

Nourishing Without Bias: Building Inclusive Weight and Nutrition Spaces for Youth and Families

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MultiCare 

Mary Bridge Children's 

8/14/25



Pediatric Wellness Program Focus

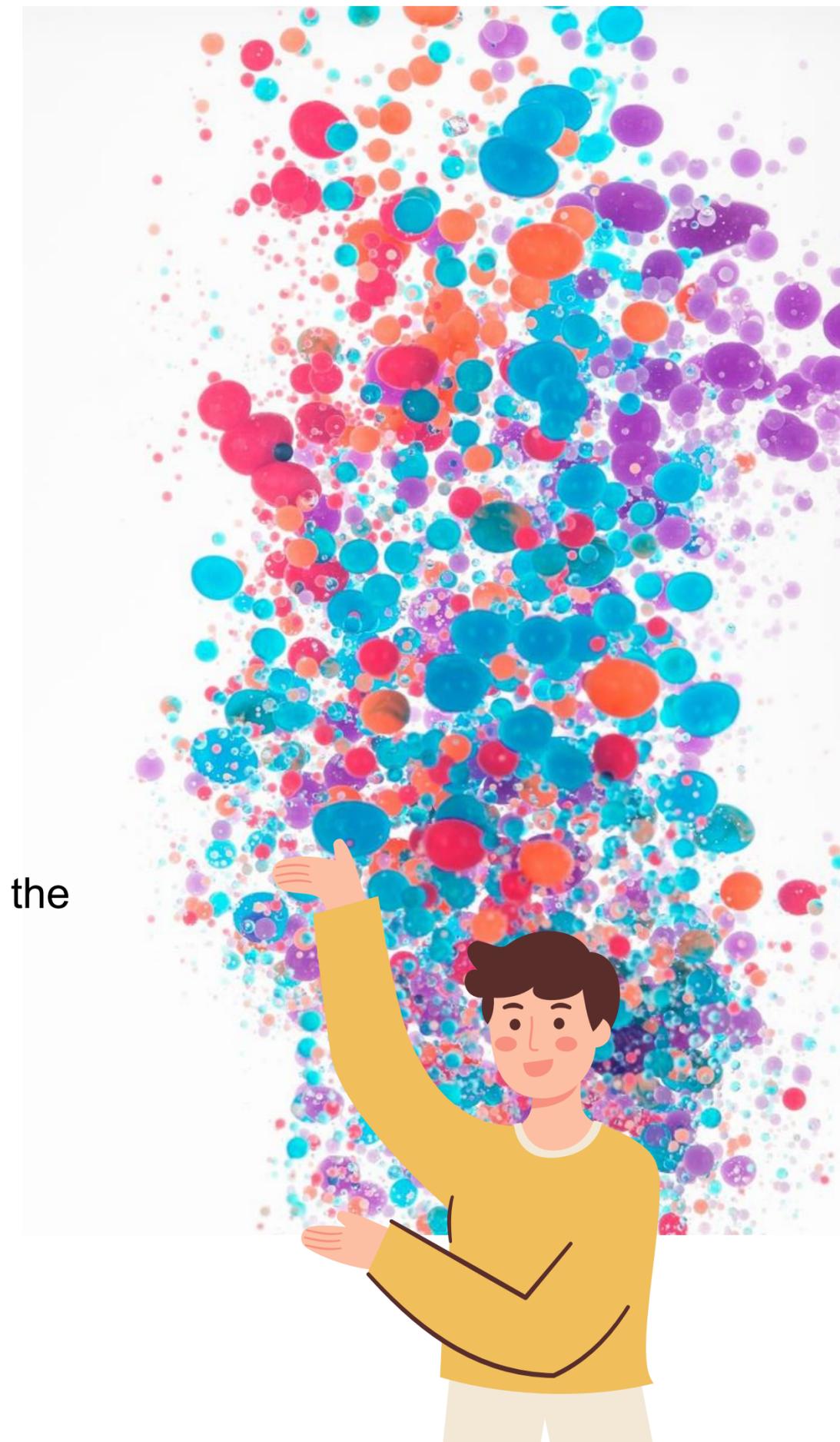


- Emphasizes overall health (physical/social/emotional) and well-being of the child or adolescent.
- Highlights the strengths of each family member to support an environment that promotes healthy growth and development.
- Promotes living actively, eating in a healthy but not depriving way, and creating a nurturing environment that helps the child or adolescent develop and grow to his/her potential.

