

Comments from **SEED** training:

“This was a **fabulous** training. Thank you!”

“I must say it was the **best nutrition training ever!**”

“I thought the program was well done and **fun.**”

“The games were **fun** and they reinforced what was taught throughout the day.”



**Fifth Edition: 2018**

Presented By:  
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**Recommendations**

approved by:



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**NO MORE  
FOOD FUSS!**



**Best Practices for  
Child Nutrition Staff**

## USE KID-FRIENDLY FRUIT & VEGGIE HABITS

### More play, less fuss helps kids try healthy foods.

1. **Serve fruits and vegetables over and over.** Sometimes it takes at least 10 exposures to the same food for children to try and decide if they like it. Adults get bored with the same food over and over, but children learn to like a food with repeated servings.
2. **Change-O Presto.** A raw tomato in a salad is very different from tomato sauce on pizza. Children may be more comfortable trying a new food if they watch it change from one form to another. Use different recipes to serve the same food in different ways. This allows children an opportunity to find one they like.
3. **Do as I do.** Children want to do what you do! When you are with children, eat the same foods they eat for snacks and at mealtimes. Don't eat junk food around children.
4. **Words Matter.** "Mmmm—broccoli is very yummy...I love crunchy carrots!" Your positive attitude toward healthier foods will encourage children to have one also!
5. **Watch Out for Trickster Foods.** Just because it says it is healthy, does not mean it is. Pay attention to foods that claim to be healthy, while serving up unnecessary sugar and saturated fats. Take time to read labels and opt for ones that list items such as "whole grain" first. Look for recipes that offer healthier substitutes, for example, exchange sweet potatoes for white potatoes.
6. **Sneak Food into Daily Interactions.** Talk with children about healthy foods anytime throughout the day—in the hall or during visits to the classroom. Ask questions like "What color are peppers?" or "Which vegetable is your favorite?" Talk about the yummy vegetables you cooked for lunch.



7. **Allow kids to decide if and how much to eat.** Help children listen to their bodies. It's your responsibility to provide the meal for the children. It is the children's responsibility to decide what to eat and how much. Use hunger cues to support their choices. Children should never be forced, threatened, or bribed to eat.
8. **Create a physical environment that supports healthy habits.** Display items in ways that encourage children, parents, and visitors to choose healthy food options. For example, place the white milk in front of the flavored milk, or post your monthly menu with attractive pictures of healthy foods.
9. **Connect with teachers.** Look for ways to connect the kitchen with the classroom. Talk to the teacher about what foods are on the menu and why they are repeated. Offer a kitchen tour! Connecting with teachers is a great way to streamline communication to the students and parents.
10. **Connect with families.** Look for ways connect your healthy food habits to parents. For example, use newsletters to share healthy snack tips. Attend parent nights or conferences to get to know parents and discuss new menu items. When parents know that their child is learning to try a new food, they might be willing to try it at home. Invite parents to the classroom to support with nutrition activities like snack prep or food experiences.

