

# Healthy Nutrition For Kids

## Setting A Good Nutritional Example For Kids

(NAPSA)—When it comes to feeding their children, parents certainly have the best intentions. But many have busy lifestyles that don't always allow enough time for grocery shopping, meal planning or cooking. Others may not be aware of the healthiest ingredients or cooking methods, and may rely on fatty or starchy foods as the basis for meals. Coupled with the picky eating habits that seem to be so prevalent among kids, it's no wonder that children are usually not eating as well as they should.

### Age-Old Habits

- Younger children often have a number of foods that they refuse to eat. Children can be particular not just about how a food tastes, but about temperature and texture, too. And trying to get kids to eat their vegetables can be a real exercise in persistence.

- Most kids prefer foods that are tasty and high calorie, and these tend to be foods that are also inexpensive, widely available and often more convenient to eat.

- Older kids are frequently on the run, which may mean not only a lot of convenience items and fast foods, but erratic mealtimes, too. Sometimes a few extra minutes of sleep in the morning are more enticing than a healthy breakfast before school.

According to Luigi Gratton, M.D., clinical physician at University of California, Los Angeles, there are some tactics that parents can take with their kids to help them to eat better.

"Setting a good example is a



**There are a number of ways parents can help their children eat healthier.**

good first step," says Gratton. "Parents should make every attempt to demonstrate healthy eating habits with their kids, and this includes having regular mealtimes." He also notes that kids are more likely to eat healthy fruits and vegetables when they take part in food shopping and preparation.

### Winning Strategies

Children are also more inclined to eat healthy foods when they are offered frequently and regularly. Repeated exposure to vegetables, for example, is just one way to encourage your family members to try new foods. It also helps to make foods visible and available. Try keeping a bowl of fresh fruit on the kitchen counter, or put crunchy, cut-up vegetables in the refrigerator.

Another approach for increasing intake of vegetables is by adding them to familiar foods. Cooked, pureed vegetables can be added to pasta sauce, for example, which boosts nutrition and reduces the overall calories in the dish. Cooked vegetables can also be added to soups, stews, casseroles and meat loaves—adding both nutrition and flavor.

Appropriate snacking is fine for growing kids, and well-chosen snacks can help to meet nutritional needs. But if snacking means sugary or salty empty-calorie items, consider offering fruits, vegetables, nuts or soy nuts, yogurt or low-fat pudding instead.

### Smooth Things Over

Kids also enjoy smoothies, and products such as Herbalife's new line of protein shakes—designed to be mixed with milk—provide a tasty way to help kids meet their vitamin and mineral needs for the day as a snack or part of a healthy meal. A bit of protein helps to curb appetite and limit frequent snacking on less healthy items.

Despite parents' best efforts, children's diets may still fall short in certain key nutrients. "A daily multiple vitamin and mineral supplement can help to round out any potential shortfalls in the diet, and can act as a safety net," says Gratton. "Look for age-appropriate products, which target the needs for the particular age of the child."

For more information on children's nutrition products, visit [www.Herbalife.com](http://www.Herbalife.com).