

## Imagination talk

Are you interested in making lunch time fun for preschoolers? Imagination talk can not only help with picky eating, it can help develop skills children need to do great in school. Children build many skills when they practice their imagination such as;

- ⇒ **Developing social skills**
- ⇒ **Building self-confidence**
- ⇒ **Boosting creativity**
- ⇒ **Practicing language skills**
- ⇒ **Building courage**

Playing pretend is a great way for children to use their imagination. As children play pretend, they explore relationships and learn more about how people interact. Imaginative play helps develop an understanding about other people's feelings.

Imaginative talk can help children build self-confidence by pretending to be somebody else such as a super hero. Young children have very little control over their lives and talking about themselves in powerful roles helps develop confidence in their abilities and their potential.

Using imagination helps boost creativity because it is the beginning of abstract thought. Children who can picture a key for a door or a flower for a garden in their minds are learning to visualize symbols. This skill comes in handy when children attend school and have to learn

that numerals symbolize groups of objects, letters symbolize sounds, and so on.

Kids who talk imaginatively at meal time may talk more. This helps increase their vocabulary, improve sentence structure and enhance communication skills.

Playing pretend can help children work out their fears and worries. When children role-play about the brand new food they have never seen before they gain a sense of control over it and suddenly it doesn't seem so scary. Imaginative play also helps kids share confusing feelings they might have, such as anger toward a change in the menu or anxiety from the colors of different foods.



You can ask children silly questions to help them build their imagination like "what would happen if I put my glasses on upside

down, or if food fell from the sky, or if people walked on their hands instead of their feet?" you can try food related questions like "What would happen if tomatoes were blue instead of red, what if watermelon was sour instead of sweet, what would happen if fish could walk?"

Children can make up some silly questions too. Have fun guessing and acting out these silly questions. You might be pleased and surprised with children's imagination.

## Hand Washing Quiz

Answer these questions to find out if you're a preschool hand washing champ!

### 1) When you wash your hands, which is best to use

- A. cold water
- B. soap and warm water

### 2) When you wash your hands, should the water be

- A. warm
- B. cold

### 3) How long should you wash your hands?

- A. 5 seconds

- B. 25 seconds

### 4) When should you turn the water off?

- A. after drying, using the paper towel
- B. before drying to save water

### 5) When drying your hands You should use

- A. a clean paper towel
- B. your pants
- C. blower



Answers: 1. B 2. A 3. B 4. B 5. A or C For more information please visit [www.kiddiwash.com/](http://www.kiddiwash.com/)

## Cuban Black Bean Soup

This black bean soup with Spanish flavors of cumin, chili, cilantro, and lime is sure to be a favorite in your family.

### WHAT YOU NEED:

Large heavy-bottomed pot  
Measuring spoons  
Cutting board  
Sharp knife (adult needed)  
Colander  
Measuring cup  
Wooden spoon or heatproof spatula  
Pot holders

### INGREDIENTS:

2 tablespoons olive oil  
2 large onions  
2 carrots  
2 celery stalks  
4 garlic cloves  
1 teaspoon ground cumin  
1 teaspoon chili powder  
1 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano  
1 / 2 teaspoon cayenne pepper  
5 cups (three 15-ounce cans) of beans  
8 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth  
2 tablespoons fresh lime juice  
2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro leaves  
4 tablespoons plain yogurt



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Before cooking, wash your hands with soap and warm water.
2. Wash your lime, celery, cilantro, and carrots.
3. Peel onions and garlic, and use a peeler to peel carrots.
4. Use a cutting board to chop onions, carrots, celery, cilantro, and garlic.
5. Put the pot on the stove and turn the heat to medium and add the oil.
6. Add the onions, carrots, celery, garlic, and spices and cook for 10 to 15 minutes.
7. Drain and rinse the beans and add them with broth, raise the heat to high and bring to a boil.
8. Lower the heat to medium and cook, half covered, for 2 hours, stirring frequently. (If at any point the soup seems too thick and is starting to look like mud, add 1 to 2 cups more broth.)
9. Stir in the lime juice and taste the soup. Does it need anything to boost the flavor? More spices? Another squeeze of lime juice? A grinding of black pepper? A pinch of salt? Add whatever you think it needs.
10. Serve right away, decorated with cilantro and yogurt, or cover and refrigerate for up to 3 days.

