



EATING BEHAVIORS OF TODDLERS

- 1. Physical growth begins to slow down a bit, and the child's appetite may begin to decrease.**

Don't get concerned that they are not eating enough!

- 2. Children learn to hold and drink from a cup and will quit eating when they are full.**

Healthy toddlers will decide which foods and how much of the foods offered they will eat. They may enjoy one food for a few weeks and then refuse it.

- 3. Definite food preferences begin to be established.**

Toddlers prefer lukewarm foods instead of hot or cold foods. They usually do not like highly seasoned foods, but enjoy sweets.

- 4. Offer new foods in a pleasant and appealing manner.**

Young children are learning what foods they will like and dislike. Be sure to:

- ▶ Offer new foods frequently. Toddlers may need to see a new food offered 6 to 12 times before they will decide to like it. Once children have accepted a food, continue to offer it so the food will remain familiar.

- ▶ Let children know they do not have to eat foods they do not want. This attitude will help children feel comfortable when trying new foods.

- 5. While children know how much they need to eat, parents and child care providers are the "gatekeepers" who decide which foods to offer and when meals and snacks will be served.**

If nutritious foods are served, toddlers can't go wrong in what they choose to eat. Offering children nutritious and appropriate foods helps kids get the nutrients and energy they need. It also sets a good example, starting at a very young age.