

# Healthy Children, Healthy Adults



## Picky Eaters! What To Do?

**Y**oung children are generally naturally picky eaters. They like a food one day, but not the next. They don't eat much at times, but then a lot at other times. Many preschoolers might taste a new food and then the next time it is presented, decide not to try it again. They may have to see, touch, or taste and watch you eat a food many times (maybe 10 or more) before they learn to like it.

Elyn Satter author of *Division of Responsibility in feeding children*, says “you can't make a child eat, if he or she, if he or she does not want to. Eating is and opportunity to teach children develop positive attitudes about food, and how to eat properly in the table.

Here are some tips to encourage healthy eating:

- Teachers and parents decide what, when, and where children eat.

- Children decide how much and whether they eat.
- Teach children to say “No, thank you,” rather than “Yuk.” If children do not want to swallow, teach them to use their napkins.
- Make the school eating area a pleasant place. Provide family-style meals and snacks. Sit at the table with the children and enjoy the same foods. Include them in the conversation.
- Give encouragement: “You can find something to eat.” “You don't have to eat if you don't want to.”
- Provide regular, repeated, and unpressured opportunities to learn about new foods.
- Do not pressure, badger, reward, applaud, or withhold a food (such as dessert) until a child eats another food (such as vegetable).

Often a child may need many exposures to the same food before he/she accepts it and learn to eat it. Be patient and accept the child's decision to try or not try a new food.



Photo: UC Regents

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### References:

1. E. Satter. *The Picky Eater*. <http://www.ellynsatter.com/the-picky-eater-i-43.html>
2. E. Satter. *How to Handle the Picky Eater. Feeding in Primary Care Pregnancy Through Preschool: Easy-to-Read Reproducible Masters*, 2003.



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## Healthy Snacking

Snacks are important for young children. They have small stomachs and cannot eat enough at 3 meals each day to meet their nutritional needs and satisfy their hunger. Most young children do best with eating 4 to 6 times a day.

Smart snacking tips for preschool children:

- Offer small snacks. Allow children to decide how much is enough.
- Offer snacks to satisfy hunger. Skip the urge to offer snacks to calm a child or reward behavior.
- Include healthful snacks in your classroom.

- Watch out for snacks with added sugar or high in fat.

Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) has a School Wellness Policy. This policy calls for all foods at school—including food served as snacks, at classroom parties, fundraisers, and after-school events to follow healthy guidelines. No chips, candies, cakes, cookies, sodas, or fruit drinks are allowed on school grounds.

Support the OUSD Wellness Policy and offer healthful suggestions to your parents. For more information check the NETA website <http://neta.ucdavis.edu>.



Check the Oakland Unified School District Wellness Policy posted in the reference.

### References:

1. Nibbles for Health, USDA. Why Snack? [http://www.fns.usda.gov/tr/Resources/nibbles/why\\_snacks.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tr/Resources/nibbles/why_snacks.pdf)
2. Oakland Unified School District, School Wellness Policy. <http://www.ousd.k12.ca.us/19941081118021697/blank/browse.asp?A=383&BMDRN=2000&BCOB=0&C=57042>

## Grow It and Eat It Fresh! Nutrition Campaign

As part of creating a healthy and supportive environment that encourages healthy eating and nutrition, Oakland Unified School District Nutrition Service Department, the University of California Cooperative Extension Program, and other partners are increasing the availability of fresh local produce by growing edible vegetables in Early Childhood Education (ECE) Centers.

State Superintendent of Schools Tom Torlakson on October 12, 2011 launched “Team California for Healthy Kids,” a statewide effort to promote daily healthy eating and physical activity in schools, childcare programs, and communities. One of the recommendations of the campaign, to change the school food environment and support healthy eating behavior, is to build school gardens.

*From the Garden to the Classroom* is the NETA nutrition in the garden program. The program offers children the opportunity to grow and taste

the fruits and vegetables they eat throughout the year. Children have the opportunity touch, smell, and taste new fruits and vegetables. Children learn to make connections between the vegetables they grow and eat as a snack and lunch. Children learn about seasonal fruits and vegetables using Tips that featured the harvest of the month. East Bay Community Foundation, Alameda County Environmental Health Department, and UCCE Alameda County Master Gardener (MG) Program support

the gardening program with funding and staff.

There are 11 Gold Start nutrition gardens at OUSD’s ECE an, Centers. Bella Vista, Emerson, H.R. Tubman, Highland, International, Jefferson, Manzanita, Stonehurst, and Yuk Yau. Teachers at these centers connect Network approved material to connect nutrition in the classroom. For more information contact Jasmine Chan at (510) 639-1276, <http://neta.ucdavis.edu>.



## Grow a Salad Garden

### HIGH NUTRITION SALAD GARDEN

In a 4x6 (24 sq. feet) you can plant a high nutrition Salad Garden.