See more at [www.chopchopmag.org/recipe/cuban-black-bean-](http://www.chopchopmag.org/recipe/cuban-black-bean-)

## Food for senses!

Preschoolers can use their food to learn about their 5 senses. These include:

- ⇒ **Hearing**
- ⇒ **Feeling**
- ⇒ **Seeing**
- ⇒ **Smelling**
- ⇒ **Tasting**

We have created a food activity for helping preschoolers learn about their senses. You can do this as described below:

- ⇒ You can collect two fruits and two vegetables and place them into a paper bag
- ⇒ Instruct preschoolers to keep their eyes closed and to reach into the bag to select one food at a time
- ⇒ They will feel each item
- ⇒ Ask the children to describe the way each item feels
- ⇒ They will smell each item
- ⇒ Ask the children to describe the way each item smells
- ⇒ They will shake each item to see if any sound

is produced

- ⇒ Ask the children to describe the way each item sounds
- ⇒ Now they can guess what they are holding
- ⇒ After guessing they can open their eyes and look at what they were holding
- ⇒ Ask them to describe it
- ⇒ Talk about size, shape, texture, scent, and firmness

Have fun!



## 5 Ways Breakfast Helps Children Thrive

**1. It breaks the overnight fast:** Children's brains need a lot of energy. Kids have small muscles that aren't able to store much energy. Kids sleep long hours.

**2. Breakfast helps children control their intake:** A consistent breakfast protects against excess weight in children. Growth is the body's priority. When meals are not consistent the body will signal hunger, and overeating may be likely.

**3. Breakfast helps kids perform better in school:** Breakfast skipping negatively impacts a child's ability to learn. Children who eat breakfast do better when it comes to memory, attention and test scores, and also have better school attendance.



**4. Breakfast teaches children that food is a priority:** Children are learning important habits that will last a lifetime. Kids may go through stages of not wanting to eat in the morning and that's okay. But if parents stay true to this ritual, it is extremely likely their child will grow into an adult who plans and eats a well-balanced breakfast.

**5. Breakfast improves daily nutrition:** Children who eat breakfast have better intakes of key vitamins and minerals than breakfast skippers. There are many nutritious foods that are served at breakfast, such as whole grains, fruit, dairy and protein sources like eggs. It's also a key opportunity for parents to positively influence their child's diet.

For more information, please visit [www.healthyeating.org](http://www.healthyeating.org)

## Activity Kits Free From the University of California

Do your part to impact childhood obesity, fitness, and malnutrition. Local, state, and federal initiatives (and funding) urge a coordinated approach to addressing these issues. The University of California has prepared activity kits to help you teach nutrition and physical activity concepts to your children, while integrating math, language and science concepts that address CDE standards. **These lessons come “ready-made”** with all of the materials you need to teach a fun and interactive lesson with your students. The curriculum was developed by the University of California.

**We will bring the materials to your site, free of charge,** and we can even provide you or your staff with trainings and additional resources to increase confidence in these topics. If you are interested, we can also plan classroom food-themed cooking clubs, special events, and other fun sessions.

If you are interested in signing up to receive these materials, please contact us.

## CONTACTS



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Fuel Their Mind Nutrition Newsletter Enclosed

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Funded by USDA's Food Stamp Program through the Network for a Healthy California and the University of CA Cooperative Extension, Yolo County Office. This institution is an equal opportunity employer. The Food Stamp program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious food for a better diet. To find out more, call 530-666-8740



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# Fuel Their Minds Parent Corner

Ideas for Better Eating and Active Play with Young Children



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## The Division of Responsibility in Feeding Part 2

Last issue, we introduced the Division of Responsibility in Feeding. There are specific roles for children and adults so that everyone knows what they need to do.

### **The Role of the Child is to Decide:**

- *If they will eat*
- *How much they will eat*

### **The Role of the Parent is to Decide:**

- *When food is served (such as at a set time like 6:00 pm).*
- *Where food is served (such as at the dinner table).*
- *What food is served (such as chicken, rice, and salad), but the same meal for all family members.*

### **If family meals are part of the daily routine but everyone is eating a different meal:**

Running a “restaurant” where everyone can order a different meal is a lot of work, takes more time, uses up more food and money, and causes unnecessary stress. Offering only one meal **simplifies** things. Be sure to include at least one food that everyone enjoys. For example, if everyone in the family loves chicken make sure to include chicken in the family meal. The goal of the Division of Responsibility is for everyone in the family to sit down together and all eat the same meal. For example, a roast chicken with rice and green beans or a simple soup and sandwiches can be a family meal. However, do not offer to make a separate meal for fussy eaters. They should choose from the food that is made and served at the table. If they decide to only eat one food item from the table that is okay. Over time, they will come to be more adventurous and curious about trying new foods and wanting to eat a variety of foods offered.