AAP CPG Guidelines – Our Response

We support:

- Evidence-based child feeding and nutrition information
- Addressing social determinants of health and health related social needs
- Eliminating weight bias and stigma in clinical settings
- Weight-neutral, health-focused interventions to empower families in health promoting behaviors (i.e. nutrition education, joyful movement, and stress reduction)
- Practices that improve health over time and protect against weight cycling, and the development of disordered eating patterns
- Upstream prevention strategies, such as early exposure to responsive feeding strategies and the 5 Keys to Feeding Well



Our Wellness Team



Erica Lewis
MS, RD, CD
Health Promotion
Program Manager

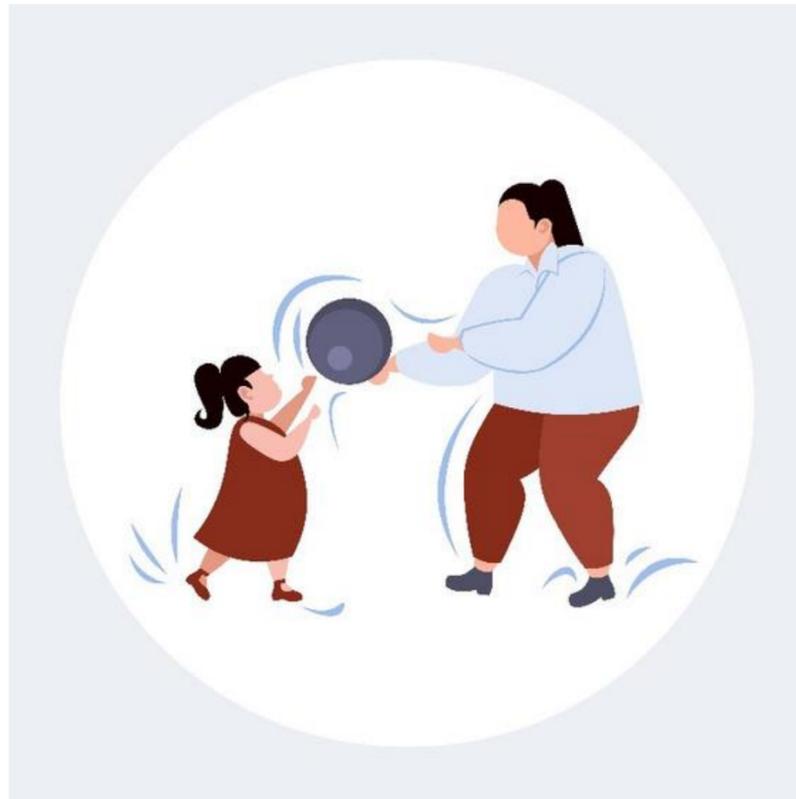


Colleen McMeen
RD, CD
Wellness Dietitian



Chelsey Lindahl
RD, CD
Manager, Health
Promotion Wellness

Discussion Points:



Impacts of Weight Stigma on Youth



Awareness of Eating Disorder Patterns



Building a Positive School Eating Environment

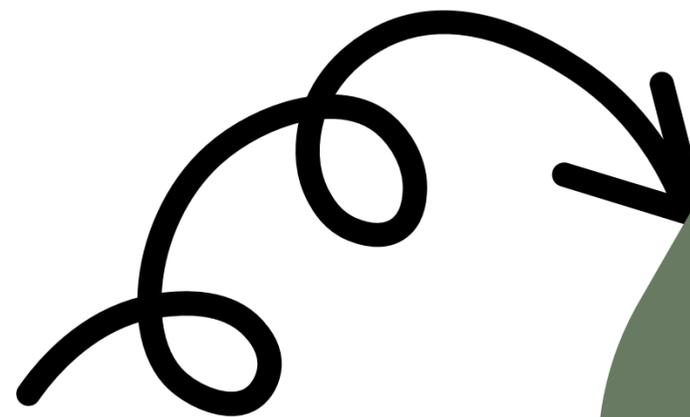


Approaching Food Insecurity with Families



Sharing Community Resources

When is the first time you thought about weight?



