

## Food Presentation<sup>1</sup>

After you prepare delicious, healthy meals and snacks for children at your home or center, the next step is to serve them. Since children are notorious for being picky eaters, this can be quite an art form. As you plan meals, remember to think about the total presentation of the meal, including plates and utensils, as well as how the food itself will look. Follow the steps below for “outside the box” ideas to make sure food is appealing to young diners:

- Make sure distinct foods don’t touch on the plate. While kids may enjoy each of the different foods on the plate separately, some kids can quickly be turned off if their foods touch. Try serving meals on divided plates or family style, in bowls in the middle of the table, allowing children to serve themselves.
- While food should not be handled like a toy, it’s okay to make it fun! Kids are more willing to try new foods or polish off old favorites when they are entertained. They are also more likely to eat food that they have helped to prepare. Try these delightful tricks:
  - Use metal or plastic cookie cutters to shape pancakes or bread into stars, smiley faces or animals. This can be especially fun on holidays and birthdays.
  - Let kids design their yogurt, mashed potatoes or muffins with healthy decorations like raisins, nuts or peas. *(Be aware of choking hazards.)*
  - Serve mini-pizzas with just cheese and tomato sauce. Then, give each child small cups filled with healthy toppings (e.g., peppers, onions, mushrooms and tomatoes) and have them personalize their meal. This activity ensures that kids get pizza with toppings they enjoy and don’t push it aside because it contains something they don’t like.
  - Mix it up and put a new spin on old favorites! Bananas, for example, can be served in countless ways. Make a banana into a popsicle by simply inserting a stick into it. Then, lightly coat it with peanut butter and roll it in crushed nuts or cereal. You can also give bananas arms and legs with carrots or pretzel sticks and create a face using raisins or other dried fruits. *(Be aware of choking hazards.)*
  - Have children follow pattern cards to create their own fruit kabobs for a snack. For example, a red, yellow and green pattern can be used with strawberries, pineapple chunks and grapes.
- Make plates colorful! Eating is a sensory experience which involves not only taste, but also sight, smell and texture. Try to serve kids three distinctly-colored foods at each meal (e.g., brown rice, salmon and asparagus). Add yellow pepper slices, shredded carrots or spices (e.g., cinnamon and paprika) for an explosion of color at meals.<sup>2</sup>
- Give meals a crazy name. Instead of serving “Spaghetti and Meatballs,” make the spaghetti into a mound, top it off with some grated parmesan cheese and call it “Snowy Spaghetti Mountain.” If kids are currently reading a particular book or watching a movie, try to incorporate thematic elements. For example, if you’re reading Dr. Seuss’ “Green Eggs and Ham,” use a drop of food coloring and actually serve this mysterious meal!
- Temperature is important – meals should not be too hot or too cold. Careful planning and staff coordination should eliminate this problem.

1. USDA Team Nutrition. Fruits & Vegetables Galore: Helping Kids Eat More, 2009.

2. Menu Magic for Children: Menu Planning Guide for Child Care Homes. United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. Published April 12, 2002. Accessed September 13, 2010. [www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/menu\\_magic.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/menu_magic.pdf)

## Role Modeling<sup>1</sup>

From earliest infancy, children learn through their interactions with parents/guardians and child care providers. Young children naturally want to do what you do. Working with children and families every day gives you a unique opportunity to influence positive health behaviors. You can do many things to help children develop healthy eating habits, and being a good role model is where it begins. Remember that children pick up on attitudes and behaviors—including eating and physical activity habits. They will learn from you which foods to eat and which to reject, so make sure your comments about the food served are positive. Mealtime is a great way to help children develop positive attitudes about healthy foods, learn appropriate mealtime behavior, and improve communication skills. Use the following tips to help you model healthy habits:

- Eat healthy foods together. Let children see you enjoying fruits, vegetables and whole grains at meals and snack time.
- Be willing to try new foods with the children. Children will be more inclined to taste an unfamiliar food if a trusted adult is eating it also. Compare experiences and talk about how the food looks, smells and tastes.
- Make positive comments about healthy eating—encourage children to taste all foods, especially new ones!
- Always praise children when they eat their fruits and vegetables or at least give them a try. Praise serves as positive reinforcement and makes it more likely that kids will repeat this behavior again in the future.
- Adopt **family-style dining**, in which all food is placed in serving bowls on the table and children are encouraged to serve themselves alone or with help from an adult. This helps children think about their own hunger and fullness cues, and learn how to make healthy choices. It's also a great time to teach children about appropriate serving sizes and encourage them to try unfamiliar foods.
- Make meals and snack time positive, cheerful and unhurried events. Children should learn to chew their food completely. Our bodies need time to realize that they've had enough to eat, and this is especially true for children's growing bodies. Modeling these behaviors and taking time to enjoy a leisurely meal teaches children the importance of mealtime and proper nutrition.
- When eating with children, make sure you're consistent in your messages by eating only what they're also allowed to eat. Children are quick to pick up when something isn't "fair," so don't create a double standard. If you eat sweets or other indulgences, do so out of children's sight.
- Seize the teachable moments during meals and snack time. Instead of watching TV while eating, engage children in conversation about healthy habits. Discuss where the foods you're eating come from and why they're good for both adults and kids.
- Allow children to observe you choosing healthy foods over less nutritious alternatives (e.g., sweets and high-fat snacks). Then tell them why you chose the apple over the cookie or brownie.

