

# Staff Pages

This Week's Topic: **Awesome Appetites**  
This Week's Lesson: **Listen to Your Body**

Today in your classroom children learned that it is important to listen to their body and eat when hungry and stop eating when full. Preschool children's appetites may be smaller because they are growing at a slower rate than infants and toddlers. Most children do best with 4 to 6 small meals a day.

- On the back of this page is your lesson plan for this week's lesson "Listen to Your Body." Use this lesson to reinforce the concepts from the Eat Well Play Hard in Child Care Settings (EWPHCCS) lesson provided to your class this week.
- Attached is a parent letter that explains what the children learned from this lesson and includes a fun activity to complete at home. Please make copies and send home following your lesson.

## 5 Ways to Have Awesome Appetites in Your Classroom



1. **Provide meals and snacks as part of a daily routine.**
2. **Eat together.** Sit with and enjoy the same foods as the children.
3. **Let children learn by serving themselves** whenever possible.
4. When serving foods that are served in units (such as sandwiches) **provide age appropriate portions** and let children decide how much to eat.
5. **Encourage children to try new foods** but let them know it's okay if they don't want to.



For more EWPHCCS lessons go to: [http://www.nyhealth.gov/prevention/nutrition/cacfp/ewphccs\\_curriculum/index.htm](http://www.nyhealth.gov/prevention/nutrition/cacfp/ewphccs_curriculum/index.htm)

## This Week's Lesson: Listen to Your Body

**Goals & Objectives:** To teach children that it is important to listen to their bodies and eat when they feel hungry and stop eating when they feel full. To assist children in identifying the appropriate portion sizes.

**Prep Time:** 0 Minutes

**Activity Time:** 30 Minutes

### Supplies You Will Need

Food for a CACFP credible snack or meal. No additional supplies are needed for this activity.

### Preparation for Activity

- Read through entire lesson.
- Plan this activity just before a meal or snack. Clean and sanitize the tables where children will eat.

### Activity

- 1. Ask the children what they remember from the nutritionist's visit.** Remind them of the following points:
  - How much you want to eat changes depending on how fast your body is growing and how active you are.
  - Listen to your body. Feeling hungry is your body's way of saying it is time to eat. Stop eating when you feel full.
  - Fruits, vegetables and dairy foods are good for your body. These foods help you give you energy and help you grow strong and healthy.
- 2. Tell children they are going to practice listening to their bodies.** Ask children to stand in a circle and call out random fitness activities such as jumping jacks, jumping or running in place. After 1 minute, ask children how they feel. Discuss with the children that they may notice they are breathing harder, feeling warmer, and that their heart may be beating faster. Explain that this is how exercise makes us feel. Sometimes they may feel tired and that's when it's good to get some rest. Sometimes they may feel like they need to move and that's when they can go play a game.
- 3. Explain that they may also feel hungry or thirsty.** That means it's time to eat and have a drink.
- 4. Ask the children to wash their hands.** 
- 5. Enjoy the meal or snack together.**
- 6. Let children serve themselves.** Teach them to take small amounts at first. Tell them they can get more if they are still hungry.
- 7. Talk to the children** during the meal or snack about the colors, tastes, shapes, textures of the foods served.
- 8. Help the children know when they've had enough** by using phrases such as "Is your stomach telling you that you're full?" "Is your stomach still making its hungry growling noise?" "Has your tummy had enough?" Avoid praising a clean plate. Children should stop when they are full, rather than when the plate is clean.

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

### Extension Activity

Go to <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/preschoolers/HealthyHabits/phrasesthathelp.pdf> and print the handout "Phrases the HELP not HINDER." Practice using phrases that help during mealtimes and snack times.

## Dear Parent,

Today your child learned that it is important to listen to their body and eat when hungry and stop eating when full.

**Home Activity:** Let your child serve themselves at dinner.



### Tips



- Children learn by serving themselves. Teach them to take small amounts at first. Tell them they can get more if they are still hungry
  - Preschoolers can practice serving from small bowls that you hold for them.
  - Patience works better than pressure. Offer your child a variety of foods. Then let them choose how much to eat.
  - Reward your child with attention and kind words, not food. Show your love with hugs and kisses. Console with hugs and talks.
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## Cook together. Eat together. Talk together. Make meal time a family time!



- 😊 Children love helping in the kitchen. Help your child learn to follow instructions, count and more!
- 😊 Have your child help you get ready to eat; for example, your child can help set the table.
- 😊 Talk to your child during meals. Ask questions like:
  - What made you really happy today?
  - What did you eat at lunch today?
  - What's your favorite vegetable?
  - Tell me one thing you learned today.

### Family Meal Days

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat

Directions: You may not be able to eat together every day. Try to have family meals at least four times a week. Write it on your calendar.