

## Early Childhood Parent Tips

### Healthy

- Review your toddler's growth charts with your healthcare provider.
- Be a good role model and make healthy eating and activity together a goal for all family members.
- Remember this is a time that children are becoming more independent.

### Eating

- Provide healthy choices for meals and snacks.
- Eat 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day.
- Eat 3 or more servings of whole grain foods per day.
- *(Appropriate serving size for age equals 1-2 tablespoons per year of age).*
- Use low-fat or non-fat milk only after 2 years of age.
- Give 100% fruit juice (not fruit drinks), but only 4-6 ounces maximum per day.
- Your child may not like a new food the first few times he/she tries it, so offer it many times to give the opportunity to learn to accept it and like it.
- Use food only to meet nutritional needs and satisfy hunger, not as a reward or to comfort your child.
- Toddlers often have an appetite slump compared to previously, which is OK if they meet their growth and energy needs.
- Limit fast food meals and offer healthy traditional foods enjoyed in your culture (e.g., beans, corn, tortillas, fruits and vegetables).

### Activity

- Plan for at least 60 minutes daily of active, free play in short periods of time.
- Limit TV, video and computer time and no TV during meals.
- Read and play with your toddler every day.
- No TV or computer in your toddler's bedroom.

### Together

- Schedule times for family meals together.
- Respect that your child is responsible for whether to eat and how much to eat, and you are responsible for what food is available, and when and where.
- Don't let TV advertisements influence food selection.
- Support healthy food choices and daily physical activity at your child's preschool and child care.

*Always ask your Primary Care Provider whenever you have any concerns/questions regarding your toddler's health!*

