



Nourishing Healthy Eaters in Early Care and Education - Introductory Session

Objectives:

1. Describe Wellness and Adult Nutrition
2. Recognize the importance of healthy eating for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers

My Food Story

Attitudes about food and food preferences begin to develop in early childhood influenced by parents, families, and adult caregivers. The way that our families discussed food, the climate of meals, culture, religion, and parenting style all impact our food story.

- List out several fruits and vegetables you enjoyed as a child.
- What is a dish a parent or family member prepared that you remember?
- What were your family meals like as a child?
- What is a food you avoid today? Why?
- What is a food you currently enjoy when you are celebrating?

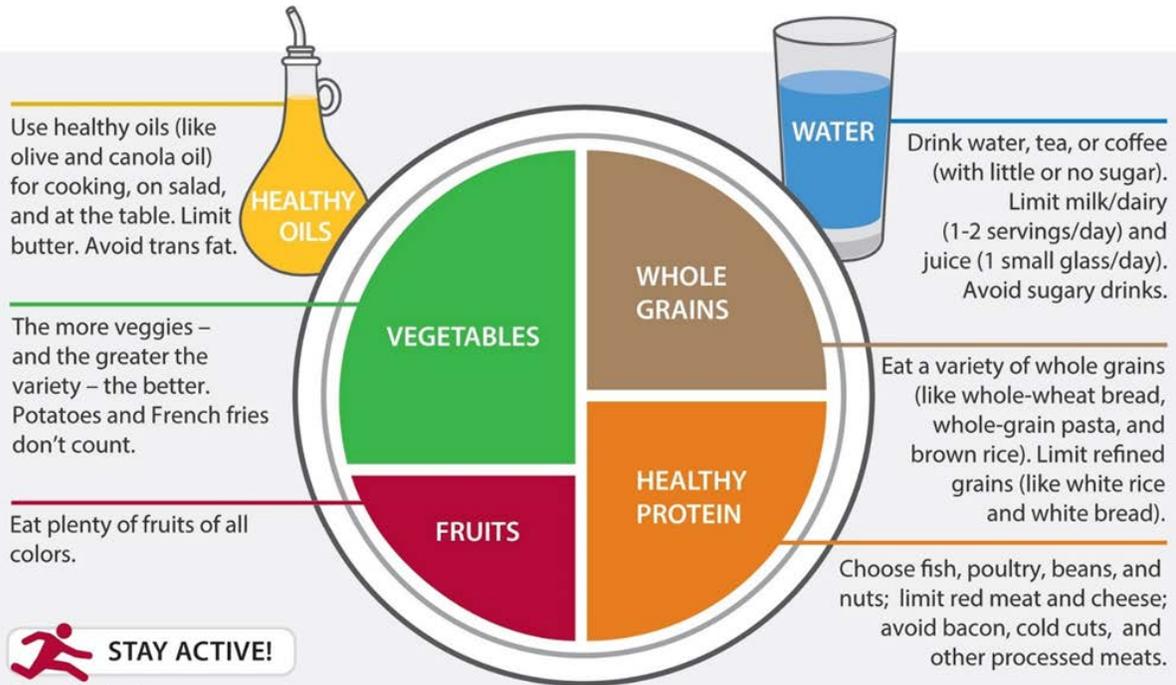
How do you think your childhood experiences with food influence your food choices today?

Wellness is an active process of becoming aware of and making choices toward a healthy and fulfilling life. Inequities and access to choices that promote wellness exist in many communities.

Wellness is more than being free from illness, it is a dynamic process of change and growth.

Wellness is important to me because...

HEALTHY EATING PLATE



Harvard School of Public Health
The Nutrition Source
www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource

Harvard Medical School
Harvard Health Publications
www.health.harvard.edu

Sugar-sweetened beverages are any liquids that are sweetened with added sugars. Examples include regular soda (not sugar-free), fruit drinks, sports drinks, energy drinks, sweetened waters, and coffee and tea beverages with added sugars.



Sugar-sweetened beverages are leading sources of added sugars in the diet. Sugars are listed on the nutrition label and the ingredient list.

