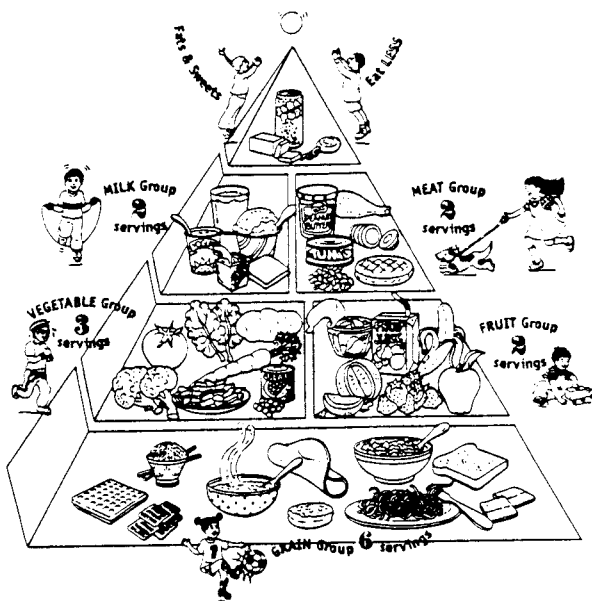


# Mealtime Tips for Young Children

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Meals are important for a child's growth. But meals should be fun for children as well. Here are some tips for having a happy and safe meal with your child.

## THE TIME TO EAT

- Serve meals at the same time every day.
- Do not let your child get too hungry or tired before meals.

- Do not let your child snack right before meals. Give your child a snack about two hours before meals.

## THE PLACE TO EAT

- Do not let your child eat in the car, in case your child starts choking.
- Make sure your child eats while sitting down.
- Make sure your child can sit high up at the table, so that he or she does not need to reach up for food.
- Use dishes that can't break and that have sides.

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- Use spoons and forks that are not sharp and that have wide, short handles.
- Use wide, small cups that can't break.
- Be sure that you or another adult is with your child while he or she eats.

### **WHAT TO EAT**

- Serve a new food with foods that your child likes.
- Don't be surprised if your child does not like a new food at first. You can always try again at another meal.
- Do not give small or hard foods, such as hot dogs or raw fruit and vegetables, to children under three years old.
- Foods should be well-cooked and soft.
- Serve dessert after the meal. Do not offer dessert as a reward.

### **A HAPPY MEAL**

- Do not bribe or pressure your child to eat.
- Let your child decide when he or she is full.
- Decide how neat your child should be based on his or her age.
- Do not let your child throw food or play with food.
- Do not fight with or nag your child during mealtime.
- Ask your child to help set up or prepare the meal.