experts agree that we cannot teach much about nutrition to small children, but we can, however:

- ✓ Teach them that there are many kinds of foods
- ✓ Introduce them to new foods, and
- ✓ Encourage them to choose healthy foods over less nutritious ones.

If a child does not receive the proper nutrition for the first three years of life, there is a grave danger of retarded growth and mental development.

In order to make children enthusiastic about discovering new foods, you must first be able to understand the kinds and amounts of food that your child needs for a balanced diet.

My ebook will show you how to plan more nutritious meals and also how to determine if your child is getting all the vitamins and iron they need to grow on.

The resource section at the end of this book contains material and information that will assist you in planning your meals. You will also find a variety of recipes for soups, salads, desserts, sandwiches and delicious drinks to choose from.

I suggest that you read the entire guide and then dip into it again for good recipes to use or adapt with your own family’s meals when you are planning them.

I hope that your entire family choose some of them as their favorites like so many others already have.

Robert Grubbs

The Importance of having Breakfast every day

For many kids, breakfast is not by choice but by chance, and unfortunately breakfast at school is their only opportunity for a morning meal.

The benefits of eating a good breakfast include improved academic performance, lengthened attention span and better behavior.

Research indicates that poor nutrition during early childhood has an affect not only on physical growth, but on the mental functioning of the child.

Therefore, it is of vital importance that your child not only receives the proper amount of food but the right kind of food as well.

In spite of all these proven benefits, many parents don't emphasize to their kids the importance of eating breakfast, or they simply are not being fed a good breakfast at home.

For some parents it is a lack of resources.

For others, it is a lack of knowledge.

Do your breakfast menus suffer from the ho-hums? From time to time, offer new items so that mealtime is something your child can look forward to.

Get your juices flowing!

The key to increased breakfast participation is creative merchandising. You should consider the following tips:

A. Serve potato breakfast boats – a baked potato wedge piled high with scrambled eggs or chopped turkey or ham and topped with cheddar cheese sauce.

B. When warm weather hits, offer a refreshing orange yogurt freeze. Blend juice and yogurt, then freeze it in 6-ounce cups with a wooden stick. To serve, just pop them out for a lip-smacking breakfast treat on a stick.

C. As with lunchtime, today's kids enjoy do-it-yourself breakfasts. Offer a French toast bar where they can add their sweet toppings, sliced peaches, apple sauce or oranges.

D. For youngsters who prefer to eat and run, serve breakfasts that they can

munch in their hands. Perhaps serve waffle cheese triangles – a toasted waffle cut square in half diagonally and filled with cheese and ham.



It is best for children to be offered three meals a day at reasonably scheduled times.

Breakfast is especially important for children before going to school.

If your child has been playing hard before lunch or dinner, a brief period of quiet activity before the meal will improve their appetite.

Some children eat less and are finished sooner than others. Others may need more time. We suggest that children be allowed to leave or stay as long at the table as necessary.

Children who eat well at mealtime also can be offered healthy snacks. These may include:

- ✓ Natural fruit juices, including orange, pineapple, grapefruit and grape.
- ✓ Skim milk, low-fat regular or frozen yogurt.
- ✓ Mini-pizzas, starting with a toasted whole wheat English muffin and adding pizza sauce and melted low-fat margarine or cheese.
- ✓ Bran muffins with raisins.
- ✓ Rice cakes, plain or with peanut butter.

The 4 Food Groups

Everyone, young and old, needs properly prepared, nourishing food for health and energy. The way we look and feel is influenced by the food we eat. The **Menu Planning Guide** in the resource section of this book can help you choose the kinds and amounts of food necessary for your family’s good health.

You can choose the foods your family likes from each of the four food groups. The four basic food groups in the food guide, as a team, give us the food we need for good health. You need foods from these four groups every day.

The meals and snacks below are made up of food from the four food groups recommended in the Daily Food Guide.

Breakfast

Fruit or juice (orange, grapefruit or tomato). Cereal or whole wheat or enriched bread with margarine or butter milk.

Lunch

Egg, bread with margarine or butter, carrot sticks or cole slaw, fruit, milk.

Dinner

Hamburger, mashed potatoes, green vegetables, bread and margarine or butter pudding, milk.

Snacks

Apple, banana or other fruit or peanut butter sandwich and milk, or milk and raw vegetables.

The **Four Food Groups** (milk, meat, vegetables, fruit, and bread/cereal) are important because, together, they will supply the nutrients that our bodies need:

- 1) Protein for growth and repair of the body.
- 2) Minerals and Vitamins – for growth and to keep the body functioning properly.
- 3) Fat, Starches and Sugar – for energy.

