Childhood Obesity: Feeding Practices and Eating Behaviors

A webinar for MiPCT Care Managers

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Years of Service

• Health4U Nutrition Consultant (8)
• Pediatric Nutritionist (22)
• Nutritionist in Private Practice (5)
• Mother (28)
• List examples of studies on children’s eating behaviors that impact body weight regulation.
• Demonstrate an awareness of the association between food insecurity and high body weight.
• Describe Satter’s trust model including eating competence and the division of responsibility in the feeding relationship.
Review of Literature

Concern about weight and shape

- Body dissatisfaction
- Eating disordered behaviors
- Low self-esteem
- Restricting/dieting/weight control efforts $\rightarrow$ Weight gain
- Weight stigma

Review of Literature

Feeding practices → Maladaptive eating behaviors

• Pressure-to-eat → Eating more or less than desired
• Control → Erratic and inconsistent eating
• Restriction → Eating in absence of hunger
• Rewards → Increased affective value of food

Maternal eating habits

Review of Literature

Food Insecurity
“exists whenever the availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or the ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways in limited or uncertain.”

National Research Council, 2006

“household-level economic and social condition of limited access to food.”
USDA, Economic Research Service, 2009

Hunger
An individual’s physical experience of pain and discomfort due to want of food.

“physiological condition that may result from food insecurity.”
USDA, Economic Research Service, 2009
Review of Literature

Food insecurity and obesity

- Reduced dietary quality—incomplete and unbalanced meals
- Modified eating patterns
  - Compensatory feeding practices
  - Cyclical overeating
  - Distorted sensitivity to internal regulators
- Psychological stress
- Impaired family functioning

Reading List


Can we intervene safely?

- Physical activity & play
- Self-efficacy
- Body self-esteem
- Eating competence
Intervention Reading List


Mitchell, G. L., Farrow, C., Haycraft, E., Meyer, C.


Eating Competence

Preserve positive eating attitude.

Eat familiar foods.

Experiment with unfamiliar foods.

Eat as much as needed for growth.

Develop positive mealtime behaviors.
short-order cooking, kid-friendly menus, encouraging your child to eat, bribing or pressuring your child to eat, not believing them when they say they’re done, not believing them when they say they need more, jumping up and getting what they want, eating on the run, rewarding with foods, withholding food as punishment, serving for a snack what he wouldn’t eat at the meal, playing games, bite rules, getting pushy, “no thank you” helpings, giving up on new foods, giving “the eye,” allowing grazing, juice in sipper cups, too-busy schedule, nutritional righteousness, making special foods, making her sit at the table until she eats her peas...

WHAT COULD GO WRONG?

The way feeding is conducted can support your child’s being competent with eating, growing appropriately and participating in mealtime harmony—or it can do the opposite.

--Ellyn Satter, Secrets of Feeding a Healthy Family (2008)
It’s not a secret. Leadership and autonomy are the basic principles of positive feeding dynamics.

HOW DO I MAKE IT POSITIVE?
## Division of Responsibility in Feeding

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YOUR FEEDING RESPONSIBILITIES

• Choose, prepare and serve the food.
• Provide meals and planned snacks.
• Make eating times pleasant.
• Support your child in learning.
• Maintain structure. Disallow grazing.
• Let your child grow in his or her own way.
• Your child wants to eat.
• Your child knows how much to eat.
• Your child will learn to eat the foods you eat.
• Your child will behave well at the table (developmentally appropriate).
• Your child will grow predictably.

YOUR CHILD'S EATING CAPABILITIES
Feeding goes best when you do your jobs with feeding and trust your child to do hers. –Ellyn Satter
You get to enjoy your meal, too!

TRUST MODEL
Include something from each food group.

Include bread.

Pair familiar with unfamiliar, favorite with not-so-favorite.

Include fat.

Put it on the table and gather everyone around.

MEALS (AND SNACKS) PROVIDE STRUCTURE

AUTONOMY
The key to nutritional excellence is variety growing out of genuine food enjoyment.
—Ellyn Satter
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