

West Virginia WIC's "Learning for Health" Project

Lesson #5

Super Snacking!

This session includes lots of ideas and discussion on why snacking is okay and important to growing children (and OK for adults) with special emphasis on easy, portable snacks that need little or no preparation and are healthier alternatives.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, parents/caregivers will be able to:

1. Share at least one "healthier" snack idea that they and/or children eat.
2. Identify one reason why healthy snacking is important for growing children.
3. Choose at least one easy snack idea to try within the next day.

Materials

- Lesson Plan Posters (2)
- Copies of Parent Fact Sheet (1 two-sided sheet)
- Easel, flip chart and colorful markers
- Supplies to share one easy recipe to make with children and/or parents, if desired.
- Pencils and/or pens for adults to write if they wish.

Preparation

- Set up room in an informal way - chairs in a semi-circle if possible.
- Hang up the posters so all the group participants can see them easily OR you can attached the posters to an easel and show them at the appropriate time.

Introduction

- Introduce yourself and welcome everyone.
- Explain the purpose of the group and the estimated time.
- Have each group member share their name and what they think of when they hear the word *snack*.

Discussion Questions

Select your questions from the following list. Depending on the size of your group, you might plan to ask 2-3 questions to engage the group members and foster discussion.

We all love snacks! A snack for an adult is often a treat. But a snack for a young child is important because children don't eat much at meals. They need snacks to have energy and grow!

When do your kids have snacks?

Responses might include some of the following:

- I give them a snack if they don't eat their food at meals.
- Between meals.
- Whenever they are hungry and ask for something to eat
- When we miss a meal.
- When we are doing errands and waiting for appointments.

What are some tips you can share for serving snacks to kids? I'm going to write your responses up on this sheet of paper so we can all learn from each other.

If the group members have not shared the following tips, cover these with the group:

- Offer a regular snack in the middle of the morning and again in the middle of the afternoon.
- Try to have snacks 1 ½ to 2 hours before the next meal. If you give a snack less than an hour before a meal, it can cut your child's appetite.
- If your child is too hungry to wait for dinner, try giving them some part of the meal like milk, bread or salad.
- A snack with protein will keep you child from getting hungry again soon. Protein foods are foods like milk, cheese, yogurt, meat, chicken, peanut butter and egg.

What makes a quick and super snack? Let's hear some of your ideas and what you've tried that your kids like

Reinforce the good ideas from the group. Here are some additional ideas to share and discuss:

- Fruits! Bananas, watermelon, cantaloupe, apples, oranges, strawberries and small amounts of fruit juices.
- Sandwiches - you can make so many kinds of sandwiches. They something new like peanut butter and banana. How about a tomato

sandwich or a grilled cheese sandwich?

- Try yogurt with fruit or make some pudding with milk.
- Cheese toast - just melt some cheese on a piece of toast.
- WIC cereals - with or without the milk.
- Crisp vegetables or cold leftover cooked vegetables. Kids can eat them with their fingers.
- Avoid snack spills. Try small milk containers or water in sports bottles with lids or pull-up spouts.

Do other people spoil your child with sweets and junk foods? What kinds of struggles do you have with this?

- Try sharing the Fact Sheet with them. Let them know how much they can help you and your child by giving healthier snacks.
- Suggest specific snacks to give or take a favorite snack for a grandparent or an aunt to feed your child at snack time.
- Encourage others to “treat” your child by doing things you might not have time for, like games and art projects. This is much better for your child than candy and TV.

Activity

You may wish to have a taste testing of an in-season fruit or vegetable such as:

- Baked butternut squash chunks
- Cantaloupe scooped out into melon balls (older kids can help make the melon balls)
- Fresh green peas in the pod (children can pull the pod apart and get the peas inside)
- Fresh green beans (show children how to prepare them by snapping the ends off).
- Fresh strawberries (children can pull the husks off the top before eating).
- Steamed baby brussel sprouts (make sure group members know that these are available fresh and frozen)

Evaluation/Wrap-up

- Here is something that you might be interested in (hold up copy of the fact sheet if not passed out already). It includes many of the things we talked about today.
- Who would like one? (pass out to interested participants)
- Many of the ideas that you shared today are on the Fact Sheet plus a few more ideas for you.
- What is one snack idea that you will try within the next two days?
- Thank them for coming to the group and participating. Let them know that they can call you or stop by for more information whenever they wish.

Resources:

Some of the content for this Lesson Plan was adapted from the Louisiana WIC Program's Nutrition Education Handouts.