Being a parent of a toddler is a hard job.

Being a child care provider of a toddler is a hard job.
Parents Are Important

- Parents are important role models
- Healthy behaviors at childcare reinforced at home
- Informed parents help support wellness goals
- Working together ensures success
- Parents do care about healthy habits

How Are You Connecting with Parents?

- Weekly Newsletter
- E-mail
- Daily Notes
- Bulletin Boards
- Surveys

Additional ideas shared by participants: daily communication notes, monthly newsletters, general clipboard “catch-up clipboard,” menus with nutrition info on the back, family engagement events, parent meetings with fun themes or wanted information (prom theme, CPR classes, etc., Facebook page, on-line communities.)
Information to Share with Parents

- Low-fat milk information to children over the age of 2
- A list of new menu items offered and which ones are
- Share recipes of menu items
- Policies for mealtimes and rewards
- Suggestions of healthy foods or non-foods for center celebrations and birthdays
- The type of physical activity opportunities each day
- The importance of family meals

Information to Get from Parents

- The types of foods their child likes at
- Suggestions of items to incorporate
- Activities their child enjoys
- Parent has an interest in wellness
  - Help with wellness policies
  - Spread the word to parents
  - Presentations and connections
Messages for Mothers of Preschool Kids

- Developed by USDA and designed to provide mothers of 2-5 year old children with information to help foster healthy eating habits.
  - Milk, whole grains, child feeding, and fruits and vegetables
- Messages and photos were tested by consumers.
- Emotion based informative messages, and related tips and advice use motivators and reinforcements.

- **Enjoy each other while enjoying family meals.**
  Keep mealtime relaxed to nourish the body and help your family make stronger connections. Let your little ones select which foods to put on their plates and how much to eat from the healthy choices you provide.

- **Feed their independent spirit at meal times.**
  Each meal with your preschooler is a chance to help them grow and learn to make some decisions on their own. Encourage them to make their own food choices from healthy foods you offer. Start early and you’ll help them build healthy eating habits for life.

- **Let go a little to gain a lot.**
  It’s natural for moms to worry about their preschoolers’ eating habits. Offer healthy foods and let your child choose from them. They’ll be more likely to enjoy meal time and eat enough, so everyone is happier.
• **Think beyond a single meal. Keep in mind what your child eats over time.**
Meals and healthy snacks give children several chances every day to eat a variety of foods. If your child eats only a little or nothing at one meal, don't worry. He'll make up for it with other meals and snacks to get what he needs for good health over time.

• **Sometimes new food take time.**
Kids don't always take to new foods right away. Offer new fruits and vegetables many times, served a variety of ways. Give your kids just a taste at first and be patient with them.

• **Patience works better than pressure.**
Offer your children new foods. Then, let them choose how much to eat. Kids are more likely to enjoy new foods when eating them is their own choice. It also teaches them how to be independent.

• **Let them learn by serving themselves.**
Let your kids serve themselves at dinner. Teach them to take small amounts at first. Assure them they can get more if they're still hungry.

• **Make meals and memories together.**
It's a lesson they'll use for life!

• **Cook together. Eat together. Talk together. Make mealtime a family time.**

• **They learn from watching you.**
Eat your fruits and veggies and your kids will too.
Creating a Relaxed Meal Time Experience

- Remove distractions
  - No TV, computers, cell phones
- Talk to each other
  - Focus conversation on what happened during the day
  - “What was the best part of your day?”

ISU Extension Mealtime Cards:
- [https://store.extension.iastate.edu/Product/Mealtime-Conversation-Cards](https://store.extension.iastate.edu/Product/Mealtime-Conversation-Cards)

- Family
- Kids
- Tots
- Adolescents
Cooking Together
Activities By Age

- 2 year olds:
  - Make faces out of pieces of fruit and vegetables
  - Scrub vegetables or fruit
  - Tear lettuce or greens
  - Snap green beans

- 3 year olds:
  - Add ingredients
  - Stir
  - Spread PB or other spreads
  - Shake a drink in a sealed container
  - Knead bread dough

- 4 to 5 year olds
  - Peel and mix fruits and vegetables
  - Peel hard boiled eggs
  - Cut soft fruit with a plastic knife
  - Wipe off counters
  - Mash soft fruits, vegetables, and beans
  - Measure dry ingredients
  - Measure liquid ingredients with help

Choose MyPlate Tip Sheets
Spend Smart. Eat Smart. Blog

- Healthy Snacks for Kids Don’t Have to Cost More
  http://blogs.extension.iastate.edu/foodsavings/2013/03/18/healthy-snacks-for-kids-dont-have-to-cost-more/

- It’s Not Just a Piece of Candy

Pick a Better Snack Monthly Newsletters

http://www.idph.state.ia.us/INN/PickABetterSnack.aspx
THANK YOU!

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