

Workshop 4 Handouts

Cover Sheet

1. PowerPoint Slides Handout - 6 pages
2. Carrot Gardens and other Recipes Handout - 5 pages
3. Enjoying the Family Meal Handout - 2 pages

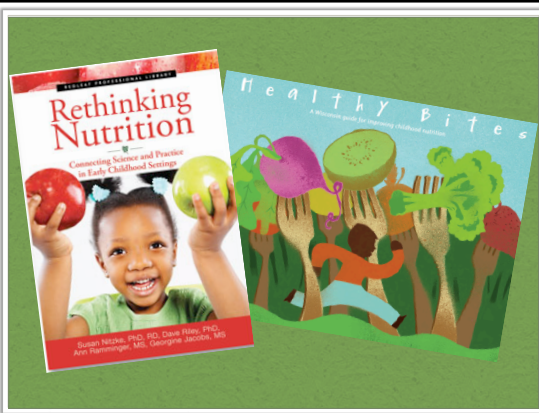
Count, Read, Share

The Meal Table as a Learning Center



Rethinking Nutrition Workshop Series

1. **Yummy Carrot Sticks: How Children Learn to Like Nutritious Foods**
 - Avoiding food power struggles, Role modeling healthy eating
2. **What's for Snack? Nutrition to Support Healthy Growth**
 - Good nutrition, Lifelong food habits, Obesity
3. **Cupcakes for Lunch? Creating a Food & Nutrition Policy for Your Early Care & Education Program**
 - Nutrition policy, Family food practices
4. **Count, Read, Share: The Meal Table as a Learning Center**
 - Mealtime learning activities, Life skills, Social skills



**Mealtimes support children's
social, emotional and
intellectual development.**

Why is mealtime a good place for children to learn?

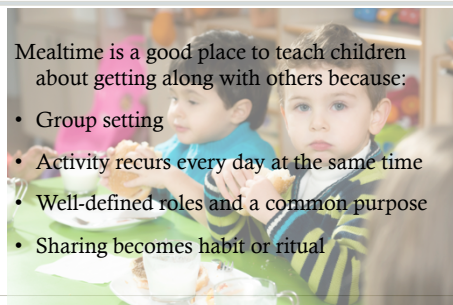
- Ritualized – Repeated - Remembered
- Most families have unwritten rules or *norms* about how people should act at the meal table
 - Norms vary across culture
 - But most families in the U.S. share mealtime values



Social Development Around the Meal Table

Mealtime is a good place to teach children about getting along with others because:

- Group setting
- Activity recurs every day at the same time
- Well-defined roles and a common purpose
- Sharing becomes habit or ritual



Socially, what do children learn at the meal table?

- Problem solving
- Behavioral Self-Regulation: Impulse Control
- Cognitive Self-Regulation: Planning
- Practical Life Skills
- Self-Responsibility

Problem Solving

- Learning how to solve conflicts with other children in competent and socially acceptable ways (i.e., no pushing or hitting)
- Difficult for toddlers:
 - Driven to increased independence and autonomy
 - Adults exert social pressure to teach respect for the needs of others, too.

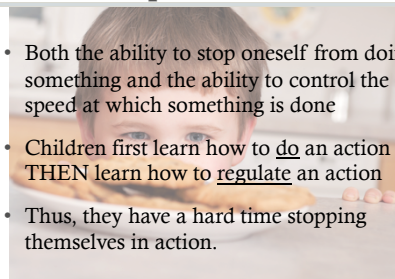
Problem Solving at Mealtime

- Taking turns
 - Passing a serving platter around the table
- Sharing
 - Splitting a snack into portions
- Expressing feelings
 - “Using your words” to tell other children how you feel when there is a dispute



Behavioral Self-Regulation: Impulse Control

- Both the ability to stop oneself from doing something and the ability to control the speed at which something is done
- Children first learn how to do an action and THEN learn how to regulate an action
- Thus, they have a hard time stopping themselves in action.



Replace Don't With Do

Don't is the first and easiest thing adults say.

- Don't spill the milk.

Don't doesn't teach, it only prohibits.

Telling children how to do something right or competently teaches.

- Use your helper hand under the pitcher. That's it!



