



Fostering Healthy Eating Phrases that Help and Hinder

WHAT YOU SAY REALLY DOES MATTER when it comes to the eating behaviors of young children. For better or worse, eating behaviors formed during childhood often follow a person into adulthood, where they play a key role in one's ability to maintain a healthy relationship with food for a lifetime. The messages a child habitually hears regarding food—in both the home and caregiver settings—can either help or hinder this development process.

Dr. Janice Fletcher and Dr. Laurel Branen, two nationally recognized



child feeding experts who developed the educational program called Feeding Young Children in Group Settings, found certain phrases help children accept new foods, while other phrases hinder this acceptance. Let's take a look at ways we can shift negative, hindering phrases into positive, helpful ones.

PHRASES THAT HINDER

Sometimes we may think praise is a good thing and say things such as, "You're such a good child for finishing your broccoli!", or "I will be sad/mad if you don't eat that." These phrases teach children to eat for approval, ignoring their own signals of hunger, fullness and personal preference in the process.

Or what about when a child wants to get up before finished and we say, "Eat one more bite before you leave the table." Again, this phrase teaches children to ignore feelings of fullness. It is better to stop eating when satisfied, rather than when the plate is clean. Over time,

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Cultural Cuisines

> Jamaica <



Origins & Roles of Food

Jamaican cuisine is influenced by many techniques and flavors from countries such as Africa, Ireland, England, Spain, France, India, China and more.

Food Customs

Jerk is a style of cooking native to Jamaica, in which chicken, pork, beef, seafood or veggies are dry rubbed with a complex, hot spice and then cooked over green pimento wood and coals to produce a smoky, sweet and savory taste. Rastafarianism, a religion that developed in Jamaica, revolves around a healthy lifestyle and includes only plant-based foods.

Staple Foods

Soups, chicken, goat, pork, beef, seafood and the Jamaican patty (a flaky pastry filled with savory ground meat) are popular. Other staples are callaloo (a green leafy vegetable), cho cho (chayote), guinep (Spanish lime), ackee (the Jamaican national fruit), breadfruit, passion fruit, mango, plantain, potato, rice, beans and breads such as bammy, a flat bread made from cassava.

Dining Etiquette

Table manners are generally informal, but stricter on formal occasions. Only begin eating after the host invites everyone to begin. The knife is always in the right hand and fork in the left. After finishing the meal, both utensils should be set down parallel to each other on the right of the plate. It is considered gracious to be open to trying all foods.

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- Food Funny

Fostering Healthy Eating

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children, parents and caregivers will develop an understanding of how much food is needed to feel satisfied, meaning less food left uneaten on the plate.

How about when we try to encourage a food a child may not enjoy by saying, “That doesn’t taste so bad.” This phrase teaches children that their own personal preferences are wrong and can in turn lead to unhealthy attitudes about food or self.

Offering food as a reward can be equally problematic. If we say, “You can have dessert if you eat your vegetables” or “If you stop crying, you can have a cookie” we are creating unintentional consequences. Offering dessert as a reward for finishing vegetables teaches children that some foods are inherently better than others. In addition, using food to resolve upset feelings teaches children to eat to feel better, which can lead to overeating or emotional eating.

PHRASES THAT HELP

What if we shifted the conversation to help children be more aware of their food and themselves? Statements like, “This strawberry is so sweet and juicy!” or “These carrots are crunchy” can spike interest and curiosity. Phrases such as these can help teach children to pay close attention to the sensory qualities that make each food unique and can be used to encourage children to try new foods in a mindful way.

Helping tune in to internal hunger and fullness cues will help children be more mindful of their body and its needs. Asking, “Are you feeling hungry?” or “Do you feel full?” can seem a bit obvious, but it’s important to teach children to recognize feelings of hunger and fullness. This can prevent overeating and eating for reasons other than satisfying hunger, like upset or boredom.

Encouraging children to have their own opinions, likes and dislikes can go a long way towards helping



create a lifelong healthy eater. When they have a say in what they eat, and see that their opinions are valued, we help raise confident and courageous eaters. Saying, “Everybody likes different foods” or “Which one is your favorite?” acknowledges a child’s ability to make choices regarding the food they eat. It also shifts the focus toward the taste of food, rather than who was right.

— Adapted from *What You Say Really Matters in Feeding Young Children in Group Settings*, Dr. Janice Fletcher and Dr. Laurel Branen, University of Idaho.

KIDS' HEALTH & SAFETY

Playground Safety Tips

EVERYTHING you need to know to keep kids safe at the playground.

