

BEST BITES



The gift of cooking

Cooking is a wonderful hobby—and life skill—that parents and children can learn together. At holiday or birthday time, consider giving your youngster cooking lessons that you can take with him. You might find classes at a community center, the library, or a local cooking school.



DID YOU KNOW?

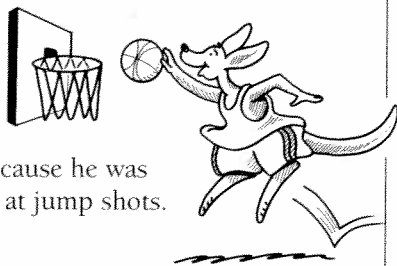
Foods that are rich in nutrients will keep your youngster feeling full longer. Plus, getting vitamins and minerals through food (rather than supplements) helps her body absorb them better. Nutrient-rich foods include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meats, fish, beans, nuts, and low-fat or fat-free dairy products.

Dress for PE

Encourage your child to dress for activity on PE days. He should wear loose-fitting clothes that are comfortable to move in and sneakers that have good support. Also, be sure he takes a jacket, a hat, and gloves or mittens so he can enjoy outdoor PE or recess.

Just for fun

Q: Why did the coach want the kangaroo on the basketball team?



A: Because he was good at jump shots.

Grocery store fun

Have a bingo game... play I Spy... make a map. Where are you? At the supermarket!

Games and activities can make food shopping fun—and help teach your youngster about healthy eating. Here's how.

Play bingo

Before leaving home, help your child use your grocery list to create a bingo game. Together, make a bingo card with the food groups (fruits and vegetables, dairy, grains, meats and beans) across the top. Have him write food items from your list underneath their headings (*example:* milk in the dairy column). Then, as you put each item in the cart, he can mark off the box on his bingo card.

Spy healthy foods

Let your youngster take along a pair of binoculars and play I Spy. For instance, when you're picking out produce, you might say, "I spy a vegetable that is purple and shaped like a big pear." He can use his binoculars to search for the answer (an eggplant). As you play, he'll build observation skills and learn more



about foods. *Tip:* Pick a healthy item you'd like him to try—once he "spies" it, he might be more interested in sampling it at home.

Draw a map

Have your child pack a pencil, markers, and paper (a sketch pad or blank paper on a clipboard). While you shop, he can make a map of the grocery store. He might draw rectangles for each aisle and label them with the foods found there. Suggest that he add symbols so he can see the sections at a glance (a banana for fruit, a loaf of bread for grains). He'll learn how the grocery store is organized and where the healthiest foods are. ●

Positive feedback

When your child chooses nutritious foods, let her know that you notice. Your praise can encourage her to keep making similar decisions. Here are some things you could say:

- "Good idea to have carrots for a snack!"
- "I'm happy to see you trying pomegranate seeds. They're so good for you!"
- "Wow—I see lots of yummy vegetables on your plate!"
- "I'm glad you and Tami decided to turn off the TV and go shoot baskets."
- "I like the way you're cutting the fat off the meat. That's what I do, too."
- "I appreciate your clearing the table. With you helping, we'll finish sooner and be able to play outside." ●