DON'T	DO
Don't spill your milk.	Use your helper hand under the pitcher.
Don't touch Miguel's food.	Hold your sandwich with both hands.
Don't play with your food.	Use your spoon to scoop up the peas.
Don't take all the carrots.	Take three or four carrots. You can have more when you finish those.
Don't talk with your mouth full.	Finish chewing and then tell me.
Stop elbowing LeShawn.	Tuck your elbows close to your sides.
Stop pounding the table.	Ask to be excused from the table.
Don't stuff your mouth so full.	Put your fork down while you chew.

Cognitive Self-Regulation: Planning

- Young children are impulsive not only in their actions but also in their thinking and decision making – their planning.
- Planning and cognitive self-regulation impact children in the long term.
 - School
 - Health

Practice Planning at Mealtimes

- Foreshadowing: Early warning for what happens next
 - After we have finished lunch, we will need to clean the table before we can go outside.
- Model a Course of Action: Think and plan out-loud
 - Let's see before we set the table for lunch, what do we need to do? That's right, we need to wash our hands.



Practice Planning at Mealtimes



- Break larger tasks into small steps and give children more to do as they are able
 - “Sara, please put a napkin at every place at the table.” vs. “Sara, please set the table.”
 - For an older child: “Sara, tell me what needs to be done to set the table.”

Practical Life Skills & Self-Responsibility

- When children do things for themselves, they are taking responsibility for their own doing and learning.
- Chores related to mealtime teach practical life skills
- Children feel pride in accomplishing mealtime tasks or chores



Teaching Practical Life Skills

- Explain and Demonstrate
 - Show how to do a chore and talk about what you are doing
- Practice with Feedback – especially positive
- Provide Supports
 - Make it easy for children to succeed by providing the necessary tools for chores.
- Give Reminders

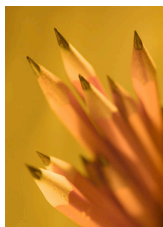


Ideas for Mealtime Social Development

- In your small group, identify a note taker and reporter to share ideas with the larger group.
- Then, brainstorm several ways to use mealtime (or snack) to promote children's *social* development in one of the following areas:
 - 1) Problem solving, 2) Impulse control, 3) Planning, or 4) Practical life skills
- Also list the supplies & steps you would need to take to make your idea a reality.

As We Share . . .

- Please, take your own notes.
- We will use them later.



Intellectual Development Around the Meal Table

- Mealtime and food can be used for a number of activities that promote intellectual development
- The meal table especially promotes intellectual learning because:
 1. Preparing and eating food is an activity that helps us learn by doing.
 2. Children care about food so have sustained interest.

Intellectually, What Do Children Learn At the Table?

- Language and Pre-Literacy
- Mathematics
- Science



Language

Conversation

- Mealtime conversations predict the growth and size of children's vocabulary
- Language stimulation + Interaction




What things do you do to
encourage language
development?

Creating Great Mealtime Conversations

- Create joint attention and then name the experience
- Elaborate on their language
- Ask open-ended questions
- Play with letter sounds
- Direct the conversation




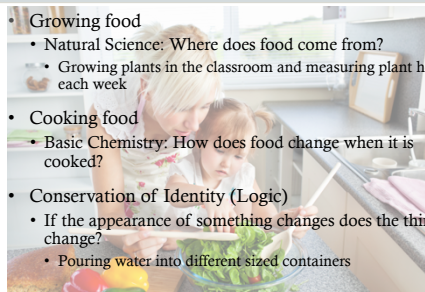
Mealtime Math

- 1-to-1 Correspondence
 - “1” is the same regardless of whether it is an apple or an orange.
 - Setting the table by matching each item to the number of chairs or people.
 - Simple arithmetic – adding and subtracting
 - If Michael’s mom joins us for lunch, how many plates do we need? If Kim is absent?
 - Fractions
 - Have children divide snacks or food evenly – 3 pieces of fruit between 2 children.
- 



(Food) Science

- 
- **Growing food**
 - Natural Science: Where does food come from?
 - Growing plants in the classroom and measuring plant height each week
 - **Cooking food**
 - Basic Chemistry: How does food change when it is cooked?
 - **Conservation of Identity (Logic)**
 - If the appearance of something changes does the thing change?
 - Pouring water into different sized containers



Intellectual Development Activity

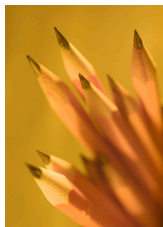
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Ideas for Mealtime Intellectual Development

- In your small group, identify a note taker and reporter to share ideas with the larger group.
- Then, brainstorm several ways to use mealtime (or snack) to promote children's *intellectual* development in one of the following areas:
 - 1) Language, 2) Math, or 3) Science
- Also list the supplies & steps you would need to take to make your idea a reality.

