

## HEALTH FOODS FOR CHILDREN

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Extension Nutritionist

What is more important in making for Better Homes than the training of the children in good food habits?

To see that children have the foods they need and that they eat them with relish is a real undertaking. This means that mothers not only must know what foods the children need, but they must train the children to enjoy them. All this means study and patience, but most of all it means that mothers must be constantly on the job during the earliest months and throughout the years that follow.

Is the effort worth while? Anyone who has ever had the care of a sick child knows that she would rather spend months of effort in careful feeding to prevent illness than a few hours hovering over a sick child's bed. Additional reward lies in the fact that the children grow up healthy and happy rather than delicate and fretful.

Just what should children eat? To begin with, a generous amount of milk of good quality is the first and most important food. Within the first year there should be added gradually orange juice or tomato juice; well cooked cereals, some of them made from whole grains; egg yolk; and strained and mashed vegetables, using spinach and carrots first. Soon after seived fruits, both cooked and raw, and finally baked white potatoes may be added. Thus are provided building, regulating, protective, and energy giving foods, all needed for growing healthy children.

To insure fine bones and teeth a few drops of cod liver oil should be given each day, beginning when the child is a few weeks old and continuing in small amounts daily as the months pass. Important too are daily sun baths when weather permits. Hard crackers or oven toast should be given to chew as soon as the first tiny teeth are cut. This chewing helps to strengthen the jaw muscles, develop well shaped jaws and bring plenty of blood to the roots of the tiny teeth.

The foods listed for the first year, plus meat in proper amounts and a few sweets, are exactly the kind the child will need during his second year, and his third and so on until he is no longer a baby but a school boy, and a young man ready for college and finally a parent in his own right. It is only a question of increasing the amount of food.

Often I hear mothers say: "If someone would only tell me how to get children to eat the foods they should have!" Perhaps these suggestions will help.

It is important to keep the diet bland in flavor and let fruits and vegetables represent a real treat, because they are highly flavored compared with milk, cereal and eggs which should constitute the main part of the child's diet.

It is important that meals be served at regular hours. Dinner at twelve one day and at one-thirty the next is certainly not conducive to good food habits.

There should be no munching between meals, especially if the appetite at meal time is affected. If there is too long a period between meals, a cup of milk and a plain cracker, half-way between, may be given but no cake, candy, popcorn or other similar foods.

Another important thing is the question of sweets. There seems to be general agreement that a little hard candy immediately after meals is permissible. The large amount of sugar in ice cream counts it a treat for dessert and bars it for lunch between meals.

The secret of a good appetite in physically fit children is bland foods, regular meals, no munching between meals and sweets only in small quantity for dessert.

To assure good food habits:

1. Begin the training early.
2. When introducing new foods observe great care that the food is served at its best—no half-cooked carrots, watery poached egg, cereals with lumps, or gritty, over-cooked greens.
3. Give only one new food at a time and this, in small quantity, so as not to overtax the digestion.
4. Introduce a new food as a treat.
5. Refusal to give a second helping after he has had his first taste of a food also makes the child look upon the food as very desirable.
6. If a new food is looked upon with suspicion, put it out of sight. Never have an open clash and make a child eat food. This serves only to fix the refusal in the child's mind. Give the new food a second trial when the child is in a better mood or more hungry and it will be accepted.
7. Never give a taste of anything that is not a regular part of the diet. A child will ask for only familiar foods. One way to avoid a child teasing for forbidden foods is to keep him in ignorance of them.
8. To prevent teasing, be final in refusals.
9. The subject of food likes and dislikes should never be mentioned at the family table or when the child eats alone. Children are very imitative and will not eat a food if

adults do not. The food should be placed before the child, and he should never be urged to eat unless he seems to be forgetting something, then call his attention to it. Do not let him know that it makes any difference whether he eats or not. Even children under two years of age are sometimes aware of parents' anxiety. They are much more apt to finish the meal when some one is not standing over them urging and nagging.

In case a child has developed definite food prejudices, use special dishes, such as an attractive mug for milk or a favorite plate, or bowl for other food.

Have him eat the most distasteful food first when he is most hungry and then give him food most enjoyed. Sometimes it is necessary to resort to letting the child go without food until he becomes hungry enough to eat what is put before him.

Too often mothers relax their vigilance in regard to food when their children reach the end of the second year. More attention should be given to food of pre-school children as it is during this period that many new foods are added. If little children eat by themselves, it is easier to keep the food simple. If they eat with the family, it makes less work for the busy mother and promotes family spirit.

