



Tips For Getting Children to Eat Vegetables

Here are some suggestions for teaching your kids to eat – and love – vegetables:

Set the example – Your kids are watching you for guidance. Healthy eating is no different. Let your kids see you eat your veggies on a regular basis. Remember not to frown when you do eat your veggies – your kids will pick up that veggies are just as enjoyable as any other food.

Shop till you drop – Well, not exactly! But, let your kids go shopping with you when it is time to pick out family meals. Kids will probably enjoy going to visit the local farmers market or just having a say in what the menu will be for the family.

Provide variety – Introduce veggies in a variety of meals. From veggie spaghetti to veggies as a simple side dish, let kids have a variety of vegetable experiences.

Plant a garden – Gardens do not have to be huge. There are so many ways to have a successful garden, even in an apartment. This is a way to give your child a sense of accomplishment when they see the veggies they planted in full bloom. You will create many family memories while working on your garden with your kids.

Swap it out – Veggies can replace unhealthy foods in several dishes. Instead of French fries, try baked sweet potato fries. Instead of traditional dips for potato chips, use homemade salsa or hummus dip.

House rules – As parents, it is up to us to set the house rules. Create a house rule that states you must at least try everything on your plate. There are some foods that your kids will just not like. We are all human in that way. But, we should not let our kids assume that they do not like something just because it is healthy. If they try it, they may realize that it is not so bad.

Use the web – There are several great online resources to help parents out with this dilemma of getting kids to eat their veggies. A few that may be worth trying out: KidsGardening, Team Nutrition from USDA, Real Food For Healthy Kids. There are also some great sites that have excellent recipes that include veggies and that kids will enjoy.

Continued Rejection?

If your child continues to reject their veggies, do not hesitate to continue to reintroduce them to veggies during family meals. You can provide veggie trays when their friends come over, prepare new recipes, or mix some veggies up in a fruit smoothie.

*Source: Nicole Henderson, Earth Eats Blog
<http://indianapublicmedia.org/earthheats/kids-eat-vegetables/>*

