

Teach Your Children To Make Smart Food Choices

(NAPSA)—Encouraging children to make smart food choices is often a challenge for parents, especially if their children are picky eaters or have specific nutritional needs. However, taking the time to teach children a few basic nutrition tools in a fun way when they are young will empower them to establish healthy eating habits throughout their lives.

“The best way for parents to teach their children about healthy eating and food choices is to lead by example—be a role model. Let the expression ‘actions speak louder than words’ be your watchwords,” said Hope Warshaw, RD, CDE, a dietitian, diabetes educator and author of several books including *The Diabetes Food and Nutrition Bible* (American Diabetes Association). “Look for foods that are both healthy and fun to eat. Then make sure plenty of these fun-to-eat foods are around the house.”

Here are some tips to help your children and your entire family eat more healthfully.

- Teach your children how to read the Nutrition Facts label on food products. These labels list valuable information about serving size, calories, fat and carbohydrate. Even at a young age, children can learn how to read the label serving size and other nutrition information to help them when choosing what to eat.

- Encourage your children to help plan meals and snacks by inviting them to accompany you to the grocery store. By allowing them to pick different foods and read the labels together, you will give your children a chance to use their understanding of the Nutrition Facts label. As a plus, they may even be more excited to eat foods that they helped you choose.

- Allow your children to help



pick out some fun, tasty items to add to their lunchboxes, such as yogurt, string cheese, their favorite fruit and sandwich bread, or Kool-Aid® Jammers 10. Kool-Aid Jammers 10 is a pouch drink with only 10 calories and 2 grams of carbohydrate. It contains 100 percent of the recommended daily value of Vitamin C and contains 10 percent real fruit juice, providing thirst-quenching refreshment that all children can enjoy.

- Your kids will be more apt to eat fruits and vegetables if they have a hand in preparing them for a meal. Smaller fingers can snap off the ends of fresh green beans, break broccoli, tear salad greens and help peel bananas and oranges. Let them help wash produce, too, such as cucumbers, mushrooms, potatoes and tomatoes.

It is also important to encourage physical activities that your child enjoys. Regular activity helps kids stay fit and burn off their boundless energy. Teaching your children to be physically active in connection with making smart food choices will help them establish life-long habits for healthy living.