1. United States Department of Agriculture. *Set a good example—they take their lead from you.* <http://www.mypyramid.gov/preschoolers/HealthyHabits/goodexample.html>. Accessed June 22, 2010.

# Tip Sheet: Healthy Eating for Infants from Birth through 3 Months

## What to Feed Your Baby

- Feed your baby either breast milk or iron-fortified formula only for the first 6 months of life. Even after starting solid foods, breastfeeding and formula feeding should continue until 12 months of age. Unless breastfeeding continues, whole milk should be served after 12 months of age.
- Starting and continuing to breastfeed can be challenging. Don't give up! If you need support or have questions, call a local lactation consultant or the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) in your area. For more information on breastfeeding contact:
  - WIC toll-free at 1-800-222-2189
  - Toll-free National Women's Health Helpline at 1-800-994-9662
  - Breastfeeding Coalition of Delaware at [www.delawarebreastfeeding.org](http://www.delawarebreastfeeding.org)
- Many infants will need to receive a daily Vitamin D supplement, which is necessary to ensure healthy bone growth and development. Ask your health care provider about the amount of Vitamin D needed for your infant.

## Signs of Hunger

Babies should be fed whenever they show you they are hungry. Look for these signs:

- Rooting: a reflex in newborns that makes them turn their head toward a breast or bottle to feed
- Sucking on fingers or a fist
- Moving, licking or smacking of lips
- Fussing or crying
- Excited arm and leg movements

## Signs of Fullness

It's not necessary for your baby to finish a bottle or container of food. If she shows signs that she is full and there is food left, allow her to stop eating. Look for these signs:

- Sealing lips together, decreasing sucking, spitting out or refusing the nipple, or pushing or turning away from the breast or bottle
- Milk begins to run out of the baby's mouth

## Safety and Storage of Breast Milk

- It is best to defrost breast milk either in the refrigerator overnight, by running under warm water, or by setting in a container of warm water. Thawed breast milk should be used within 24 hours. Do not refreeze unused milk.
- If your baby doesn't finish the bottle of breast milk within one hour, throw out the rest. Bacteria from saliva can contaminate the milk and make your infant sick if he drinks it later.

Breast Milk Storage Guidelines	
Location of Storage	Maximum Recommended Storage Time
Room Temperature	3 - 4 hours
Refrigerator	48 - 72 hours
Freezer	6 months

## Safety and Storage of Formula

- Always follow label directions carefully.
- If your baby doesn't finish the bottle of formula within 1 hour, throw out the remainder. Bacteria from saliva can contaminate the formula and make your infant sick if she drinks it later.
- To prevent waste and save time, mix a large batch of formula and divide it into bottles that you can refrigerate and use throughout the day.

Formula Storage Guidelines	
Location of Storage	Maximum Recommended Storage Time
Room Temperature	2 hours
Room Temperature, if warmed	1 hour
Refrigerator	24 hours

## How Much to Feed Your Baby

Understand your role and your baby's role at mealtimes. Your job is to offer breast milk or formula at regular times; your baby's job is to decide how much to eat.

*Ask your healthcare provider if you have any questions about feeding your baby.*

## Ages Birth through 3 Months

The Delaware Office of Child Care Licensing (OCCL) requires all child care homes and centers to serve age-appropriate sized meals that follow the below meal pattern. This rule also applies to parents/guardians who pack food for their children to bring to child care. Use the following chart and pictures as a guide for serving your child at home and for packing his/her meals.

How Much to Feed Your Baby	
If breast milk	On demand
If iron-fortified infant formula*	4 – 6 fluid ounces per feed
Daily Formula Feeding Amounts by Age*	
1 month	14 – 20 fluid ounces per day
2 months	20 – 28 fluid ounces per day
3 months	26 – 32 fluid ounces per day

\* Formula intake should be adequate to support appropriate weight gain as determined by your infant's doctor.

5 oz serving →

*Reminder: Never use a microwave to heat a bottle of breast milk or formula.*



# Tip Sheet: Healthy Eating for Infants Ages 4 through 7 Months

## Breast Milk and Formula

- Feed your baby either breast milk or iron-fortified formula only for the first 6 months of life. Even after starting solid foods, breastfeeding and formula feeding should continue until 12 months of age. Unless breastfeeding continues, whole milk should be served after 12 months of age.
- Starting and continuing to breastfeed can be challenging. Don't give up! If you need support or have questions, call a local lactation consultant or the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) in your area. For more information on breastfeeding contact:
  - WIC toll-free at 1-800-222-2189
  - Toll-free National Women's Health Helpline at 1-800-994-9662
  - Breastfeeding Coalition of Delaware at [www.delawarebreastfeeding.org](http://www.delawarebreastfeeding.org)
- Many infants will need to receive a daily Vitamin D supplement, which is necessary to ensure healthy bone growth and development. Ask your health care provider about the amount of Vitamin D needed for your infant.