Most foods contain more than one nutrient, but no food contains all the nutrients in the amounts that we need. Therefore, we need to consume a variety of foods for good health.

Small children need the same foods as all the other members of the family. The only difference is that they need smaller amounts. Small children also like small servings, with the assurance that they can have more.

Large servings discourage small appetites. Bread and sandwiches can be cut into quarters, meat and vegetables into bite-size pieces, and milk and juice can be served in small glasses.

Sometimes, a child can be encouraged to drink more milk by giving him or her a small pitcher and letting them pour their own.

Examples of suitable size servings are a ½ cup of milk, a small piece of meat, 1 or 2 tablespoons of vegetables or fruit, and a ½ to 1 slice of bread.

Little children usually do not like foods mixed together. They like to eat raw vegetables and fruits as “finger” foods. They like cookies with raisin faces or interesting shapes, and surprises like a piece of fruit in the bottom of their custard.

How foods look, taste and feels in their mouth is very important to little children. They like the color, flavor and texture of these foods: chewy toasted cheese sandwiches, soup with crisp toast strips, banana and tangy orange slices, smooth pudding.

Appetites of children, like those of adults, can vary from day to day. An active child will usually eat more than a smaller or less active one.

A happy child will eat better than an anxious or worried one.

A tired, excited child cannot enjoy his food. He should relax and wash his hands and face before eating.

Choose a quiet time and place to feed the child.

Points to Remember

A. Offer food so that it is attractive to children.

- B. Have a happy, relaxed atmosphere at mealtime.
- C. Help your child to learn how to like the foods their bodies need to grow on.
- D. Never use food as a form of punishment or punish your child at the dinner table.
- E. Never withhold desserts as punishment or give as a reward. They are part of the meal.
- F. Help your child to learn how to like a variety of different foods.
- G. Serve all their foods in a form that is easy for your child to eat.
- H. Accept some spills as part of the process as the child learns to feed himself.
- I. Never insist that a child eat a certain food if he or she refuses it. Allow the child time to learn how to like the food instead.
- J. Serve meals according to a regular schedule.
- K. Insist that all members of the family sit down and eat together at the same time each day.
- L. Coffee, tea, and soft drinks are not good for small children. They also prevent the child from drinking the milk needed to build strong bones and teeth.
- M. Candy and cookies between meals fill the child up but do not provide the vitamins and minerals they must have for growth and development.

Giving Your Child Quality Food

Your goal as a parent should be to provide healthy and nutritious meals for your kids and to help them develop good eating habits.

No two kids are alike. You should not compare one child’s eating habits with those of another.

Don’t push your child based upon the progress of another sibling, cousin, or the advice of a friend or a relative.

Because infants (birth to 1 year) are so vulnerable nutritionally, you should gear their feeding to the needs of each child and base it on sound medical advice.

During the first few months of a baby’s life, breast milk or formula provides all of the nutrients and calories your child will need.

In addition to breast milk or formula, you should provide other foods during the first year, but not until the infant is at least 4 to 6 months old.

Do not introduce cereal or any other type of baby foods too early in your child’s life. It is not necessary and may even increase the risk of your baby developing a reaction to the food later on.

When your baby is ready to begin solid foods, start with small servings of 1 to 2 teaspoonfuls and gradually increase the serving size to 3 to 4 tablespoons per feeding.

Introduce infant cereal first, and then strained fruits, strained vegetables, and finally, strained meats.

You should also introduce juices (orange or apple) one at a time, preferably from a cup.

You should only introduce new foods to your child one at a time over a period of 4 or 5 days. This will allow you time to determine if an allergic reaction will develop and to which food your child may be

allergic.

How can you tell if your child has a reaction?

If your baby develops any of the following symptoms there is a good possibility it is food related:

- A.** A skin rash
- B.** Hives
- C.** Vomiting
- D.** Diarrhea
- E.** Nasal congestion
- F.** Wheezing in the chest

It is recommended that you should take your child to the doctor immediately if any of these symptoms persist so that the proper medical attention can be administered.

Most doctors advise never to feed a baby solid foods until the child is between the ages of 4 and 6 months. By then, the child has better control over eating and can move the food safely from the front of the mouth and down its throat without choking.

The first two years of your child’s life should be a fun and happy time for both you and your child. These early eating experiences should serve as the foundation for the development of a positive mental attitude towards such things as health, nutrition and foods in general.

As babies become acquainted with their environment, including their food, they will want to explore it, handle it and try to feed themselves. Encourage this as much as possible.

With the proper care and attention to your child’s development, you can make meal time one of the most enjoyable experiences in a child’s life.

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