



Food For Thought

Healthy Ideas for Preschoolers



Grow Your Own Herbs



This time of year almost everyone likes to see plants coming up. Your children, too, will enjoy growing something of their own and especially something they can eat. Herbs are a great thing to grow. They grow quickly either outside or inside by a sunny window.

You will need:

- Seed: parsley, basil, chives, or mint are good choices
- A saucer
- Potting mix or soil
- A pot, or put two or three holes in the bottom of a large margarine tub
- Small stones

To plant and grow herbs, help your child:

1. Place several small stones in the bottom of the pot. Fill the pot with soil and place it on a saucer.
2. Sprinkle the seeds over the soil and cover with more soil. Read the directions on the seed packet.



3. Water lightly and keep the soil moist until the seeds start to grow.
4. Watch them grow.
5. Water when the soil is dry to the touch.
6. Pinch or clip off the tops of herbs when you need some. They will grow back.
7. When they are three to four inches tall and there is no chance of frost, they may be put outside. They may be left in the original pot, planted in a larger pot or planted in the ground. If planted in the ground, mint and chives will probably come up next year.

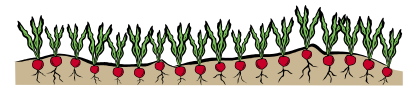
Ideas for using herbs:

- Use as toppings for salads
- Sprinkle on meat, fish or poultry before cooking
- Add to salad dressings
- Sprinkle on vegetables
- Add mint to fruit, yogurt, or ice milk.

Taken from Kids' Meal Times, North Central Regional Extension Publication.

Explore where foods come from:

- visit a garden or orchard when the fruits and vegetables are ready to harvest
- plant a garden of your own, watching the vegetables grow and using them in meals this summer



Food, Fun, and Reading

Do you want to spend time with your child?

Do you want your child to be healthy?

Do you want your child to enjoy reading?



If you answered yes to these three questions, you agree with most parents. One way to make these things happen is to spend time together with your child reading about food. There are many good children's books at the library or bookstore about food, exercise and health. Here are some ideas to help you get started reading with your child.

- Have your child help you pick out a book to read. Select books that have a positive message about food.
- Make yourself comfortable; be sure you both can see the pictures.
- Be sure to read the title of the book and the author or illustrator of the book.
- Point out the illustrations and how they relate to the story and the child's experience.
- Talk about what you and your child eat that relates to the topic of the book.
- If your child is learning to read, encourage them to help with the reading.

Here are a few titles to get you started, but there are many other good books for you and your child to read together.

Alphabite! A funny feast from A to Z by Charles Reasoner and Vicky Hardt

The Berenstain Bears and Too Much Junk Food by Stan and Jan Berenstain

Growing Vegetable Soup by Lois Ehlert



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Microwave Herbed Potatoes

4 medium potatoes, peeled and thickly sliced
1/2 teaspoon salt
3 tablespoons chopped parsley
1 tablespoon margarine
1/2 cup water

Mix all ingredients in microwave-safe bowl, dotting with margarine and adding water last. Wrap loosely with wax paper. Microwave on High 9 minutes. Turn dish halfway around and cook 4 minutes more on High or until tender. Serves 4.

Chive Rice

4 slices bacon, diced
3 cups hot, cooked rice
1/4 cup chopped chives
salt and pepper to taste
2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce (optional)

Cook bacon until very crisp. Add to rice, along with chives and seasonings. Blend well and serve hot. Serves 6.