### **Get children involved in the process:**

Children are eager to learn and help. Let children help with family meals, this teaches responsibility and independence. Young children (2-4 years of age) can help set the table, clear and clean the table after meals, wash fruits and vegetables for the meal, or pick out a new fruit or vegetable to try with family meals. Older children (5-7 years of age) can help stir or mix ingredients, help prepare salads, pour milk or water for family members at the table, and help wash or dry dishes.

### **A few things to remember:**

- Be patient; it may take children 10-15 times of seeing, smelling, or tasting the food before they learn to accept and like it.
- Pair new foods with familiar foods; offering a new fruit or vegetable with a food a child knows and likes will be more successful.
- Stay positive; change takes time. Do not give up, if something does not work the first time, keep trying!
- Picky eating is common. The key is to keep offering a variety of foods and not letting the child dictate what foods are eaten repeatedly. The cook (parent) is in charge of preparing the meals!



Article adapted from [www.ellynsatterinstitute.org](http://www.ellynsatterinstitute.org)



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## La División de Responsabilidad Cuando Comen Parte 2

La vez pasada, introducimos El División de Responsabilidad Cuando Comen. Las responsabilidades de los niños y padres son diferentes.

### Las Responsabilidades de los Niños:

- *El niño decide si va comer*
- *El niño decide cuanto va comer*

### Las Responsabilidades de los Padres:

- *Los padres deciden cuando van a servir la comida (un tiempo regular como 6:00 pm).*
- *Los padres deciden donde van a servir la comida (como en el comedor).*
- *Los padres deciden cuales tipos de comida van a servir (como pollo, arroz, y ensalada), pero el mismo menú para todos los miembros de la familia.*

### Si todos los miembros de su familia comen juntos diario, pero cada miembro tiene un menú diferente:

Trabajando como en un restaurante donde todos pueden escoger lo que quieren es mucho trabajo. Toma mucho tiempo y gasta comida y dinero, además, causa estrés. Ofreciendo solo un menú simplifica las cosas. Debe incluir por lo menos una comida que a todos les gusta. Por ejemplo si a todos les gusta el pollo, incluye pollo. El propósito de la división de responsabilidad es que todos se sientan juntos en la mesa y que comen las mismas comidas. Por ejemplo, caldo de pollo y arroz con frijoles. No debe ofrecer un menú separado para los que son quisquillosos. Los que son quisquillosos deben escoger de la comida ya lista para servir. Si sus niños deciden solo comer uno de las comidas servidas, está bien. No debe preocuparse porque con tiempo, sus niños se harán más curiosos cuando ven comida nueva. Y con más tiempo van a empezar a comer una variedad de comidas.

### Deje que sus niños participen en el proceso:

A los niños les encanta ayudar y aprender. Deje que sus niños ayuden con el preparación de la comida, les enseñara responsabilidad y la independencia. Niños jóvenes (2-4 años) pueden preparar la mesa con los platos y tenedores, limpiar la mesa después de comer, lavar frutas y verduras, o escoger un nuevo fruta o verdura para la familia. Niños más grandes (5-7 años) pueden mezclar ingredientes, preparar ensaladas, servir leche o agua a los miembros de la familia, y también ayudar lavar y secar trastes.

### Algunas cosas que no debe olvidar:

- Sea paciente; puede tomar 10-15 veces que sus niños ven, huelen, o prueben una comida nueva antes que ellos aprenden aceptar y comérselos.
- Combina nuevas comidas con comidas ya conocidas; ofrece un nuevo fruta o verdura con comidas que sus niños ya conocen y quieren para que sea una transición más fácil.
- Manténgase positivo: el cambio toma tiempo. No debe renunciar su esfuerzo, si algo no trabaja perfecto la primera vez, sigue tratando.
- Ser quisquilloso es común. La clave es a seguir ofreciendo comidas y parrar de dejar que sus niños dicten que comidas ellos van a comer. El chef (el padre) es el que manada en la preparación de comida.



Este artículo fue adaptada de [www.ellynsatterinstitute.org](http://www.ellynsatterinstitute.org)