

West Virginia WIC's "Learning for Health" Project

Lesson #1

"Growing" a Happy, Healthy Child

This session focuses on nurturing, child development and parent-child interactions around eating (what, when and how much) and healthy food choices.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this session, adult will be able to:

1. Identify at least one positive thing they do right now to nurture their child's growth and good eating.
2. Identify at least one new thing they can do to nurture their child and encourage healthy eating.
3. Explain how important the bond between parent and child is to the child's growth and development (including eating behaviors).

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 their favorite food.

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.

I'm so pleased to have you here with us today. You all have young children. Today we are going to talk about your child's growth and development. Your child is growing every day.

What is one of the most important things you do every day to help your child grow and stay healthy?" "I'm going to write your responses up on this sheet of paper so we can all learn from each other.

Record the responses from the group. Responses might include some of the following:

- I feed him his meals
- I give her hugs
- I read to her
- I make sure we play a game together
- I make sure she gets her nap so she is well rested
- I say she is doing a great job when he tries something new
- We sing songs together
- We eat together at meals
- We smile a lot at meals and have fun
- I send a healthy snack to day care with my son/daughter

What a great list! I can tell you all love to see your children growing and learning! Let's talk a little more about your child's growth and development.

How do children learn how to eat and feed themselves?

Get a few responses verbally and then review selected content on Poster #1 and/or handout.

What can you do to help your child grow and develop well?

How can you help your child become a better eater?

Review “golden rule” for parent-child interaction (Poster #2):

Parents...Give your child a good variety of healthy foods at regular meals and snacks.

Let your child decide whether to eat and how much to eat.

Activity

- “Catching” the good stuff! - Have parent practice praising and encouraging their children for specific actions and behaviors at meals and snacks. Encourage parents to share something their child has done recently that has made them proud - what did they say to their child? Group participants can discuss the positive effects of giving their child praise for specific actions and behaviors.
For instance, saying “you used your spoon - GREAT JOB!” or “you ate your peaches - yummy, yummy!”
- If parents are most interested in talking about their child’s development, use the Poster #1 (What can I expect from my child...) and the front page of the handout and have parents think about their child’s development compared to the bulleted lists. Parents can check off the boxes for the developmental milestones their child has achieved.

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)
- What things look familiar from our discussion today?
- What is one thing that you can start doing today to help your child develop and learn how to feed herself/himself?
- 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.

Additional Resources:

Bright Futures in Practice: Nutrition - resource for nutrition educators
(www.brightfutures.org)