



At our child care, your child is learning healthy eating habits for life. Children with healthy eating habits learn more, can do more, and keep a healthy weight. We are improving menus and changing the way meals and snacks are served. Our goal is to be a **Missouri Eat Smart Child Care**.

### **What is an Eat Smart Child Care?**

It is a child care center or home that chooses to follow higher standards for feeding children. We do more because we know it's good for the children.

See **Missouri Eat Smart Guidelines for Child Care** at [www.health.mo.gov/eatsmartguidelines](http://www.health.mo.gov/eatsmartguidelines)

### **Some ways we're improving.....**

#### **THE FOODS:**

- More whole grains
- More fresh fruits and veggies
- Less processed foods
- Lower fat milk
- Fewer sweet snacks and breakfast foods
- More variety of foods

#### **WHAT WE DO:**

- Set a good example by eating with the children
- Let children make choices about the foods they eat
- Help children feel important by setting the table, serving themselves, cleaning up, etc.
- Teach kids about nutrition, healthy habits and foods
- Have healthy classroom parties



### **Families can help.....**

- **Ask questions.** Find out what changes we are planning.
- **Offer suggestions.** Tell us what you think is important in feeding your child.

Share ideas for meals that your family likes.

- **Support a healthy environment.** Send non-food items like bubbles or play tattoos instead of sweet treats for parties.

Let child care provide all the food. If a child brings in food from outside, it can cause problems.

- **Be a good role model.** Practice healthy eating habits at home.



## At Home

**Cook together. Eat together. Talk together. Make mealtime a family time.**



- **Avoid lecturing or making your child eat.** It's normal for young children to be "picky" eaters. They don't always take to new foods right away. Offer new foods many times. Give just a taste at first and be patient with your child.
- **Offer the same foods for everyone.** No need to be a "short-order cook" making different dishes to please children. It's easier to plan family meals when everyone eats the same foods.
- **Focus on the meal and each other.** Turn off the television. Take phone calls later. Talk about fun and happy things.

- **Fix meals together.** Teach your child to tear lettuce or add veggie toppings to pizza.
- **Let them learn by serving themselves.** Let your kids serve themselves at meals. Teach them to take small amounts at first. Tell them they can get more if they're still hungry.
- **Go food shopping together.** Grocery shopping can teach your child about food and nutrition. Discuss where foods come from. Help your child make healthy choices.
- **Re-think your drink.** Serve water and fat-free or low-fat milk. Limit juice and sweet beverages.
- **Reward with attention, not food.** Show your love and comfort with hugs, kisses and talks. Choose not to offer sweets as rewards. It could make your child think sweets are better than other foods.

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Hearing- and speech-impaired citizens can dial 711.

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## MEALS MAKE MEMORIES

teach lessons  
they'll use for life