The World Obesity Federation definition - the discriminatory acts and ideologies targeted towards individuals because of their weight and size.

Weightism
Sizeism

Weight-based Bullying Impact

Among children, weight-based bullying is more common than bullying based on race, sexual orientation, or disability status.





Weight Stigma Impacts on Quality of Life



- Physiological changes (hits all systems)
 - Stress = chronic cortisol release = long-term metabolic changes
- Negative mental health impacts
 - Social isolation
 - Depression and anxiety
 - Lower self-esteem
 - Body dissatisfaction and acceptance
 - Feelings of shame and societal judgement

Youth in Larger Bodies Experience...



- Increased risk for:
 - Dysfunctional relationships
 - Verbal and cyber attacks
 - Physical harm
- Higher self-harm and suicidality behaviors
- Think about suicide 2 times higher
- Greater weight gain and avoidance of school activities

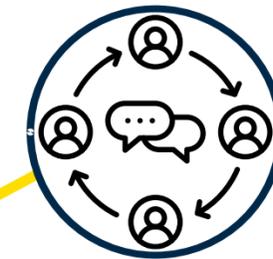


Internalization of Diet Culture on Behaviors



Internal Thoughts:

I'm overweight so I must be lazy
I can't do this b/c of my weight
I don't have self control to stop eating.
No will power.

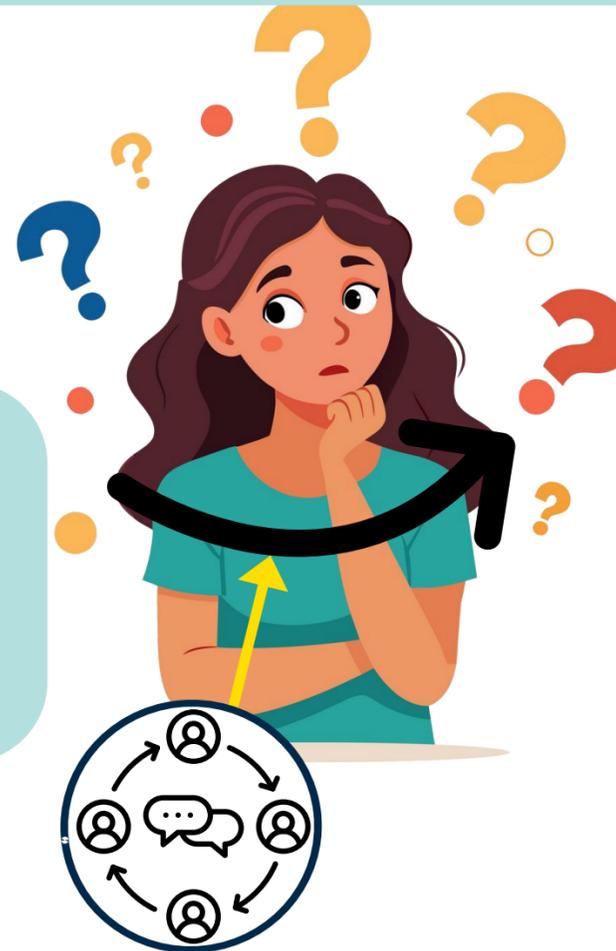


Responsive Behaviors:

Hide
Get angry
Avoid doing what others tell us
Give up
Ignore hunger
Avoid medical appointments
Extreme diets + exercise

Emotions:

Sadness
Guilt
Frustration
Shame



Major Developmental Changes

Body hair/odor

Weight Gain - teens
Girls (30 to 40 lbs); Boys (50 to 60 lbs)