#### What to Plant?

- Cherry tomato (1 plant)
- Salad tomato (1 plant)
- Greens (8 sq. ft.)
- Kale or chard (2 plants)
- Carrots (4 sq. ft. wide row)
- Parsley (1-2 plants)
- Green onions (optional)

#### Rich Vitamin A, C Mini Garden

- Broccoli
- Greens and carrots
- Kale, pepper
- Collards



## Indoor and Outdoor Physical Activity for Early Childhood

Early childhood educators and parents need to work together to help young children learn healthy eating habits and get the recommended amount of physical activity each day. Because many children spend so much time in school, early childhood educators are in a good position to help children develop healthy habits that may continue throughout their lives. Here are some tips for early childhood providers to help children get daily physical activity.

- Include active games as part of your classroom activities. Simple movement activities can help children be more active. Try a “freeze” dance, a jumping activity or a simple follow-the-leader game.
- Encourage, but don’t force children. Give all children chances to be successful at active games. Encourage everyone to play, but

keep it low-key. Allow reluctant children to watch before they join in.

- Emphasize cooperation. Most children under age 5 or 6 are not very competitive. Set up activities everyone can complete, such as an obstacle course. Celebrate with each child when he completes the course. Don’t single out one “winner.”
- Set a good example. Don’t just stand around during outdoor play or active games. Join in the activity and encourage children to play with you. Young children learn by watching adults. Seeing your example may encourage them to be physically active.



**Source:** Cornell University Cooperative Extension <http://www.extension.org/pages/25752/active-play-in-child-care>

## Recipe: Peas

Peas are an excellent source of vitamin K and a good source of vitamin A, vitamin C, fiber, folate, and thiamin. Green peas are among the top ten most commonly eaten vegetables by California children. California leads in the nation’s production of Chinese (such as snow) peas. Edible-pod peas are grown year-round in coastal (Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo) counties of California. [Reference: Harvest of the Month [http://www.harvestofthemonth.com/download/Spring/Peas/pea\\_edu\\_2.pdf](http://www.harvestofthemonth.com/download/Spring/Peas/pea_edu_2.pdf)]

### PEA SALAD WITH FRESH HERBS

Makes 25 tastes at ¼ cup each

#### Ingredients:

- ¾ pound sugar snap peas and snow peas
- ¾ pound fresh green peas (about 1 cup shelled)
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint and fresh parsley
- 1½ tablespoons olive oil
- 3 tablespoons rice vinegar



#### Preparation:

1. Wash peas. Remove stems and strings. Shell green peas.
2. Put snap and sugar peas in a large bowl and add water. Cover with a paper towel.
3. Microwave for 2-3 minutes until tender. Repeat with shelled green peas.
4. When tender, drain peas and cool on paper towel.
5. Mix together all peas in a large bowl. Add herbs, oil, and vinegar until smooth.
6. Pour over peas and serve.

#### Recipe adapted from:

Harvest of the Month, [http://www.harvestofthemonth.com/download/Spring/Peas/pea\\_edu\\_2.pdf](http://www.harvestofthemonth.com/download/Spring/Peas/pea_edu_2.pdf)

#### Nutrition Information per serving:

Calories 24, Carbohydrate 3 gm, Protein 1 gm, Fat 1 gm, Saturated Fat 0 gm, Cholesterol 0 mg, Sodium 2 mg, Fiber 1 gm

## Professional Development Sources

### California School Garden Network (CSGN) <http://www.csgn.org/>

The Network serves as a central organization to distribute school garden information, resources and support throughout the state. CSGN provides school gardening resources for teachers and others working in school gardens.

### Life Lab <http://www.lifelab.org/>

Life Lab offers a variety of garden-based educational programs for teachers. They promote experiential

learning for young children through field trips, teacher workshops, and professional development opportunities.

### Master Gardener Program Alameda County <http://acmg.ucdavis.edu/>

The Alameda County Master Gardeners are trained volunteers that help people learn about gardening. They provide garden seminars, workshops and trainings. They also answer gardening questions on a plant doctor hotline, through email, at local farmers markets, at our three demonstration gardens,

and at various community events such as the Alameda County Fair.

Garden-based educational programs not linked to nutrition are not *Network* supported activities.



## Children Health and Wellness Books

### *A Fruit is A Suitcase for Seeds*

Jean Richards

Millbrook Press, 2002, 32 pp.

ISBN-13: 978-0822559917

The author provides excellent information about seeds, their purpose, and growth that should be easy for young children to grasp.

### *All our Food and Vegetables*

Roberta Duyff, Pat McKissack, Janice Hamilton

Many Hands Media, 1995, 31 pp.

ISBN-13: 978-1888566031

Children learn about and taste a variety of fruits and vegetables. They make a fruit salad,

### *Being Active*

Mari C. Schuh

Capstone Press, 2006, 24 pp.

ISBN-13: 978-0736853682

The book provides pictures and sounds of exercise and depict nutritious snacks

Photo: UC Regents



This material was produced by the California Department of Public Health's *Network for a Healthy California* with funding from USDA SNAP, known in California as CalFresh (formerly Food Stamps). These institutions are equal opportunity providers and employers. CalFresh provides assistance to low-income households and can help buy nutritious foods for better health. For CalFresh information, call 1-877-847-3663. For important nutrition information, visit [www.cachampionsforchange.net](http://www.cachampionsforchange.net).

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