Breaking the habit of drinking sugary drinks can be challenging. The rush of sugar causes the dopamine to be released to brain. This can lead to cravings for more sugar.

Challenges to Healthy Eating



Access to fresh, whole, affordable, culturally relevant food
Transportation
Time

Cooking Equipment
Cooking Skills
Space
Cost of equipment, transportation, and groceries



EAT SMART

WITH FOOD NUTRITION LABELS

The Nutrition Facts label can help you make healthier choices.

Use it! Here's what to look for:

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	2/3 cup (55g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	230
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	6%
* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.	

Start with serving information.

This will tell you the size of a single serving and how many servings are in the package.

Check total calories.

Do the math to know how many calories you're really getting if you eat the whole package.

Limit certain nutrients.

Compare labels when possible and choose options with lower amounts of added sugars, sodium and saturated fat and no trans fat.

Get enough of beneficial nutrients.

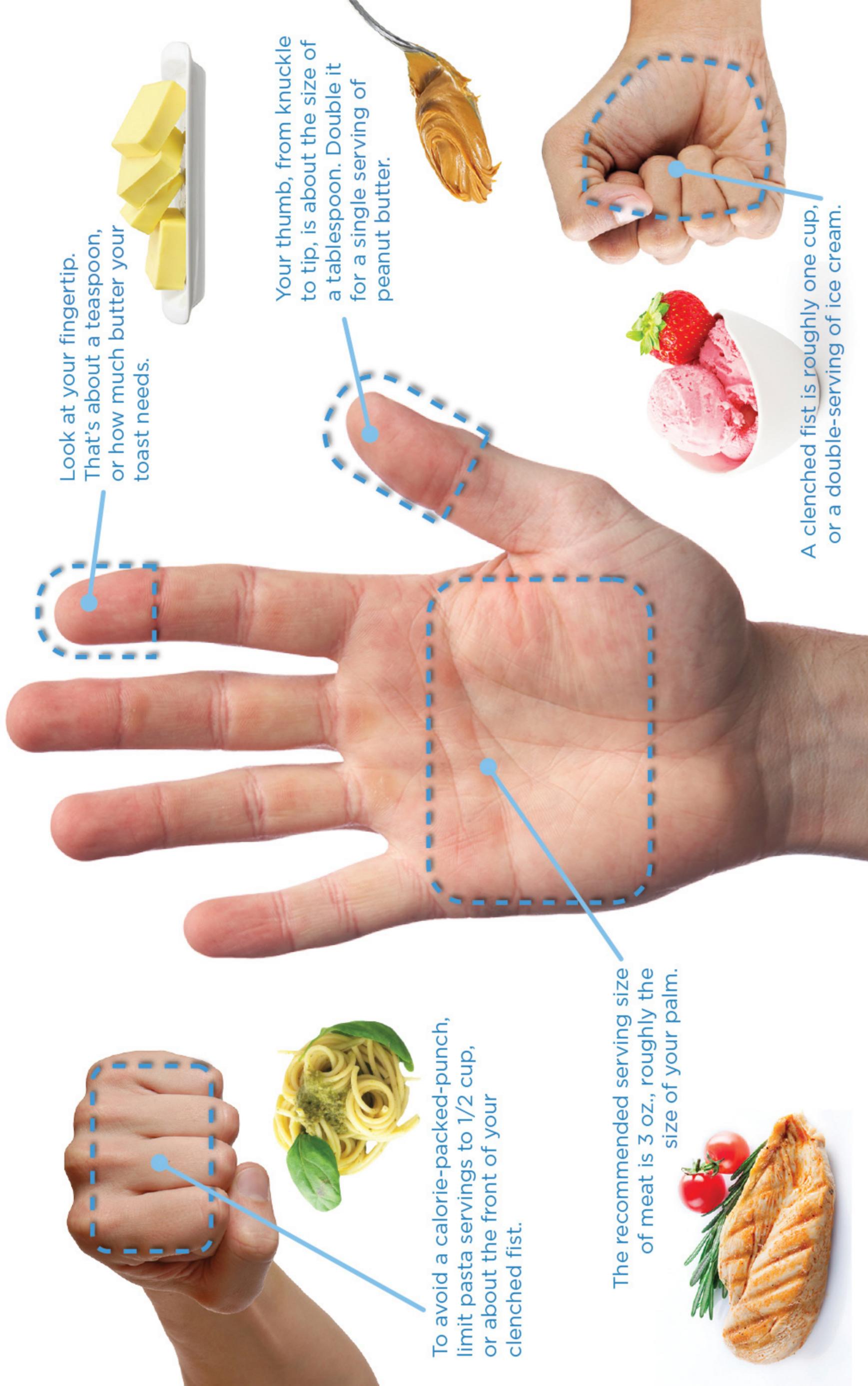
Eat foods with nutrients your body needs, like calcium, dietary fiber, iron, potassium and Vitamin D.