As We Share . . .

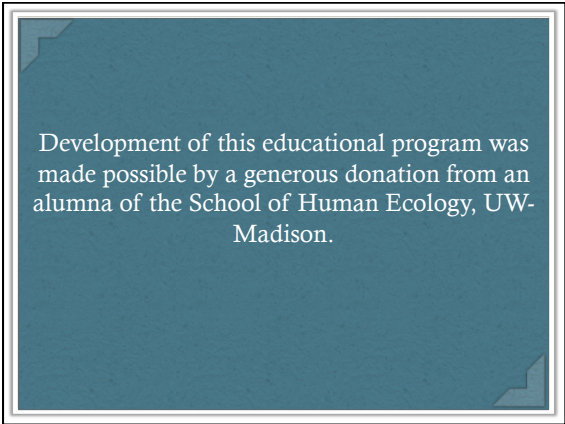
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Closing

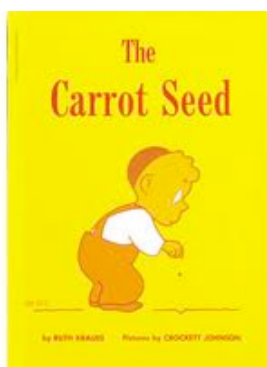
- Children develop intellectually and socially through participation in mealtimes.
- Because mealtimes become ritualized, with the same rules and actions repeated every day, they are a more effective setting for teaching and learning than are most other parts of the childcare day.





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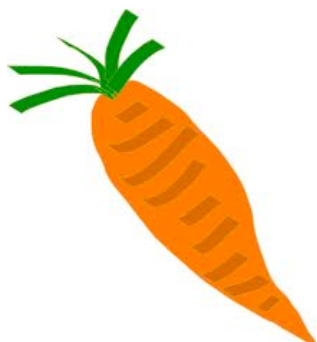
SNACK RECIPE: CARROT GARDENS



Today's book is The Carrot Seed by Ruth Krauss.

This classic picture book tells the story of a boy who plants a carrot seed and faithfully tends it, although no one else in his family believes it will grow. And, then, one day a carrot comes up.

Our snack for the day, Carrot Gardens, links what we are reading to what we are eating.



Carrot Gardens

(Serves 10)

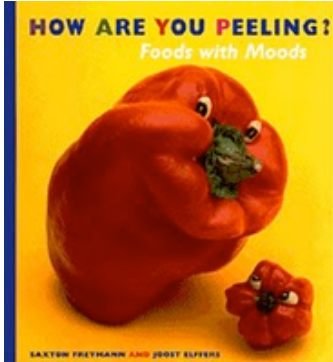
- 1 pound carrot sticks (about 40 carrots)
- 1 ¼ cup hummus (about 20 Tablespoons)
- 10 small paper cups

Place cups, hummus, and carrots on a table with a spoon (typical eating-size) in the hummus. Explain that each person making a snack should put two spoonfuls of hummus into a cup and then stick four carrots upright in the hummus. They can then use the carrots to “dig” out the hummus.

Each cup is a “garden” with carrots “planted” in the hummus.

Alternate snack: A similar snack could be made with nut butter and other vegetable sticks (i.e., celery, snap peas). For young children, use carrots cut into thin “match sticks.”

SNACK RECIPE: MAKING FACES



Today's book is How Are You Peeling? by Saxton Freymann & Joost Elffers.

This clever book about emotions uses common fruits and vegetables sculpted as characters expressing moods and feelings. The photos are humorous and the questions with them encourage a discussion of feelings.

Our snack for the day, Making Faces, links what we are reading to what we are eating.

