
LESSON CF-000-14

Food for Thought

Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Ⓒ name or list ways to prevent behavior problems at mealtime.
- Ⓒ name or list ways to feed a “picky eater”.

Materials For The Lesson:

Videotape program: *Food for Thought* (Produced by the Altshul Group Corporation, 1-800-421-2363, in English and Spanish (approx. 12 minutes). To obtain copies, contact the State WIC office. **Summary:** Parents of young children share their experiences concerning behavior problems during mealtime and how to deal with “picky eaters.”

TV/VCR

Discussion Questions (attached)

Evaluation Handout (reproduce from master copies included at the end of the lesson)

*Additional Resource: *Picky, Picky, Picky*, by Ellyn Satter, R.D., M.S. W., with Roberta Israeloff, Parents Magazine, January 1994.

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Teaching tip: This video illustrates how parents deal with behaviors like children fighting at the table, refusing to eat, and wanting to watch television. This is a topic that will probably interest your clients, so allow plenty of time for participants to share their experiences with the group.

Introduce and show the video, *Food for Thought*, 12 minutes.

Discussion questions:

1. Which situations in the video did you relate to? Pause for a show of hands or discussion.

Discussion point: At the beginning of the video, parents discussed children fighting during mealtime because they're hungry and tired. How do you deal with this type of behavior at home? Pause for discussion.

Add the following tips from the video if they are not discussed:

- C Try not to make mealtime a power struggle. Children aren't misbehaving, they're just trying to bond with their parents. As a parent, this means using more patience.
- C Be flexible at mealtime. If children can't wait to eat with the family, feed them a small nutritious snack before mealtime. Some examples include:
 - < Plate of sliced fruit
 - < Plate of raw vegetables with a healthy dip
 - < Bag of pretzels, carrots, or box of raisins

Remember, children under 4 years of age can choke on raw vegetables like carrots, and foods like raisins and grapes until they learn to chew better. Watch children during meals and snacks to make sure they:

- < Sit quietly
- < Chew food well before swallowing
- < Eat slowly
- < Eat small portions at one time

C Avoid other distractions going on during mealtime, especially the television.

2. Another situation discussed in the video was helping children who are picky eaters. How many of you have picky eaters in your family? Pause for discussion. What do you do when your child refuses to eat certain foods or anything at all?

Discussion Point: As parents we want to see our children eat everything we offer them, but that doesn't always happen. You're not alone in this struggle. Keep in mind that you don't want to force them to eat or it will turn into a struggle. Set a good example by eating and offering healthy foods. Let's talk about some ways you can deal with a "picky eater."

Tips for a "picky eater":

C Don't force them to eat. This may cause children to feel stressed about cleaning their plate.

C Serve child-sized portions. Rule of thumb is one tablespoon for each year of age for vegetables and fruit.

C Allow your child to ask for seconds. Don't put more food on their plate unless they ask for more.

C Serve food at room temperature so that your child doesn't have to wait for it to cool off.

C It's okay if your child just tastes the food. Just because your child doesn't swallow it, it doesn't mean your child doesn't like it.

C Allow your child to touch and explore new foods without rushing them.

3. How many times do you think you have to offer a new food before a child will taste or touch a new food? Pause for discussion.

Discussion Point: Can you believe that you have to offer new food 15 times! As you can see, it can take weeks and sometimes months before your child will even taste or touch a new food. Don't get discouraged. Keep serving what you would normally serve, enjoy it yourself, and let your child begin to eat the food in their own time.

4. What's the best way to offer a new food to your child? Pause for discussion.

Discussion Point: If you offer a new food and your child either doesn't try it or makes a face, continue to offer that food at other meals. Even though your child doesn't show it, your child is studying the food. Also, children watch to see if you will eat and enjoy the new food. For this reason, parents should practice what they preach.

Tips for offering new foods:

- Ⓒ Offer the new food with a food you know your child loves.
 - Ⓒ Think about pleasing textures like soft and moist foods. Some children won't eat certain foods if they are too dry or hard to chew.
5. In the video, a parent was concerned about her child eating just peanut butter sandwiches. What ideas do you have for offering foods to a child who wants to eat the same food over and over again? Pause for discussion.

Discussion point: Eating the same food over and over again isn't bad, but it is important to offer a variety of foods so that eating is not limited to just one food. This eating pattern is called a "food jag" and is very common in toddlers and older children. What were some of the tips the parents gave in the video for "food jags."

Include these tips if not discussed:

- Ⓒ Offer the food they already like in different ways. For example, offer peanut butter with fruits, vegetables or crackers.
 - Ⓒ Don't make a big deal about your child eating the same food, especially if it's a healthy food.
 - Ⓒ Be patient, this stage will pass.
6. What did you learn from today's discussion? Pause for discussion. If there aren't any further questions, move to the evaluation.

“Food for Thought”

Written or oral evaluation

Look at the situations listed below and choose the one you relate to the most, then write at least 3 new tips you will try at home.

Situation	What will you do?
Hungry and tired children fighting at the table	
I have a “picky eater”	
My child doesn’t like new foods	
My child is on a “food jag”	

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Lesson Evaluation Form - Participant

1. The name of the video I saw today was: _____

2. I am: (you may circle more than 1)

- a. Pregnant
- b. Breastfeeding
- c. Parent of an infant
- d. Parent of a child
- e. Family or friend

3. How much did you like the video?

- a. A lot
- b. A little
- c. Not at all

4. Do you plan to use the ideas from the lesson?

- a. A lot
- b. A little
- c. Not very much

5. Do you think this is a good video to show at WIC?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Why? _____

6. What is the most useful thing you learned from the video and discussion today? _____

7. Comments: _____

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Lesson Evaluation Form - Staff

Month/Year of lesson use: _____

1. Was the audiovisual easy to see and hear?
a. yes b. no

2. Was the lesson easy to read and follow?
a. yes b. no

What changes would you suggest for improving the lesson? _____

3. Was participant feedback:
a. positive
b. negative
c. indifferent

4. Was the Spanish translation appropriate for your participants?
a. yes b. no

5. Do you plan to use this audiovisual/lesson again?
a. yes b. no

Comments: _____

6. Additional comments: _____