## Solid Foods

- Around 6 months your baby will begin to show signs that he is ready for solid foods. Signs include:
  - Absence of tongue thrust reflex
  - Good neck and head control
  - Increased demand for breast milk or formula that continues for a few days
- Offer single-ingredient foods first and wait 2–3 days between each new food. This makes it easier to identify the offending food if he experiences a bad reaction (i.e., allergy).
- Introduce iron-fortified rice cereal first, followed by iron-fortified oat or barley cereal.
- Offer different fruits and vegetables. They should be:
  - Puréed, mashed or strained to prevent choking
  - Served plain without added fat, sugar, honey or salt
- It may take multiple tries (5–20) before your baby accepts a new food. Don't get discouraged!

### Choking Hazards

Do not feed children younger than four years of age round, firm food unless it is chopped completely.

**The following foods are choking hazards:**

- Nuts and seeds
- Large chunks of cheese or meat (e.g., hot dogs)
- Whole grapes, chunks of hard fruit (e.g., apples) and raw vegetables
- Peanut butter
- Ice cubes
- Raisins
- Popcorn
- Hard, gooey, or sticky candy, chewing gum

**\*NEVER** leave an infant unattended while she/he is eating.

## Signs of Hunger

Babies should be fed whenever they show you they are hungry. Look for these signs:

- Rooting: a reflex in newborns that makes them turn their head toward a breast or bottle to feed
- Sucking on fingers or a fist
- Moving, licking or smacking of lips
- Fussing or crying
- Excited arm and leg movements

## Signs of Fullness

It's not necessary for your baby to finish a bottle or container of food. If she shows signs that she is full and there is food left, allow her to stop eating. When making a meal, offer the correct amount of food for her age and offer more only if she is still hungry and engaged in eating. Look for these signs of fullness:

- Sealing lips together, decreasing sucking, spitting out or refusing the nipple, or pushing or turning away from the breast or bottle
- Milk begins to run out of the baby's mouth

## How Much to Feed Your Baby

Understand your role and your baby's role at mealtimes. Your job is to offer breast milk or formula at regular times; your baby's job is to decide how much to eat.

## Safety and Storage of Breast Milk

- It is best to defrost breast milk either in the refrigerator overnight, by running under warm water, or by setting in a container of warm water. Thawed breast milk should be used within 24 hours. Do not refreeze unused milk.
- If your baby doesn't finish the bottle of breast milk within one hour, throw out the rest. Bacteria from saliva can contaminate the milk and make your infant sick if he drinks it later.

## Safety and Storage of Formula

- Always follow label directions carefully.
- If your baby doesn't finish the bottle of formula within 1 hour, throw out the remainder. Bacteria from saliva can contaminate the formula and make your infant sick if she drinks it later.
- To prevent waste and save time, mix a large batch of formula and divide it into bottles that you can refrigerate and use throughout the day.

### Breast Milk Storage Guidelines

Location of Storage	Maximum Recommended Storage Time
Room Temperature	3 - 4 hours
Refrigerator	48 - 72 hours
Freezer	6 months

### Formula Storage Guidelines

Location of Storage	Maximum Recommended Storage Time
Room Temperature	2 hours
Room Temperature, if warmed	1 hour
Refrigerator	24 hours

*Ask your healthcare provider if you have any questions about feeding your baby.*

## Ages 4 through 7 Months

The Delaware Office of Child Care Licensing (OCCL) requires all child care homes and centers to serve age-appropriate meal sizes that follow the below meal pattern. This rule also applies to parents/guardians who pack food for their children to bring to child care. Use the following charts and pictures as a guide for serving your child at home and for packing his/her meals.

	BREAKFAST	LUNCH/SUPPER	SNACK
	Serve both components	Serve all 3 components	
1. Breast Milk or Formula	4 – 8 fl oz	4 – 8 fl oz	4 – 6 fl oz
2. Fruit or Vegetable	None	0 – 3 Tbsp	None
3. Grain or Bread			
Infant Cereal	0 – 3 Tbsp	0 – 3 Tbsp	None
Bread	None	None	None
Crackers	None	None	None

*Reminder: Never use a microwave to heat a bottle of breast milk or formula.*

How Much to Feed Your Baby	
If breast milk	On demand
If iron-fortified infant formula*	4 – 8 fluid ounces per feed
Water with no added sweeteners	If desired, small amounts can be given after breast milk or iron-fortified formula
Daily Formula Feeding Amounts by Age*	
4 through 7 months	26 – 32 fluid ounces per day

\* Formula intake should be adequate to support appropriate weight gain as determined by the infant's doctor.