Menstruation

Height
~ 25% of human growth occurs

Wider Hips/Body Composition

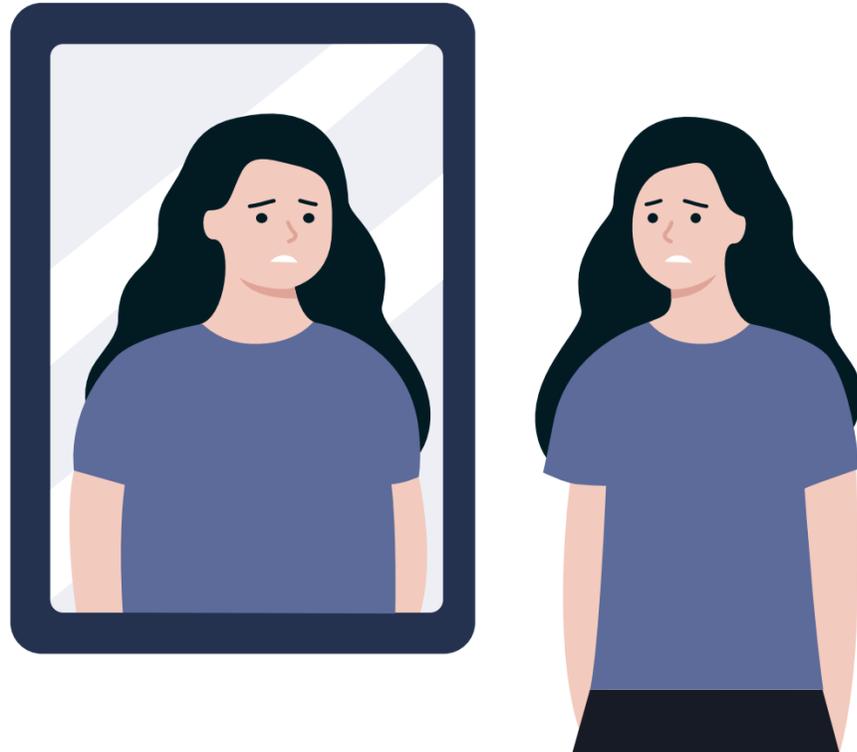
Brain Development

Hormones - acne, greater emotions

Voice Changes



Disordered Eating Behaviors



- Preoccupation with weight loss, food, calories, and dieting
- Refusal to eat certain foods or limitations whole food groups
- Makes excuses to avoid mealtimes or situations involving food
- Withdraws from friends and activities they love
- Extreme concern for body size and shape
- Noticeable weight fluctuations
- Unexpected clothing changes
- Irregular periods + GI issues



How We Communicate Matters

- Practice person first language
- You are a role model
- Watch your non-verbal body language
- Minimize negative comments about yourself
- Be mindful of wording when giving nutrition advice
- Ask how they would like to be referred to



