

10 Tips For Parents to Help Kids Eat More Fruits & Vegetables

We totally get it! Encouraging your child to eat fruits and vegetables at this age can be challenging. Ideally, it is recommended to practice patience at this stage to help increase fruit and vegetable consumption. Eating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables provides the body with rich sources of Vitamins A, C, K, Folate, Calcium, and Fiber, which directly benefit eyesight, skin health, immunity, the heart, bone strength, and digestion.

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Be a Role Model.

- Incorporate fruits and vegetables into YOUR diet, and watch how your kid picks up those habits too!

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Convenience Matters.

- Make it readily accessible for your child to grab n' go fruits/veggies by washing, cutting, and storing produce in the fridge.

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Take Your Child to the Grocery Store.

- Ask for their help listing produce needed
- Let them try new fruits/veggies that catch their eye
- Have them pick out frozen, fresh, or canned fruit

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Add Produce to Favorite Dishes.

- Top fruit on pancakes, french toast, or waffles
- Add grated veggies (carrots) in muffins, veggies on top of pizza, spinach/broccoli into mac n' cheese
- Pair fruits/veggies with dipping sauces

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Have a Helping Hand in the Kitchen.

- Children are more likely to eat the fruits of their labor (only assign tasks they are comfortable doing).
- Help them practice a life skill: nourishing their bodies

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Talking Positively About Foods.

- Children are highly influenced so be careful & aware of what you say about a food and how you say it.
- Guide your child in listening to hunger and fullness cues to decide when, what, & how much to eat.

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Make Produce Visually Appealing.

- "We eat with our eyes first," present foods in fun, unique, and playful ways such as shapes like stars, moons, circles, etc.

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Repetition

- Keep trying to offer fruit and vegetables as it can take up to 10 times or even more to accept a new food and 10 more times to decide if they like it!

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Use Different Cooking Techniques.

- baking, boiling, steaming, sautéing, air-frying, grilling, and pureeing

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Basic Nutrition Education.

- Understanding the benefits associated with produce may pique their interest, and they may be motivated to eat more of these foods for their own health rather than seeing it as a chore.

→ **check out the farm fresh passport for more information about the nutritional benefits of fruits/vegetables**

The bottom line is you can try all the tips mentioned to help your child eat more fruits and vegetables, but it is important to honor your child's behavior towards a particular food. You want to create an open, healthy, and supportive environment when trying new foods. If they may not like it at that time, gently explain to them they may not have enjoyed it at this moment but to make an attempt next time it is prepared. Our taste buds change as we grow so what your child did not find favorable may grow into a food preference later.

