

# TABLETALK

JULY, 2008 ❁ CHILD FOOD PROGRAM OF TEXAS ❁ P.O. BOX 5465 ❁ KATY, TX 77491 ❁ 281-395-7000, TOLL-FREE: 877-395-6560, Fax: 281-395-7002

## Mealtime Communication

You can make mealtimes even more special by encouraging communication with and between children. When you pay attention to children and encourage them to talk, you help children create a positive view of themselves and the world they live in. Mealtime can be an important time to encourage communication. Make it one of your goals to serve meals in a relaxed, social atmosphere. Children need adults to eat with them. When adults eat with children they can:

- Serve as role models by their food choices,
- Protect children from safety hazards such as choking and cross-contamination when sharing foods, and
- Encourage conversation at mealtime.

## What foods present a choking risk for young children?

Toddlers delight in feeding themselves. However, parents and childcare providers need to be cautious with young children at the table. Foods that are hard, round or difficult to chew can sometimes lodge in small airways, causing a child to choke. To be on the safe side, consider the following advice on finger foods for children less than 3 years of age:

- Don't give hard, or difficult-to-chew-foods such as raw carrots and other crunchy vegetables, hard candy, lollipops, peanuts, and popcorn.
- Modify the shape and texture of firm foods. Cut grapes into quarters; chop apples and firm fruits into very small pieces, and



## Tips from Chef Bob

### FROZEN FRUIT POPS

4 hours to freeze Serves: 12

Use single fruits or combine several for special "house blends." **Ingredients:** Blender or Food Processor: 1 ripe honeydew melon; 2 ripe bananas; 2 pints ripe strawberries; 1/4 cup honey or sugar. **Directions:** Help children peel, seed, and cut fruit into chunks. Put fruit and honey or sugar in blender in small batches and puree. (Pops will taste less sweet when they are frozen.) Ladle the puree into Popsicle molds and freeze for at least 4 hours or until frozen. Puree can be frozen in plastic ice cube trays. Poke Popsicle sticks into place when the pops are almost frozen so that the sticks will stay upright.

cook carrots and hard vegetables until soft, then cut into small pieces.

Keep an eye on small children when they are eating. Small children may eat in a hurry, stuff too much food in their mouths, or chew their food inadequately. To avoid accidents, children should not be allowed to run or play with food while chewing. Feed small children only when they are sitting down and are in a relaxed atmosphere. Train toddlers to chew their food thoroughly before swallowing.

## Approximate Reimbursement Date

July.....Aug. 21

August .....September 26

September.....October 24

## SCHEDULED DATES FOR 2008 MANDATORY TRAINING

Date	City	Location & Time
Sept. 6	Plano	2501 Coit Road (W. O. Haggard, Jr. Library); 10:00 - 1:00
Sept. 6	Katy	Maud Marks Library, 1815 Westgreen Boulevard, 77450, 10:30 - 1:30