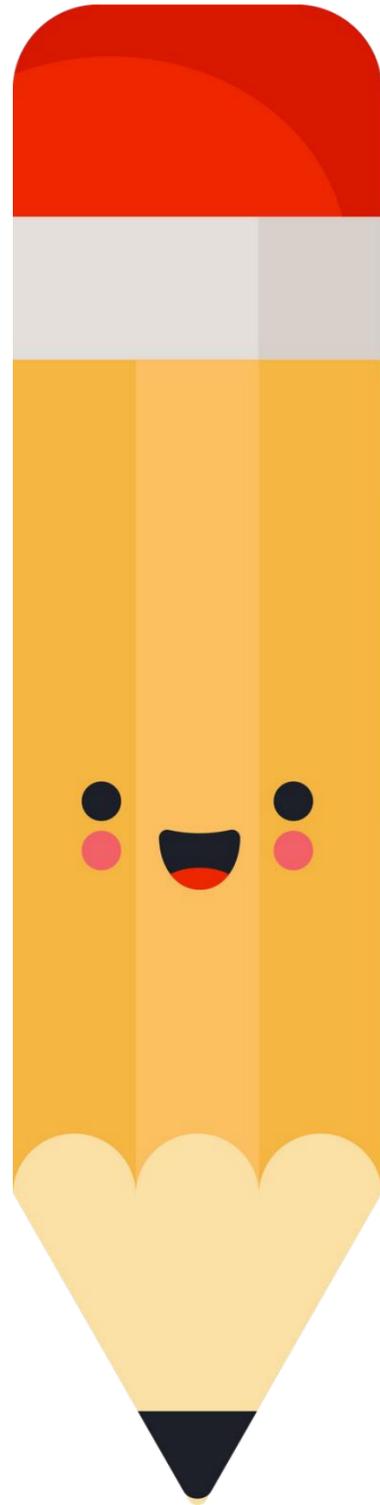
Potentially Triggering Words

- Overweight
- Obese
- Ideal or normal weight
- Underweight
- Healthy weight

Interactions Stay with Us



- Engage empathetically and respectfully
- Uncouple a person's weight from their personal actions and behaviors
- Ask open ended questions without judgement
- Fat isn't the enemy - body and dietary fat are required
- Limit assumptions about a person's lifestyle or health based on appearance
- Don't compare people or praise weight loss
- Ask permission before taking or talking about weight



Interactive Activity



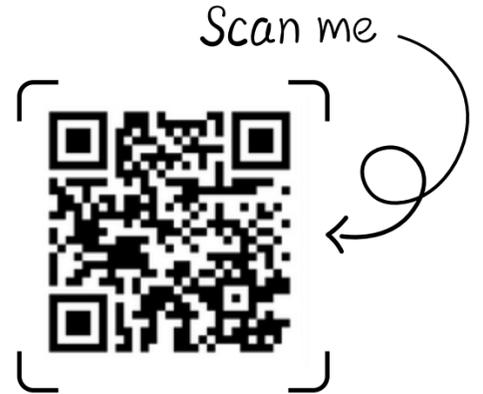
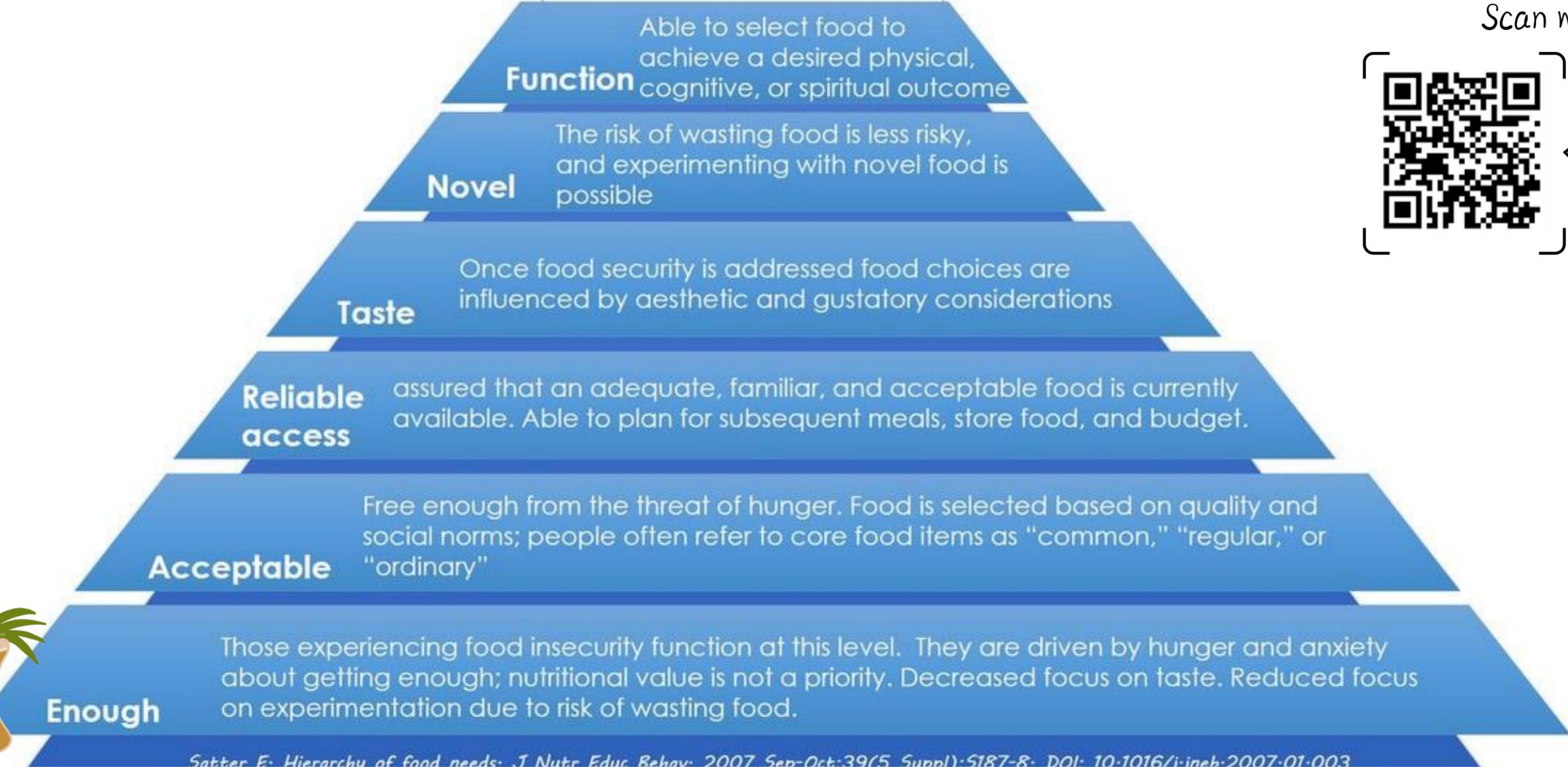
Nutrition Messaging in Schools