6 oz serving shown →



## Age-Appropriate Servings for Lunch/Supper – Infants Ages 4 through 7 Months

### Grain/Bread

Infant Cereal – 1.5 Tbsp  
serving shown



### Fruit/Vegetable

1.5 Tbsp serving  
shown, puréed



Lunch/Supper  
shown on 8" plate.  
Add breast milk  
or formula to complete  
the meal requirements.

# Tip Sheet: Healthy Eating for Infants Ages 8 through 11 Months

## Breast Milk and Formula

- Feed your baby either breast milk or iron-fortified formula only for the first 6 months of life. Even after starting solid foods, breastfeeding and formula feeding should continue until 12 months of age. Unless breastfeeding continues, whole milk should be served after 12 months of age.
- Starting and continuing to breastfeed can be challenging. Don't give up! If you need support or have questions, call a local lactation consultant or the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) in your area. For more information on breastfeeding contact:
  - WIC toll-free at 1-800-222-2189
  - Toll-free National Women's Health Helpline at 1-800-994-9662
  - Breastfeeding Coalition of Delaware at [www.delawarebreastfeeding.org](http://www.delawarebreastfeeding.org)
- Many infants will need to receive a daily Vitamin D supplement, which is necessary to ensure healthy bone growth and development. Ask your health care provider about the amount of Vitamin D needed for your infant.

## Solid Foods

- Encourage your baby to begin feeding herself simple finger foods during meals and snacks (e.g., small pieces of banana; cooked, cut carrots; soft cheese, etc.).
- Offer single-ingredient foods first and wait 2 – 3 days between each new food. This makes it easier to identify the offending food if she experiences a bad reaction (i.e., allergy).
- It may take multiple tries (5 – 20) before your baby accepts a new food. Don't get discouraged!
- If she seems interested, begin using a cup (i.e., "sippy" cup) around eight months of age.
  - Start with water (with no added sweeteners)
- Offer different fruits and vegetables. They should be:
  - Cooked and/or cut into bite-size pieces to prevent choking
  - Served plain without added fat, sugar, honey or salt
- You can also introduce:
  - Iron-fortified infant cereal
  - Lean beef, veal, and/or pork\*
  - Skinless chicken and/or turkey\*
  - Cooked beans and peas

\* For children under age four, meats, beans and peas should be soft, puréed, ground, mashed or finely chopped to prevent choking.

## Choking Hazards

Do not feed children younger than four years of age round, firm food unless it is chopped completely.

**The following foods are choking hazards:**

- Nuts and seeds
- Large chunks of cheese or meat (e.g., hot dogs)
- Whole grapes, chunks of hard fruit (e.g., apples) and raw vegetables
- Peanut butter
- Ice cubes
- Raisins
- Popcorn
- Hard, gooey, or sticky candy, chewing gum

\*NEVER leave an infant unattended while she/he is eating.

## Signs of Hunger

Babies should be fed whenever they show you they are hungry. Look for these signs:

- Rooting: a reflex in newborns that makes them turn their head toward a breast or bottle to feed
- Sucking on fingers or a fist
- Moving, licking or smacking of lips
- Fussing or crying
- Excited arm and leg movements

## Signs of Fullness

It's not necessary for your baby to finish a bottle or container of food. If he shows signs that he is full and there is food left, allow him to stop eating. When making a meal, offer the correct amount of food for his age and offer more only if he is still hungry and engaged in eating. Look for these signs of fullness:

- Sealing lips together, decreasing sucking, spitting out or refusing the nipple, or pushing or turning away from the breast or bottle
- Milk begins to run out of the baby's mouth

## How Much to Feed Your Baby

Understand your role and your baby's role at mealtimes. Your job is to offer breast milk or formula at regular times; your baby's job is to decide how much to eat.

## Safety and Storage of Breast Milk

- It is best to defrost breast milk either in the refrigerator overnight, by running under warm water, or by setting in a container of warm water. Thawed breast milk should be used within 24 hours. Do not refreeze unused milk.
- If your baby doesn't finish the bottle of breast milk within one hour, throw out the rest. Bacteria from saliva can contaminate the milk and make your infant sick if he drinks it later.

## Safety and Storage of Formula

- Always follow label directions carefully.
- If your baby doesn't finish the bottle of formula within 1 hour, throw out the remainder. Bacteria from saliva can contaminate the formula and make your infant sick if she drinks it later.
- To prevent waste and save time, mix a large batch of formula and divide it into bottles that you can refrigerate and use throughout the day.

