



### HELPING MOMS AND KIDS MAKE HEALTHIER FOOD CHOICES

The messages and supporting tips, advice and guidance are designed to provide mothers of 2-5 year old children with information and guidance to increase mother's confidence in using child feeding practices that to help them foster healthy eating habits during these critical formative years. Use these messages along with the action oriented tips and advice to increase participants' skills, motivation and self-efficacy in introducing new foods, fostering independent eating skills, role modeling healthy eating and making family meals more enjoyable. These emotion based, informative messages, and related tips and advice use motivators and reinforcements that mothers find personally relevant.

Incorporate these child feeding messages, video and rollover/widget into your nutrition education and promotion programs. For more information, see background and [Maximizing the Message](http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/corenutritionmessages/Maximizing.htm) (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/corenutritionmessages/Maximizing.htm>).

The photos shown with the messages and content were tested with consumers and are available from online sources. Contact us ([nutritionmessages@fns.usda.gov](mailto:nutritionmessages@fns.usda.gov)) if you are interested in information.



### **New!** Messages for Mothers of Preschool Kids



#### **Enjoy each other while enjoying family meals.**

Keep meal time relaxed to nourish the body and help your family make stronger connections. Let your little ones select which foods to put on their plates and how much to eat from the healthy choices you provide.



**Feed their independent spirit at meal times.** Each meal with your preschoolers is a chance to help them grow and learn to make some decisions on their own. Encourage them to make their own food choices from the healthy foods you offer. Start early and you'll help them build healthy eating habits for life.



**New!**

**Let go a little to gain a lot.** It's natural for moms to worry about their preschoolers' eating habits. Offer healthy foods and let your kids choose from them. They'll be more likely to enjoy meal time and eat enough, so everyone is happier.



**New!**

**Think beyond a single meal. Keep in mind what your child eats over time.** Meals and healthy snacks give children several chances every day to eat a variety of foods. If your child eats only a little or nothing at one meal, don't worry. He'll make up for it with other meals and snacks to get what he needs for good health over time.

## Introducing New Foods



**Sometimes new foods take time.** Kids don't always take to new foods right away. Offer new fruits and vegetables many times, served a variety of ways. Give your kids just a taste at first and be patient with them.



**Patience works better than pressure.** Offer your children new foods. Then, let them choose how much to eat. Kids are more likely to enjoy new foods when eating them is their own choice. It also teaches them how to be independent.



**Let them learn by serving themselves.** Let your kids serve themselves at dinner. Teach them to take small amounts at first. Assure them they can get more if they're still hungry.

## **Cooking and Eating Together Messages**



**Make meals and memories together.**  
It's a lesson they'll use for life!



**Cook together. Eat together. Talk together.**  
**Make mealtime a family time.**

## **Role Modeling/Fruit and Vegetable Messages**



**They learn from watching you.** Eat fruits and veggies and your kids will too.



**They take their lead from you.** Eat fruits and veggies and your kids will too.