E. Satter Hierarchy of Food Needs



*We have to allow ourselves
"enough" food before we can
become selective*



Satter E. Hierarchy of food needs. J Nutr Educ Behav. 2007 Sep-Oct;39(5 Suppl):5187-8. DOI: 10.1016/j.jneb.2007.01.003

Eating is a Learned Skill



Age/Stage	Development Skills to Learn	Parent's Tasks	Children's Tasks
3-5 years Toddlers are "quirky"	Your preschooler wants to learn and do things to please adults.	WHAT, WHEN & WHERE Expect your child to not be predictable about anything. Three meals and three snacks; water in-between. They can be coerced to overeat.	IF, AND HOW MUCH
School Age "Concrete Operational"	Children are learning to function independently. They learn best systematically. They may think they know it all, they can reason, organize themselves and play with friends.	WHAT, WHEN & WHERE Give support without control, autonomy without abandoning. Retain leadership in family meals and food selection; give guidelines for eating away from the house to come to the table hungry. Involve them in meal planning and preparation. They can learn facts, but don't apply them to food selection.	IF, AND HOW MUCH WORKIN INTO MORE SKILLS AND SOME OF THE WHAT/WHEN
Adolescent	In early adolescence they are learning autonomy , and later intimacy and identity.	Continue with the WHAT/WHEN/WHERE for family meals. Talk and Listen. Listen some more. Continue to plan family and independent meals, help them increasingly understand intuitive food regulation capabilities. Teach them more of the food selection, shopping, planning and cooking skills.	IF, AND HOW MUCH AND ADVANCING INTO THE WHAT/WHEN WHERE

Use Neutral Nutrition Wording

General rule: Guide only behavior, use neutral language, be aware of who is in the room, listen to teens, don't use food as a reward.

Overall Goal:

- Use food neutrality - food group education
- Food enjoyment and exploration
- Favorite foods
- Respecting all foods students eat
- Explore attitudes around different foods
- What foods give us energy



Food Words	
Helpful	Unhelpful
Satisfying	Good/Bad
Delicious	Clean/Dirty
Appetizing	Healthy/Unhealthy
Nourishing	Tempting
Filling	Addictive
Crunchy	Dangerous
Crispy	Allowed/Not Allowed
Tasty	Red/Yellow/Green Lights

Messaging and Curriculum Considerations

Kids < 12 years

Food exploration and curiosity

Where food comes from

Identify different foods

What foods give us energy

Food group basics

History and culture of different foods

Simpler wording and terms

How we try new foods

What their body does for them

Activities/movement for enjoyment

For All Ages

Practice Putting foods together to make a satisfying meal or snack.