### Breast Milk Storage Guidelines

Location of Storage	Maximum Recommended Storage Time
Room Temperature	3 - 4 hours
Refrigerator	48 -72 hours
Freezer	6 months

### Formula Storage Guidelines

Location of Storage	Maximum Recommended Storage Time
Room Temperature	2 hours
Room Temperature, if warmed	1 hour
Refrigerator	24 hours

*Ask your healthcare provider if you have any questions about feeding your baby.*

	BREAKFAST	LUNCH/SUPPER	SNACK
	Serve all 3 components	Serve all 4 components	Serve both components
1. Breast Milk or Formula	6 – 8 fluid oz	6 – 8 fluid oz	2 – 4 fluid oz
2. Fruit or Vegetable	1 – 4 Tbsp	1 – 4 Tbsp	None
3. Grain or Bread			
Infant Cereal	2 – 4 Tbsp	2 – 4 Tbsp	None
Bread	None	None	0 – 1/2 slice
Crackers	None	None	0 – 2 crackers
4. Meat or Meat Alternate (protein source)			
Lean meat, poultry/fish, egg yolk, cooked beans or peas	None	1 – 4 Tbsp	None
Cheese	None	1/2 – 2 oz	None
Cottage cheese	None	1 – 4 oz	None

**Ages 8 through 11 Months** The Delaware Office of Child Care Licensing (OCCL) requires all child care homes and centers to serve age-appropriate meal sizes that follow the meal pattern above. This rule also applies to parents/guardians who pack food for their children to bring to child care. Use the charts above and pictures as a guide for serving your child at home and for packing his/her meals.

How Much to Feed Your Baby	
If breast milk	On demand
If iron-fortified infant formula*	6 – 8 fluid oz per feed
Water with no added sweeteners	If desired, small amounts can be given after breast milk or iron-fortified formula
Daily Formula Feeding Amounts by Age*	
8 through 11 months	26 – 32 fluid oz per day

\* Formula intake should be adequate to support appropriate weight gain as determined by the infant's doctor.



← 7 oz serving shown in a 7 oz cup

→ 7 oz serving shown

*Reminder: Never use a microwave to heat a bottle of breast milk or formula.*



## Age-Appropriate Servings for Lunch/Supper for Ages 8 through 11 Months

### Grain/Bread

Infant Cereal –  
3 Tbsp serving shown

### Meat/Meat Alternate

2 Tbsp serving shown – puréed,  
mashed or finely chopped



### Fruit/Vegetable

2 Tbsp serving shown –  
puréed, mashed or finely  
chopped

Lunch/Supper  
shown on 8" plate.  
Add breast milk  
or formula to complete  
the meal requirements.

# Tip Sheet: Healthy Eating for Toddlers Ages 1 through 2 Years

## Developing Healthy Eating Habits

- Start with age-appropriate servings, as listed in the chart on the next page.
- Teach her to eat slowly. Ask if she is still hungry before allowing her to serve herself more food. Taking the time to decide if she is hungry or full will help her pay attention to important cues from her body.
- Avoid requiring your child to clean his plate. Help him learn to eat based on how hungry he is, not on how much food is still on his plate.
- Understand your role and your child's. Your job is to offer a variety of healthy foods at regular meal times; her job is to decide what and how much to eat.
- Be a positive role model. Sit with your child and let him observe you eat a healthy, balanced diet. Serve yourself appropriate portions and try “new” foods. Explain what you are doing.
- Pay attention to your toddler's hunger cues. She may not say that she is full, but may start playing, become distracted, shake her head “no,” close her mouth or refuse to finish the food on her plate.
- Complaints of being hungry, especially when a child has just eaten, may be due to other triggers such as boredom, TV advertising or seeing another person eating.
- Given healthy servings, most toddlers sense when they are full and will stop eating if you let them. The amount of food a toddler eats may change from day to day, but a healthy child will generally consume just the right amount of food to nourish his body.

## Trying New Foods

It is natural for your toddler to be cautious with new foods. It may take 5 – 20 tries before he will come to like it. Minimize the struggles of introducing new foods by:

- Alternating bites between a new food and a food your child is familiar with and likes.
- Encouraging children to try new foods. Begin by putting a very small portion on your child's plate (e.g., two peas). However, do not force her to finish more than she wants.
- Avoiding rewarding good behavior or a clean plate with food. Especially avoid forcing a child to finish the “healthy foods” to get dessert or sweets—this can make the healthy food seem like punishment and cause him to eat when he is full.

## Ages 1 through 2 Years

The Delaware Office of Child Care Licensing (OCCL) requires all child care homes and centers to serve age-appropriate meal sizes that follow the meal pattern at right. This rule also applies to parents/guardians who pack food for their children to bring to child care. Use the following charts and pictures as a guide for serving your child at home and for packing his/her meals.

*Ask your healthcare provider if you have any questions about feeding your toddler.*

	BREAKFAST	LUNCH/SUPPER	SNACK
	Serve first 3 components	Serve all 4 components	Select 2 of the 4 components
<b>1. Milk, fluid</b> (Age 1, whole; Age 2, fat-free or 1% low-fat)	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	1/2 cup
<b>2. Fruit or Vegetable</b>	1/4 cup	Serve 2 or more separate fruit / vegetable dishes: 1/4 cup total (2 Tbsp each)	1/2 cup
<b>3. Grain or Bread</b>			
Bread	1/2 slice	1/2 slice	1/2 slice
Grain or Pasta	—	1/4 cup	1/4 cup
Cereal – Dry	1/4 cup	1/4 cup	1/4 cup
Cereal – Hot	1/4 cup	1/4 cup	1/4 cup
<b>4. Meat or Meat Alternate</b> (protein source)			
Lean meat, poultry/fish	1/2 oz	1 oz	1/2 oz
Cheese	1/2 oz	1 oz	1/2 oz
Cottage cheese	2 Tbsp	1/4 cup	2 Tbsp
Large egg	1/2 egg	1/2 egg	1/2 egg
Cooked dry beans/peas	—	1/4 cup	2 Tbsp
Peanut butter/other nut/seed butters	1 Tbsp	2 Tbsp	1 Tbsp
Nuts or seeds	1/2 oz	1/2 oz	1/2 oz
Yogurt, plain or flavored	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	1/4 cup

## Choking Hazards

Do not feed children younger than four years of age round, firm food unless it is chopped completely.

