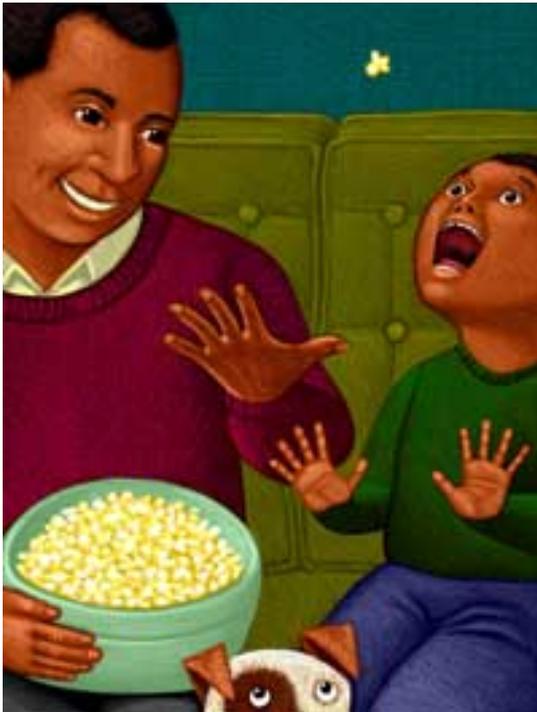


Preschoolers have already established preferences for food based on texture, flavor and smell. Their preferences may not necessarily be healthy choices. You can be a model for eating a variety of healthy foods. Eating a variety of healthy foods will help children be more alert and do better in school.

Health & Safety: Activity 4



Benefits for Your Child:

- Identifies different foods
- Understands that eating a variety of healthy foods is necessary for growth

Preschoolers have already established preferences for food based on texture, flavor, and smell. Their preferences may not necessarily be healthy choices. You can be a model for eating a variety of healthy foods. Eating a variety of healthy foods will help children be more alert and do better in school.

Kindergarten Connection

Children who eat in the school cafeteria will have to choose foods from limited menus. When children enter school having experienced eating an assortment of healthy foods, they may be more likely to make better choices about what they eat.

Activity: Tasting Party

In advance, prepare bite-sized pieces of the foods for you and your child. Tell your child that you are going to have an adventure and try new things at a Tasting Party. Tell him/her of a time when you tried something new and enjoyed it. Ask your child to choose the one he/she would like to taste first. After tasting it, encourage your child to describe how it tasted, smelled, and if he/she liked it. Then tell your child about the food: "This is coconut. It comes from a tall tree." Continue with the remainder of the samples.

Materials:

- A few samples of foods familiar to your child
- A few samples of foods not familiar to your child

More Ideas:

- Have your child choose a few unfamiliar foods from the store.
- Let your child help you prepare the samples.
- Invite other family members to join you for the Tasting Party.
- Invite others to choose a favorite food to add to the Tasting Party.
- Use the new foods in meals (especially the ones they like).

Tips:

- If your child does not enjoy certain foods, it may be that he/she does not like the texture, flavor, or smell. Certain foods with strong flavors that adults enjoy may not be enjoyable to children. Your child may not like all of the foods that are sampled, but that is okay. If you keep the Tasting Party a positive experience, your child will be more likely to have a positive attitude when trying new foods.

- It is typical for children to want to eat the same things every day. These are phases children go through that may last for months. Even if your child wants to eat the exact same meal for lunch every day, you can help by adding variety to other meals. You could present a new food at lunch by putting it on a small dish next to your child's plate. As he/she becomes accustomed to the new food, he/she may touch, lick, smell, then sample it. Present the same "new" food, such as a tomato, every day at lunchtime. Do not force your child to touch or eat the food.

Activity Card

 [Download Printable Activity Card](#)

Video

