

Food Guide for Kids

A national study shows that more and more children are dealing with obesity. The numbers of children with poor nutrition is astounding. Macaroni and cheese, hotdogs, and French fries were among the top food choices for children. So how do we get them to eat better?

The first step is to make sure they eat what is cooked. If you are serving a food dish they don't like, they can have the choice of eating it or not having dinner. This can be really difficult at first and can start a big fight. When introducing new foods that you think your kids won't like, also serve something good that you know they will eat. This can help eliminate the problem of them "starving to death".

Once your children know that they must try new foods, it allows you to begin experimenting. For our family, I found a recipe book that had 36 weeks of recipes. The first time we used the book, each family member rated the dinner item. I placed a star by the recipe for each family member that liked the food. Now when we go through the book, if an item has fewer than 3 or 4 stars, I skip that meal.

Find recipes that provide good nutrition - legumes, vegetables, fruits. We all remember the food pyramid from our days of school. If your kids are eating school lunch, they are getting one good nutritious meal. You can follow their food guidelines when planning your own meals. Keep the monthly calendar with the meals the school has planned, and follow them for dinner (in a different month).

Introduce foods that you know your children didn't like before, and have them try one bite. Kid's taste buds change over time, and something they hated before they might really like now.