**The following foods are choking hazards:**

- Nuts and seeds
- Large chunks of cheese or meat (e.g., hot dogs)
- Whole grapes, chunks of hard fruit (e.g., apples) and raw vegetables
- Peanut butter
- Ice cubes
- Raisins
- Popcorn
- Hard, gooey, or sticky candy, chewing gum

\*NEVER leave a young child unattended while she/he is eating.

## Age-Appropriate Drink Servings for Toddlers Ages 1 through 2 Years



### Milk

4 oz (1/2 cup) serving shown  
in a 9 oz cup:

- Whole milk for age 1
- Fat-free or 1% (low-fat) for age 2



### Juice

4 oz (1/2 cup) serving shown  
in a 9 oz cup – 100% juice

# Age-Appropriate Servings for Lunch/Supper for Toddlers Ages 1 through 2 Years

**Grain/  
Bread**

1/4 cup  
serving shown

**Meat/Meat  
Alternate**

1 oz serving shown



**Fruit/Vegetable**

1/4 cup total (2 Tbsp each)

Lunch/Supper  
shown on 8" plate.  
Add milk to complete  
the meal requirements.

# Tip Sheet: Healthy Eating for Preschoolers Ages 3 through 5 Years

## Encouraging Healthy Eating Habits

- Start with age-appropriate servings, as listed in the chart on the next page.
- Teach him to eat slowly. Ask if he is still hungry before allowing him to serve himself more food. Taking the time to decide if he is hungry or full will help him pay attention to important cues from his body.
- Avoid requiring your child to clean her plate. Help her learn to eat based on how hungry she is, not on how much food is still on her plate.
- Understand your role and your child's. Your job is to offer a variety of healthy foods at regular meal times; his job is to decide what and how much to eat.
- Be a positive role model. Sit with your child and let her observe you eat a healthy, balanced diet. Serve yourself appropriate portions and try “new” foods. Eat when you are hungry and stop when you are full, even if there is food left on your plate. Talk about what you are doing.
- Pay attention to your preschooler's cues. He may not say that he is full, but may show it by starting to play, becoming distracted, shaking his head “no,” pushing food around on his plate or simply refusing to eat.
- Complaints of being hungry, especially when a child has just eaten, may be due to other triggers such as boredom, TV advertising or seeing another person eating.
- Given healthy servings, most children can sense when they are full and will stop eating if you let them. The amount of food a preschooler eats may change from day to day, but a healthy child will generally consume just the right amount of food to nourish her body.

## Trying New Foods

It is natural for preschoolers to be cautious about trying new foods; but remember that by and large, they should eat what the rest of the family is eating. If you are eating and enjoying a variety of healthy foods, they won't want to be left out.

- When offering a new food, feed a familiar food with the new one, alternating bites between each.
- Some children are less likely than others to try new things. It may take her 5 – 20 times of trying a new food before she will like it. Don't give up!
- Encourage your child to try new foods – at least one bite. Begin by putting a small amount on his plate (e.g., two peas). However, do not force him to finish more than he feels comfortable eating.
- Model trying new foods. Try a new fruit or vegetable and talk about how it looks, smells and tastes.
- Avoid rewarding good behavior or a clean plate with foods of any kind. Especially avoid forcing your child to finish the “healthy foods” to get dessert or sweets – this can make the healthy food seem like punishment and force her to eat when she is full.
- Offer desserts rarely so he does not expect one at every meal.

## Ages 3 through 5 Years

The Delaware Office of Child Care Licensing (OCCL) requires all child care homes and centers to serve age-appropriate meal sizes that follow the meal pattern at right. This rule also applies to parents/guardians who pack food for their children to bring to child care. Use the following charts and pictures as a guide for serving your child at home and for packing his/her meals.

