Healthy Eats for Kids

Want to teach children about good nutrition? Try these tips.

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SERVE IT UP

“You have to set an example for kids,” says Rovenia Brock, PhD, Washington, DC nutritionist and author of Dr. Ro’s Ten Secrets to Livin’ Healthy. “If you want them to eat their vegetables, you must serve them.”

TAKE ‘EM SHOPPING

Keecha Harris, DrPH, a spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association, suggests inviting kids to help plan the grocery list, negotiating nutrient-rich items and including one or two items of their choosing. “It gives them a little freedom,” she says. “They might not even pick high-calorie treats.”

GO FOR THE RAINBOW

At the supermarket educate them about making good nutritional choices. Teach them, for example, that a healthy diet contains a variety of colors—from yellow squash to green peas to red apples to blueberries.

LET THEM HELP

While cooking, rather than just letting the kids stare at the television, give them kitchen chores. “Preschoolers can rinse the lettuce,” Harris says. “With guidance, younger children can chop softer vegetables and help with measurements.”

DON’T EAT ON THE RUN

Have a sit-down dinner, so children can see how a complete meal looks and learn social etiquette and table manners.

DO AS YOU SAY

If you want your child to learn good nutritional habits, you have to have them, too. “Whatever parents preach, they have to model,” Brock says.

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