

# Healthier Communities Today

The Quay County Maternal Child and Community Health Council -- Number One

## Picky Eating is Normal! Learn How to Cope!

By Jessie Robinson, CMS District IV Nutritionist

Picky eating is a normal childhood behavior and cannot be "cured". Parents need to learn how to cope. Some skills that can be learned are:

- A child's natural appetite can be trusted.
- What a healthy diet actually consists of.
- How to offer what you want your child to eat.
- When and how to say no.

Normal childhood behavior:

- Children's growth slows after the first year, therefore children need relatively fewer calories after the first year. The child's natural appetite will decrease as the caloric need decreases.
- Children have "food jags". This may mean a few weeks of macaroni and cheese or spaghetti as a favorite food. Continue to offer other foods with the child's preference and he/she will soon choose a new favorite.

- Babies are born with a natural preference for sweets. Offer cereal, vegetables and even meats before introducing fruit. Avoid other sweets until a child is at least a year old, then limit to occasional treats. Healthy foods from the food pyramid are important for growth and development. Never put juice, soda or other sweet drinks in a bottle.
- Children may be resistant to trying new foods. Remember, it takes being introduced to a new food as many as fifteen times before a child acquires a taste for a new food.
- Young children do not usually eat three full meals a day. Two meals and a couple of snacks may be all the child eats. A young child's appetite decreases as the day goes on, so they tend to eat less at the evening meal. Remember the child's natural appetite and offer healthy foods.
- Everyone has a different eating pattern, so learn what pattern suits your child best.

## Motivate Your Child To Success

Adapted from "Motivating Your Child To Success", a For Parents Only Series booklet published by the Bureau For At-risk Youth. 1994.

A successful child is a child that has an inner sense of confidence sees himself as important in his world, is able to see himself as successful at whatever he's doing, and faces the problems and stresses of everyday life without falling apart.

Success starts with the family. Do not shelter your children from the sometimes-unpleasant facts of life. Rather, help children learn coping skills, deal with stresses in positive ways, and talk about their feelings.

Motivating children to success means creating an atmosphere of optimism and hope for the child. By mixing the following ingredients together with your love and support, you'll give your child a good start.

- Offer children opportunities to learn and succeed at all kinds of skills in sports, play, music, art, work, and schoolwork.
- Encourage your child to take advantage of activities in and outside of school in order to have new experiences.
- Participate with your child in all kinds of activities and have fun together doing them.
- Promote a good sense of values such as decency, honesty, responsibility, and respect and caring for others.
- Try to keep a strong bond between family members. Children learn by imitating.

The wrong words can hurt when you are trying to motivate your child to be successful so avoid phrases like these: Quit while you're ahead, One a failure, always a failure, You'll never amount to anything, You're worthless, You're going nowhere...fast, and Who cares how you feel. Encourage and support your children as they take steps to grow. Let your children know that you're on their side and remember what it felt like to be their age. Share your own learning experiences and successes. Share stories that show you understand your child's achievement anxieties. Don't compare your child to other children. No one likes to feel inadequate by comparison to someone more successful. Your goal is to motivate, not to add to your child's self-doubt. Share your own efforts and challenges. Tell your child about the steps you are taking to reach your

goals at home and at work. Let your child's confidence grow by building on small successes. Break goals down into smaller, easier tasks. Give your child a chance to practice being successful by experiencing the rewards of small efforts and feeling good about them. Teach your child that small achievements are the stepping stones to success.

Another way of motivating children is to teach them to be responsible for themselves in these ways:

- Start early. Even preschoolers can learn some basics of responsibility like getting dressed or bringing a toy along with them.
- Start small. Don't expect too much too soon.
- Don't do for a child what he can do for himself. It takes away the child's energy and desires to succeed.
- Let your child experience the consequences of irresponsibility. This is a good learning tool for the next time.
- Give your child choices.
- Offer praise for a task well done.
- Set a good example with your own responsible behavior.

Some parents mistakenly believe that it is better to keep children from trying something new than to risk letting them fail. But children who learn to deal constructively with failures also learn how to turn their failures into successes. Parents can help motivate their children by keeping these three parenting pointers in mind:

1. Let children take responsibility for their successes and for their failures.
2. Help children grow from each experience by letting them express their fears, sadness, frustration and anger as well as their happiness, pride or satisfaction.
3. Give children opportunities to try and try again.

Remember that no child is successful all the time. Learning to be successful is a lifetime job for all of us.

# Please take these free recipes and start getting more fruits and vegetables today!

These simple recipes and many more come from Steph's Country Kitchen Goodness at <http://members.aol.com/stephndon/recipe.htm>

## BAKED BROWN SUGAR SQUASH

I usually pair this sweet side dish with meatloaf and baked potatoes...a real comfort meal (especially since all three bake simultaneously!).

2 medium acorn squash, halved and seeded  
1/4 cup butter  
1/2 cup brown sugar  
1/4 tsp. ground cinnamon

1. Place squash in 11x7-inch baking dish. Dot 1 tbsp. butter in each squash half. Evenly sprinkle brown sugar and cinnamon in squash halves.
2. Add enough water to baking dish to just cover the bottom of the pan; cover with aluminum foil.
3. Bake at 350° for 1 hour, until squash is tender. Serve with additional brown sugar if desired. Yield: 4 servings.

## SEVEN-LAYER DIP

This is always a success at parties~no one can stay away from it!

1 can (16 ounces) refried beans  
2 cups shredded Colby Jack cheese  
3 avocados, minced  
Lemon juice  
1/2 cup sour cream  
Chopped tomatoes  
Chopped green onions  
1 can (2-1/4 ounces) sliced black olives

1. Spread refried beans on platter or shallow dish. Warm in microwave or in oven. Top with cheese.
2. Spread on avocados; sprinkle lemon juice over avocados. Cover with sour cream and top with tomatoes, onions and olives. Serve with tortilla chips or corn chips.

## WALDORF SALAD

We enjoy this refreshing, crunchy salad when we want a change from veggie salads.

2 large red apples, chopped (about 3 cups)  
1 celery stalk, sliced  
1/2 cup raisins  
1/2 cup chopped walnuts or pecans  
1/2 cup mayonnaise  
2 tbsp. sugar  
1 tbsp. milk

1. Combine apples, celery, raisins and nuts in a medium serving bowl.
2. Whisk together mayonnaise, sugar and milk in a small bowl; pour over apple mix and toss to combine well. Yield: 4 to 6 servings.

## FRUIT DIP

I love to serve this great dish with shish kebabs in the summer time. This also makes an attractive appetizer or delicious snack anytime.

1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened  
1 jar (7 ounces) marshmallow creme  
3 to 4 tbsp. milk  
Assorted fruits, cut into bite sized pieces (we like strawberries, peaches, kiwi fruit and apples)

1. Mix cream cheese, marshmallow creme and milk until smooth.
2. Thread fruit on wooden skewers. Serve with dip. Yield: 1-1/2 cups dip.

For more information about the MCCH Council,  
contact Alida Brown at 461-4218.  
This newsletter is produced with funds from the New Mexico Department of Health.

QUAY COUNTY  
MATERNAL CHILD & COMMUNITY  
HEALTH COUNCIL