

Healthy Habits

Most parents want the very best for their children. By helping them develop healthy habits early in life, parents are promoting good health.

Lifetime eating habits and attitudes about food are usually formed in early childhood. Help your child develop good habits by making mealtime pleasant and relaxed.

A child may be irritable and refuse food for a variety of reasons: if overtired; if meals are hurried and family members rush off from meals to watch TV or do other things; or if family members discuss disagreements at mealtime.

Follow these suggestions to make mealtime more enjoyable:

- ❖ Serve small portions on a small plate.
- ❖ Serve new foods at the beginning of a meal while your child is hungry. Serve familiar foods with new foods. A disliked food may be accepted later if the issue isn't forced.
- ❖ Use your imagination and serve food in bite-sized pieces; serve foods in an attractive dish.
- ❖ Be casual, friendly, patient and set a good example. Say nice things about the food. Practice good manners.
- ❖ Let children help. Eating is more fun for the child who helps prepare the meal. Children can scrub potatoes or carrots, set the table, pour milk onto cereal from a small pitcher or do other small tasks.
- ❖ Allow time to eat, and have meals at regular times so your child will be ready to eat.



Take time to wake up your brain!

Did you know that children who eat breakfast do better in school? Breakfast is also important for adults. Breakfast feeds both our body and our mind.

If children are too busy to eat a healthy breakfast, try one of these ideas:

- Have your child eat breakfast at school.
- Make sure your child gets up 15 minutes earlier.
- Pack breakfast in a bag so your child will eat it on the way to school.

Remember, mornings should always begin with breakfast!

Breakfast: Always a Smart Start!



Eating breakfast is the best way to start a day, so never skip breakfast. Common breakfast foods are ready-to-eat cereal, milk, bagels, French toast, eggs, and bacon.

Not all these choices are healthy choices if eaten every day. The key is variety and portion control.



A healthy breakfast should be high in fiber, carbohydrates, vitamin C and calcium. These tips may help you add breakfast to your daily activity list:

- If you plan for your children to have breakfast at home, have them wake up early enough so they won't have to rush through breakfast. Offer a few healthy choices and let them decide. This will make them more willing to eat. If there is really no time to sit down and eat, pack the breakfast and let them eat on the way to school. Healthy choices include: low-fat yogurt, granola bar, bagel with low-fat cream cheese, orange juice.
- If your children eat breakfast at school, make sure you know what is offered and get feedback about what they eat. To get the necessary nutrients every day, they will have to balance other meals with the school breakfast. You cannot control what your children eat at school. Explain to them why it is important to eat a balanced diet.

Try this healthy breakfast recipe!

Breakfast Splits

Ingredients:

- 1 small banana
- ½ cup low-fat yogurt
- ¼ cup granola or flake-style cereal
- ½ cup sliced or chopped fresh fruit (kiwi, orange, cherry, apple)

Directions:

1. Cut banana in half lengthwise; place in a shallow bowl.
2. Top with yogurt, cereal, and fruit.



For more information contact:

Kim Evans

Family & Consumer Sciences Extension Agent –
Family Development

LaSalle Parish

kevans@agctr.lsu.edu

318-992-2205



Louisiana State University Agricultural Center

William B. Richardson, Chancellor

Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service

Paul D. Coreil, Vice Chancellor and Director

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture.

The Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

LSU programs are open to Louisiana residents regardless of race, color, creed, sex, religion, national origin or handicap.