Making Faces (Serves 10)

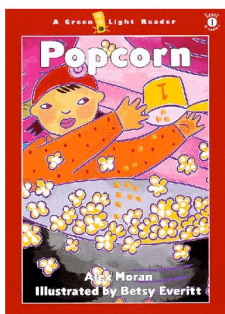


- 10 Whole Wheat English Muffins
- 5 cups various fruits and vegetables (cucumbers, carrots, cherry tomatoes, red or green peppers, bananas, raisins, berries, thin apple slices all work well)
- 10 Tablespoons Neufchatel or low-fat cream cheese or nut butter (non-peanut if you have children with peanut allergies)

Before snack, cut fruits and vegetables into small, bite-sized pieces and strips. Children are less likely to choke on very small pieces or strips of fruits and veggies. Cut cherry tomatoes or grapes in half. Cut English muffins in half.

During snack, allow each child to put a tablespoon of cheese or nut butter onto two English muffin halves. Then let them make a face with the fruit and vegetable pieces.

SNACK RECIPE: POP! POP! POP!



Today's book is Popcorn by Alex Moran.

Popcorn uses rhyming words and short sentences to tell a story about popping too much popcorn. Children will enjoy the colorful illustrations and chanting along with the words.

Our snack for the day, Pop! Pop! Pop!, links what we are reading to what we are eating.

Pop! Pop! Pop!

(Serves 10)

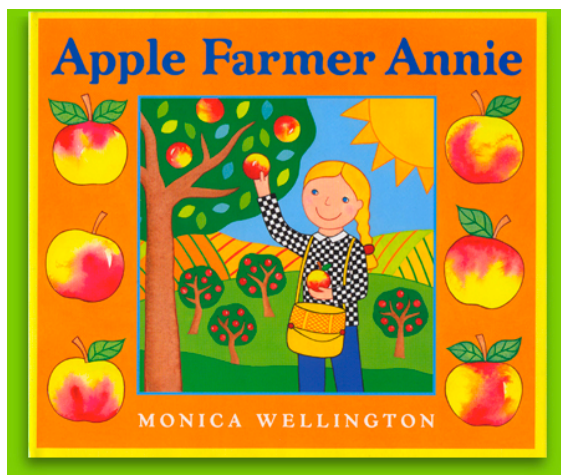
*NOTE: Popcorn can be a choking hazard for children under age 4. If you are working with children age 4 or younger, serve rice cakes instead and allow children to season them as desired.



- 10 cups popcorn* or 10 plain rice cakes
- Oil in a spray can
- Various seasonings
 - Cinnamon
 - Italian Seasoning & Garlic Salt
 - Salt
 - Pepper

Before snack (or as a learning activity for the children) pop popcorn in an air popper or on the stove. (Microwave popcorn is not as healthy as air popped popcorn.) Allow children to try the popcorn plain. Then invite them to try a tiny taste of the different seasonings. Finally, spray the popcorn lightly with the oil and allow each child to choose which of the seasoning they would like on his or her popcorn.

SNACK RECIPE: BEFORE & AFTER APPLES



Today's book is Apple Farmer Annie by Monica Wellington.

This simple story about Annie, an apple farmer, provides young children with basic information about where apples come from and ways they can be eaten, from cider to apple muffins.

Our snack for the day, Before & After Apples, helps children think about the process of cooking apples. Recipes can be found at the back of the book.



Before & After Apples (Serves 10)

- 4 apples sliced in quarters and seeded
- 5 cups unsweetened applesauce
- 10 small Annie's Applesauce Muffins (recipe at back of Apple Farmer Annie)
- 10 small plates & spoons

Ask participants to put one apple quarter, $\frac{1}{2}$ a cup of applesauce, and 1 baked good on a plate. If serving children, talk about how all these snacks are made with apples. All snacks could be made with the children. Ask them which is their favorite apple snack.

Using Snack to Foster Intellectual Development

Concept: Conservation of Identity

Exercise

Set out the Before & After apples snack. Gather children/participants around.

TELL (while showing a whole apple): This is an apple.

ASK (while holding a quarter of an apple): Is this an apple? (You can probe further by asking “How is it like an apple? How is it unlike an apple?”)