*Ask your healthcare provider if you have any questions about feeding your child.*

	BREAKFAST	LUNCH/SUPPER	SNACK
	Serve first 3 components	Serve all 4 components	Select 2 of the 4 components
<b>1. Milk, fluid</b> (Fat-free or 1% low-fat)	3/4 cup	3/4 cup	1/2 cup
<b>2. Fruit or Vegetable</b>	1/2 cup	Serve 2 or more separate fruit / vegetable dishes: 1/2 cup total (1/4 cup for each)	1/2 cup
<b>3. Grain or Bread</b>			
Bread	1/2 slice	1/2 slice	1/2 slice
Grain or Pasta	—	1/4 cup	1/4 cup
Cereal – Dry	1/3 cup	1/3 cup	1/3 cup
Cereal – Hot	1/4 cup	1/4 cup	1/4 cup
<b>4. Meat or Meat Alternate</b> (protein source)			
Lean meat, poultry/fish	1/2 oz	1 1/2 oz	1/2 oz
Cheese	1/2 oz	1 1/2 oz	1/2 oz
Cottage cheese	2 Tbsp	3/8 cup (1/4 cup + 2 Tbsp)	2 Tbsp
Large egg	1/2 egg	3/4 egg	1/2 egg
Cooked dry beans/peas	—	3/8 cup (1/4 cup + 2 Tbsp)	2 Tbsp
Peanut butter/other nut/seed butters	1 Tbsp	3 Tbsp	1 Tbsp
Nuts or seeds	1/2 oz	3/4 oz	1/2 oz
Yogurt, plain or flavored	1/4 cup	3/4 cup	1/4 cup

## Choking Hazards

Do not feed children younger than four years of age round, firm food unless it is chopped completely.

**The following foods are choking hazards:**

- Nuts and seeds
- Large chunks of cheese or meat (e.g., hot dogs)
- Whole grapes, chunks of hard fruit (e.g., apples) and raw vegetables
- Peanut butter
- Ice cubes
- Raisins
- Popcorn
- Hard, gooey, or sticky candy, chewing gum

*\*NEVER leave a young child unattended while she/he is eating.*

## Age-Appropriate Drink Servings for Preschoolers Ages 3 through 5 Years



### Milk

6 oz (3/4 cup) serving shown  
in a 9 oz cup:

- Fat-free or 1% (low-fat) milk



### Juice

4 oz (1/2 cup) serving  
in a 9 oz cup – 100% juice

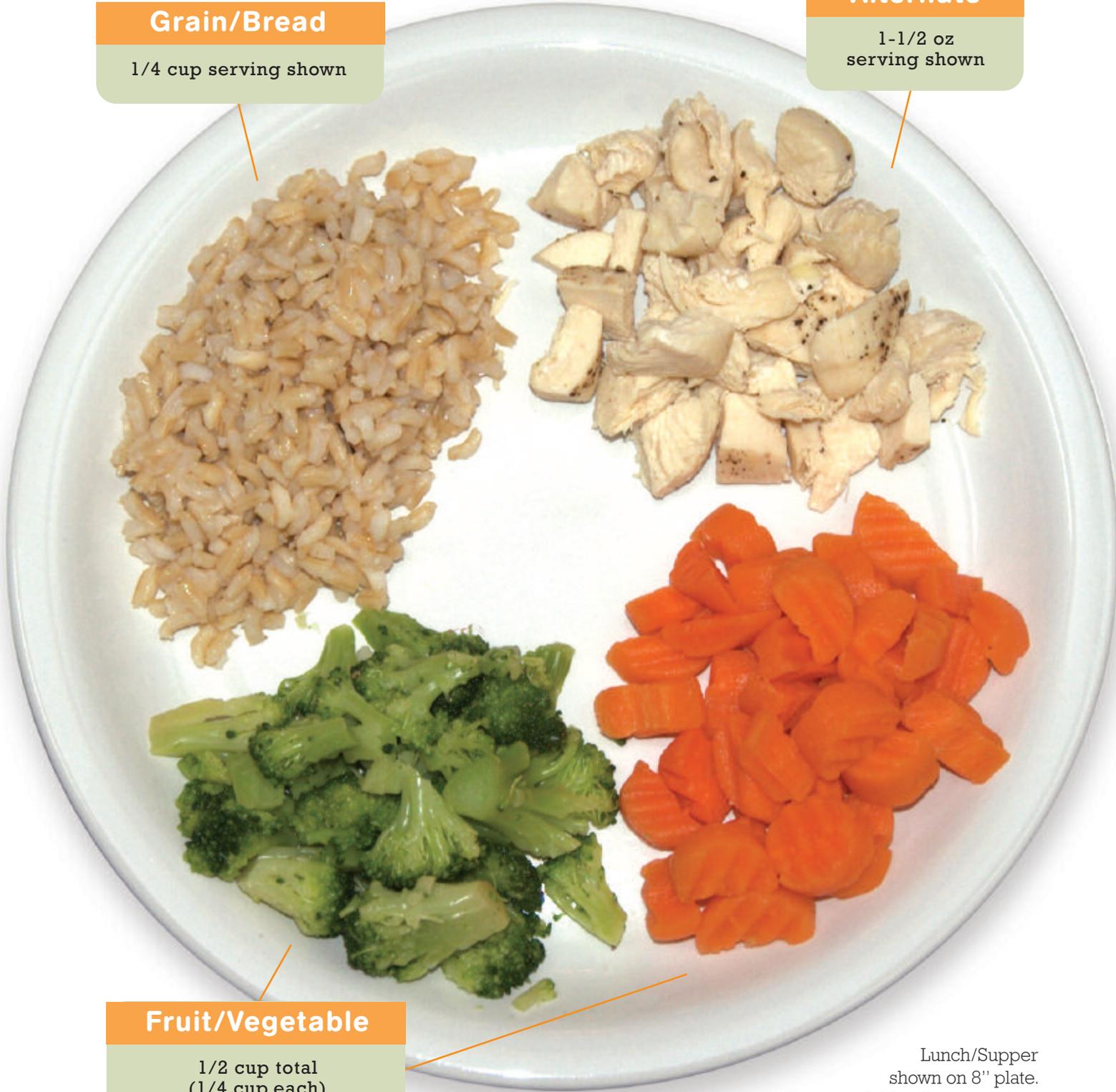
# Age-Appropriate Servings for Lunch/Supper for Preschoolers Ages 3 through 5 Years