SUPERVISE KIDS USING PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

- Actively supervise children on playgrounds. It won't be hard – they'll probably be calling for you to watch them climb, jump and swing.
- Check playgrounds where your children play. Look for hazards, such as rusted or broken equipment and dangerous surfaces.
- Teach children that pushing, shoving or crowding while on the playground can be dangerous.
- Dress children appropriately for the playground. Remove necklaces, purses, scarves or clothing with drawstrings that can get caught on equipment and pose a strangulation hazard. Even helmets can be dangerous on a playground, so save those for bikes.
- Big kids play differently than little kids. It is ideal to have a separate play area for children under 5.

Falls are the most common type of playground injury, accounting for more than 75 percent of all playground-related injuries. Lack of or improper supervision is associated with approximately 45 percent of playground-related injuries.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT PLAY AREA BASED ON YOUR CHILD'S AGE

- Ensure that children use age-appropriate playground equipment.
- For babies who are learning to walk, the play area should have a smooth and easy surface to walk on.
- If baby has fairly good head control and can sit up with support (usually around 9 months old), give the baby (bucket-shaped) swings a try.



ENSURE SAFE SURFACING BENEATH AND SURROUNDING PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

- Avoid playgrounds with non-impact absorbing surfaces, such as asphalt, concrete, grass, dirt or gravel.
- Recommended surface materials include: sand, pea gravel, wood chips, mulch and shredded rubber. Rubber mats, synthetic turf and other artificial materials are also safe surfaces and require less maintenance.
- Surfacing should be at least 12 inches deep and extend at least 6 feet in all directions around stationary equipment. Depending on the height of the equipment, surfacing may need to extend farther than 6 feet.
- For swings, make sure that the surfacing extends, in the back and front, twice the height of the suspending bar. So, if the top of the swing set is 10 feet high, the surfacing should extend 20 feet.
- With active supervision and these basic safety tips, every day at the playground can be a walk in the park!

— Safekids.org

Jamaican Coconut Rice and Peas (Beans!)

Vegetable oil	3 Tbsp
Garlic, minced	3 cloves
Onion, finely chopped	1
Thyme	1 tsp
All spice	1 tsp
Bay leaves	2
Scotch bonnet pepper, (optional)	1
Kidney beans, drained	2 (15.5 ounce) cans
Coconut milk	1 (14 ounce) can
Water	1 cup
Salt	1 tsp
White rice, enriched	2 cups

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Heat oil in a large oven proof pot. Sauté garlic, onion, spices and pepper (whole) until onion is translucent, about 3 minutes,
2. Add kidney beans, coconut milk, water and salt. Once it comes to a simmer, add the rice and stir. When it just begins to boil, immediately cover the pan and transfer to oven.
3. Bake for 40 minutes. Remove from oven, keep covered and let rest for 15 minutes. Remove pepper and bay leaves, fluff the rice and serve.

Yield: 7 servings

Meets the requirement for breads/grains and meat/meat alternate

— *Recipetineats.com*

Banana Oat Sheet Pan Pancakes

Oats, rolled	1 cup
Whole wheat flour	1 cup
Bananas, ripe	2
Milk	½ cup
Eggs	3
Honey	3 Tbsp
Vegetable oil	4 Tbsp
Baking powder	3 Tbsp

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Spray a 13 x 18 inch sheet pan with cooking oil spray.
2. Mix all ingredients together in a blender or food processor and blend thoroughly. Spread batter onto the sheet pan evenly.
3. Bake for 20 minutes or until a knife inserted near the middle of the pan comes out clean. Cut in squares and serve with fresh berries if desired.

Yield: 12 servings

Meets requirement for whole grain-rich

— *Creativenourish.com*



Fuel & Fitness

AUTUMN APPLESAUCE ACTIVITY

Homemade applesauce is a fun activity for children and makes a delicious addition to any meal or snack. Let children help with all or some of the steps depending on their abilities.

Start with 4 apples (any variety will work), rinse, peel, core and chop into chunks. Put apple chunks, ¼ cup water, the juice from one lemon, ½ teaspoon of cinnamon, 1 teaspoon of vanilla and 1 tablespoon of brown sugar into a crockpot. Set the pot on low and cook 6 hours. The house will smell amazing while it cooks! Mash any chunks with a fork before serving warm. Makes about 3 cups and can easily be doubled.



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Food Q. What can a whole apple do that half an apple can't do?
Funny A. It can look round!!