TELL: Ok, it’s not a whole apple, but it is still apple. Even though it looks different, it is made of the same stuff as a whole apple.

ASK (Cut the quarter apple into little bits while participants watch, point to the small pieces): Is this still apple?

TELL: It looks different but both the little pieces and the whole apple are made of the same stuff so they are both apple. We didn’t add anything, and we didn’t take anything away, so it has to be the same.

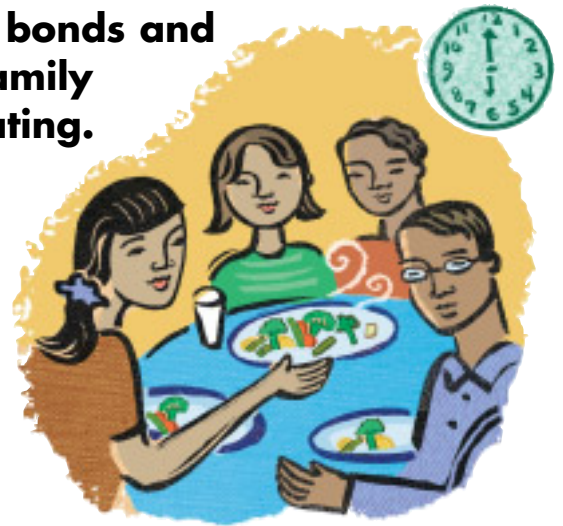
ASK (pass out applesauce): If we boil the apple bits in a pan, they will soften and slowly melt into applesauce. Here is some applesauce. Is this still apple?

TELL: Surprisingly, yes it is still apple. It looks very different, but we have only changed its appearance. ***Everything is like that: even when the outside appearance changes, the thing itself can still be the same.*** (Conservation of identity). This is like if we put you in a tiger costume and you wore a tiger mask. Would you really be a tiger? No, you would still be you, deep down inside, despite looking different on the outside. You wouldn’t change even if you looked different on the outside.

Enjoying The Family Meal

Family meals are important. You create close bonds and lifelong memories around the family table. Family meals can teach your child about healthful eating. You just need to be a good role model. When you try new foods your child may be more adventurous with food, too.

Try these easy ways to make family meals a pleasant part of your family routine.



- **Set a regular family mealtime.** Regular mealtimes give your child a better chance to eat a variety of foods to get the right amount to grow, stay healthy, and keep a healthy weight.
- **Make it simple, make it quick!** Spend less time in the kitchen and more time at the family table. Simple meals, even cold sandwiches, taste as good as meals that take more work. You can make any meal special if you all feel relaxed and if mealtime is filled with caring and laughter. Simplify – to take care of you, too!
- **Show that family meals are important.** During mealtime, turn off the TV. Find another way to see favorite shows. Let the answering machine take your phone calls, too. Have your family make calls before or after the meal hour. Show that same respect for other families when you make phone calls.
- **Eat around a table.** It's easier to talk and listen to your family when you face each other. Eating side-by-side at the kitchen counter takes away eye contact.
- **Enjoy meal talk.** Make easy conversations – no nagging or complaining. Talk so everyone can be a “star” at mealtime. Don’t take over. Your child will listen and learn by feeling included.
- **Be realistic about mealtime.** Try to sit down together. Keep meals from lasting too long. If kids get fussy, your family meal won’t be fun. Wait until everyone is done to be excused.

Enjoying The Family Meal

"I Can Help!"

Helping with family meals makes your child feel important in your family. You get time together, too. Your child learns even when tasks aren't perfectly done. So even if you work faster alone, **ask your child to help you.**

- **Pick** flowers for the table.
- **Create** paper place mats.
- **Put** pets in another room, if they demand family attention at mealtime.
- **Clear and wash** the table. Wash his or her hands.
- **Help** with table setting.
- **Help** with simple kitchen tasks, perhaps tearing salad greens or putting bread in a basket.
- **Pour** milk, perhaps with your help.
- **Turn off** the TV. Turn on fun music.
- **Clear and clean** the table.
- **Ask** "What would you like to do to help me?" Jot their ideas down.



Try this:

Does it seem impossible to fit family meals into your hectic schedule? Go step by step. Try to enjoy at least one family meal together each week. See what works, and plan from there.