## Grain/Bread

1/4 cup serving shown

## Meat/Meat Alternate

1-1/2 oz serving shown



## Fruit/Vegetable

1/2 cup total  
(1/4 cup each)

Lunch/Supper shown on 8" plate. Add milk to complete the meal requirements.

# Tip Sheet: Healthy Eating for Children Ages 6 through 12 Years

## Encouraging Healthy Eating Habits

- Start with age-appropriate servings, as listed on the chart below.
- Teach him to eat slowly. Ask if he is still hungry before allowing him to serve himself more food. Taking the time to decide if he is hungry will help him pay attention to important cues from his body.
- Create a positive eating environment by making meal times relaxed, fun and free of power struggles.
- Avoid requiring your child to clean her plate. Help her learn to eat based on how hungry she is, not by how much food is still on her plate.
- Understand your role and your child’s. Your job is to offer a variety of healthy foods at regular meal times; his job is to decide what and how much to eat.
- Be a positive role model. Sit with your child and let her observe you eating a healthy, balanced diet. Serve yourself appropriate portions and try “new” foods. Eat when you are hungry and stop when you are full, even if there is food left on your plate. Talk about what you are doing.
- Complaints of being hungry, especially when a child has just eaten, may be due to other triggers such as boredom, TV advertising, or seeing another person eating.
- Discourage eating meals in front of the TV or computer. Eating during screen time is a distraction and can keep a child from noticing he is full. This may cause him to eat more than he normally would.
- When offering a new food, feed a familiar food with the new one, alternating bites between each.
- Avoid rewarding good behavior or a clean plate with foods of any kind. Especially avoid forcing her to finish the “healthy foods” to get dessert or sweets – this can make the healthy food seem like punishment and cause her to eat when she is full.
- Offer desserts rarely so he does not expect one at every meal.

## Ages 6 through 12 Years

The Delaware Office of Child Care Licensing (OCCCL) requires all child care homes and centers to serve age-appropriate meal sizes that follow the meal pattern at right. This rule also applies to parents/guardians who pack food for their children to bring to child care. Use the following chart and pictures as a guide for serving your child at home and for packing his/her meals.

	BREAKFAST	LUNCH/SUPPER	SNACK
	Serve first 3 components	Serve all 4 components	Select 2 of the 4 components
1. Milk, fluid (Fat-free or 1% low-fat)	1 cup	1 cup	1 cup
2. Fruit or Vegetable	1/2 cup	Serve 2 or more separate fruit / vegetable dishes: 3/4 cup total (1/4 cup + 2 Tbsp each)	3/4 cup
3. Grain or Bread			
Bread	1 slice	1 slice	1 slice
Grain or Pasta	—	1/2 cup	1/2 cup
Cereal – Dry	3/4 cup	3/4 cup	3/4 cup
Cereal – Hot	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	1/2 cup
4. Meat or Meat Alternate (protein source)			
Lean meat, poultry/fish	1 oz	2 oz	1 oz
Cheese	1 oz	2 oz	1 oz
Cottage cheese	2 Tbsp	1/2 cup	2 Tbsp
Large egg	1/2 egg	1 egg	1/2 egg
Cooked dry beans/peas	—	1/2 cup	1/4 cup
Peanut butter/other nut/seed butters	2 Tbsp	4 Tbsp	2 Tbsp
Nuts or seeds	1 oz	1 oz	1 oz
Yogurt, plain or flavored	1/2 cup	1 cup	1/2 cup

## Age-Appropriate Drink Servings for Children Ages 6 through 12 Years



### Milk

8 oz (1 cup) serving shown  
in a 9 oz cup:

- Fat-free or 1% (low-fat) milk



### Juice

6 oz (3/4 cup) serving  
in a 9 oz cup – 100% juice

# Age-Appropriate Servings for Lunch/Supper for Children Ages 6 through 12 Years

## Grain/Bread

1/2 cup serving shown

## Meat/Meat Alternate

2 oz serving  
shown

## Fruit/Vegetable

3/4 cup total  
(1/4 cup + 2 Tbsp each)

Lunch/Supper  
shown on 8" plate.  
Add milk to complete  
the meal requirements.