Does this mean that children eat the same food as that prepared for the grown-ups, or adults eat only kindergarten food? Probably the best plan is to see that the dishes prepared for the elders are such that the children's meal may be selected from the family's without cooking special dishes. This plan saves work, the children have the kind of food they need and the adults do not feel abused.

There is a distinct advantage in giving children as much variety as possible among the foods allowed them. Sometimes as children grow older, there is the special problem to get them to try new dishes just because they are different from the ones eaten from day to day. For example, many variations can be made with a custard for the basis. Custard poured over canned peaches, sliced bananas or cooked prunes will have such a different flavor that it will seem like a new dessert. Meringue may be used on it one time, whipped cream another. It may be served between layers of sponge cake, or in pastry shells for the older members of the family.

Salads are a good medium of getting green vegetables into the diet. A taste for salads should be cultivated in children. Fruit and vegetable salads may be served often with mildly seasoned dressing. More seasoning can easily be added to make it interesting to the older people. Perhaps the best way to make a success of adapting the adult meals to children's needs and children's meals to adult tastes is to make the food interesting as well as nutritious.

Wouldn't it be wonderful never to have to say or to hear, "Eat it, it's good for you?" A better slogan is, "Eat it, it is good."

### IT'S ALL IN THE STATE OF MIND

If you think you are beaten, you are; If you think you dare not, you don't; If you think you'd like to win, you can't; It's almost a "cinch" you won't; If you think you'll lose, you've lost; For out in the world you'll find Success begins with a fellow's will— It's all in the state of mind.

## STATE AGENT



RUTH CURRENT

Miss Ruth Current, State Agent of Home Demonstration Clubs, who succeeds Dr. Jane S. McKimmon, brings to her position a wealth of experience and ability that well qualifies her to have charge of home demonstration work in the State.

Full many a race is lost Ere even the race is run, And many a coward fails, Ere even his work's begun. Think big, and your deeds will grow, Think small and you fall behind, Think that you can, and you will; It's all in the state of mind.

If you think you are outclassed, you are;

You've got to think high to rise; You've got to be sure of yourself before

You can ever win a prize. Life's battle doesn't always go

To the stronger or faster man; But sooner or later, the man who wins

Is the fellow who thinks he can.

—Author Unknown.

## WHO KNOWS?

1. Do men or women spend more for clothes?
2. How much has the R. F. C. loaned to banks?
3. How many young people look for their first jobs each year?
4. What is the national debt?
5. How many CCC camps are in operation?
6. What is the appropriation for the Army and Navy?
7. How high is the Washington Monument?
8. How does present business activity compare with last summer?
9. When will the Philippines achieve independence?
10. What is the average income of business and professional men?

### THE ANSWERS

1. Women in cities and men on the farms.
2. \$3,198,000,000.
3. About 400,000.
4. Approximately \$38,000,000,000.
5. 1,500.
6. About \$500,000,000 for the Army and \$560,000,000 for the Navy. This does not include funds for the 20 per cent increase in warships.
7. 555 feet 5 1-8 inches.
8. Present business index, 78.1; last August 111.2.
9. Under present legislation, in 1946.
10. A recent study indicates it is less than \$2,500.

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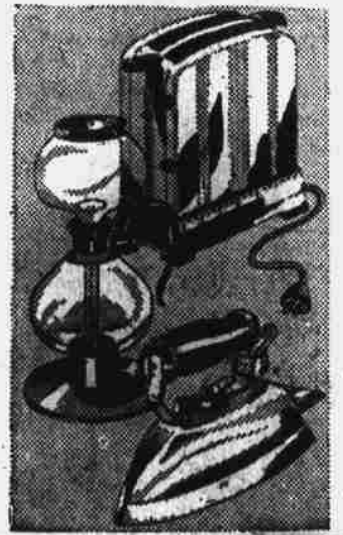
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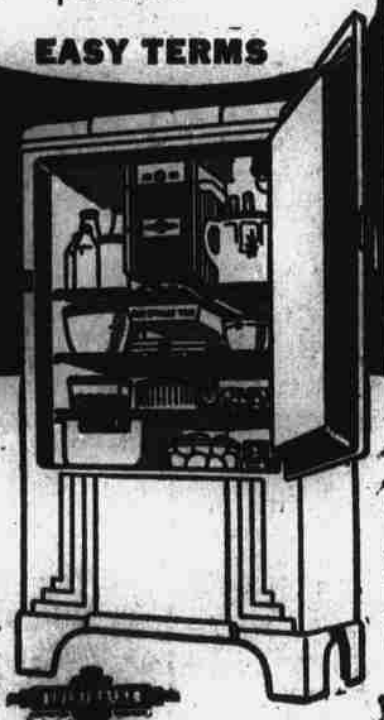
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