Understand % Daily Value.

- The % Daily Value (DV) tells you the percentage of each nutrient in a single serving in terms of the daily recommended amount.
- To consume less of a nutrient (such as saturated fat or sodium), choose foods with a lower % DV (5% or less).
- To consume more of a nutrient (such as fiber or potassium), choose foods with a higher % DV (20% or more).

For more tips and tricks on eating smart, visit heart.org/HealthyForGood

Hand Guide to Portion Control



Look at your fingertip. That's about a teaspoon, or how much butter your toast needs.



Your thumb, from knuckle to tip, is about the size of a tablespoon. Double it for a single serving of peanut butter.



A clenched fist is roughly one cup, or a double-serving of ice cream.



To avoid a calorie-packed-punch, limit pasta servings to 1/2 cup, or about the front of your clenched fist.



The recommended serving size of meat is 3 oz., roughly the size of your palm.



MAKE EVERY BITE A MEDITATION



If you want to put healthier eating habits on the menu, mindfulness may be a simple and effective place to start! It's not about dieting or restrictions – it's about taking a moment to take it in.

Try these easy ways to incorporate mindful eating into your day, so you can Eat Smart at every meal:



Ponder: Check in with yourself about your hunger before you eat – you may actually be thirsty, bored or stressed.



Appraise: Take a moment to take it in. How does it smell? Do you really want it? Is it more than you need?



Slow: Slow down so your brain can keep up with your stomach. Put your fork down between bites and focus on the flavor.



Savor: Enjoy your food. Take a moment to savor the satisfaction of each bite – the taste, texture, everything!



Stop: Stop when you're full – there's no need to join the clean plate club if it means overeating.

Try one or more of these tactics to help you eat more mindfully. And for more ways to be Healthy for Good, visit [heart.org/HealthyForGood](https://www.heart.org/HealthyForGood)

Action Plan	
Goal Statement:	
Action Steps	Materials, Resources or Support Needed
<i>Example: Recognize my daily progress</i>	<i>Example: Planner/calendar, 5-10 minutes of time in the evening to think and note about my progress in my calendar</i>
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
Today's Date:	Start Date:

Sample Goals:
 Eat 5 servings of Fruits and Vegetables per day
 Limit Sugary beverages to one drink per day
 Drink 5 glass of water per day
 Use 1 mindful eating strategy at each meal and snack

Sample Acton Steps:
 Track or journal my successes and challenges
 Keep nutritious foods and snacks available
 Identify apps that help support my goals
 Name a partner for support

Healthy Eating in Early Childhood

- Experts believe that early childhood is the best time to establish healthy eating habits
- Research shows that the more opportunities children are given to sample unfamiliar foods, the more likely they are to learn to enjoy and accept them
- Young children are motivated to imitate the behaviors around food modeled by caregivers and peers.
- Food preferences and dietary habits begin developing from birth.
- From birth to age 2 is a critical period for exposing children to a wide variety of healthy foods and setting a preference for healthy options.
- Child care can help influence these preferences as children may consume up to two meals and two snacks daily while in child care.

Early care professionals can help children become healthy eaters.

Nutrition plays an essential role in early childhood growth and development



Physical Growth & Development



Brain Development



Social & Emotional Development