

# TABLETALK

OCTOBER, 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

## We Welcome Our New Child Caregivers:

City Of Refuge Academy  
Happy Trails Child Care And Early Learning  
Liberty Christian Pre-School  
Where Kidz Connect Academy

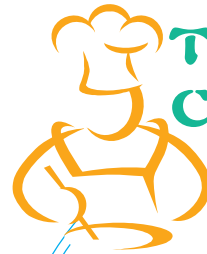
## Best Practices at Mealtimes

Childcare providers who are good role models make mealtime and snacktime positive, cheerful, unhurried events. Providers should sit with children during meal periods, eat the same foods the children do, offer choices and give children an opportunity to serve themselves. They should also engage the children in upbeat food-related conversations, make positive comments about nutrition and encourage, but not require, children to taste all foods. Providers who force children to "clean their plate" and use food as a reward, punishment or pacifier are less likely to help children develop healthy eating behaviors. Working parents who screen day-care centers for good food and nutrition practices can be confident their children are getting the nutrition they need and developing healthy eating habits that can help them avoid diet-related problems as they grow older.

## Healthy Portion Sizes

Are we setting up our children for a lifetime of weight problems and unhealthy eating by serving them inappropriately large portion sizes? Maybe, according to recent research. When given large portions of lunch components that exceeded the USDA recommended serving sizes, 5- and 6-year olds ate more of all items than when they were served recommended portion sizes. 3 1/2 year old children ate similar amounts no matter what portion size they were offered.

It appears that very young children eat the amount of food needed to satisfy their hunger, then stop. As they get older, children seem to start ignoring their internal hunger cues and eat according to other influences, such as the amount of food offered to them. Nutrition experts think that serving children larger than recommended portion sizes encourages them to eat more than is necessary and may be an important piece of the growing childhood obesity puzzle. CACFP portion sizes are based on the amount of food required for normal growth of children at different stages of development.



## Tips from Chef Bob

### FAJITA POT PIE

*Serves 4*

**Ingredients:** 1 tsp vegetable oil; 1/2 medium bell pepper, cut into 1/2-inch strips; 2 cups cut-up cooked chicken; 1- 3/4 cups Thick 'n Chunky salsa; 1/4 cup water; 1 cup Bisquick mix; 1/3 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese; 1/2 cup milk.

**Directions:** **1.** Heat oven to 400°F. In 10-inch skillet, cook bell pepper in oil until crisp-tender. Stir in chicken, salsa and water. Cook 1 to 2 minutes, until bubbly. Pour into ungreased 1 1/2-qt casserole. **2.** Mix together remaining ingredients. Pour over chicken mixture. **3.** Bake uncovered about 30 min or until light golden brown.

*Will qualify for bread alternate,  
meat & 1 vegetable.*

Providers must always serve at least the minimum portion size of each meal pattern component. If a child is still hungry after finishing the first serving, offer additional food rather than serving very large portions initially.

## For Preschoolers, Healthy Eating Is...

- Being curious about new foods and ways of eating them · Examining the chicken sandwich before they eat it
- Accepting toast only if it is cut in triangles
- Trying only a bite of squash today - maybe more tomorrow
- Drinking milk only if they can pour it into their own glass
- Loving carrots on Tuesday, refusing them on Wednesday.
- Insisting the apple be whole, not in slices
- Wanting a peanut butter sandwich for lunch every day for a week
- Gobbling up the cookies they helped to prepare when they are fresh from the oven.
- Preferring simple foods they can recognize
- Drinking soup out of a mug, just like Mom's