Let children eat as little or as much as they like.

Do not comment on how much a child eats.

Respect all body shapes and sizes.

All foods can be enjoyed (be considerate of allergies).

Offer a variety of foods during special events and classroom parties.

CAUTION:

- Food journaling and calorie counting assignments.
- Calculating ideal body weight.
- Give out prizes or reward students for eating.

Kids ≥ 12 years

Understanding food labels

Menu planning + preparation

Greater cooking skills + equipment

Meal/snack composition

Macronutrients + micronutrients

Serving sizes + portions

Higher level about key nutrients for development

Learn hunger and fullness cues

Health classes - what happens during puberty/body image

Exploring activities/movement

Incorporating into School Philosophy

School Environment

- Visual displays + printed materials
- Bring in community partners to present
- School nurse room layout
- Provide community resources
- Educate yourselves
- Work within your network



Extra Tools for your "Lunchbox"

How to Talk About Fruits and Veggies

May not help +

- "Apples are good for you!"
- "Carrots will turn you into a bunny!"
- "This food will help you grow!"
- "Salad is healthy!"
- "Bananas have antioxidants in them!"
- "White food isn't good for you!"

+ May help a lot

- "Red food gives you a strong heart!"
- "Orange food helps you see in the dark."
- "Yellow food helps your body feel cute."
- "Green food helps you fight off sickness."
- "Blue and purple foods give you a strong brain."
- "White foods give you energy."

Red Foods

AGES 0-3
"Red foods make your heart strong!"

AGES 3-5
"Red foods have something in them called lycopene that is red. It helps protect your heart and body for a long time!"

AGES 6-11
"Lycopene is an antioxidant. Antioxidants help protect our hearts, skin, and other parts of our bodies for a long time. Lycopene gives red foods their red color!"

AGES 11-18
"Lycopene is an antioxidant. Antioxidants protect our bodies from free radicals and oxidize stress. Lycopene helps protect from cancer, heart disease, and more."

Orange Foods

AGES 0-3
"Orange foods help you see in the dark."

AGES 3-5
"Orange foods have something in them called Vitamin A. We need Vitamin A to see in the dark!"

AGES 6-11
"Vitamin A helps keep our eyes, heart, lungs, and kidneys working well. Vitamin A foods are orange!"

AGES 11-18
"We get Vitamin A a few ways: orange and dark green foods (like carrots), and animal products (preformed Vitamin A). Let's learn more..."

Yellow Foods

AGES 0-3
"Yellow food helps your body feel from cuts!"

AGES 3-5
"Yellow foods have Vitamin C in them. It helps your body feel from cuts!"

AGES 6-11
"Vitamin C helps cuts heal and keeps our teeth in our gums. Vitamin C is in lots of fruits and veggies. That's why we eat a fruit or veggie with every meal!"

AGES 11-18
"Balanced meals can contain a fruit or veggie. They provide Vitamin C. When we don't get enough Vitamin C, we can get sick, our gums can become swollen, and..."

Green Foods

AGES 0-3
"Green food helps you fight off sickness!"

AGES 3-5
"Green foods have prebiotics and lots of other good things in them. They feed the helpful bugs in your gut!"

AGES 6-11
"Prebiotics help feed the helpful bugs in our gut. The bugs help us stay healthy, have a good mood, and fight bad germs. That's why we have a leafy green food every day!"

AGES 11-18
"Leafy green veggies have so many things, including prebiotics, vitamins, and minerals. Without prebiotics, our good bugs may die. Then we get sick more and feel bad!"

Purple & Blue Foods

AGES 0-3
"Purple and blue foods give you a strong brain!"

AGES 3-5
"Purple and blue foods have antioxidants in them. They give us strong brains!"

AGES 6-11
"Antioxidants protect our brains from damage over time. There are lots in purple and blue foods!"

AGES 11-18
"There are lots of antioxidants, including anthocyanins, in purple and blue foods. They protect us from free radicals that damage our brains over time!"




Kids Eat in Color Poster

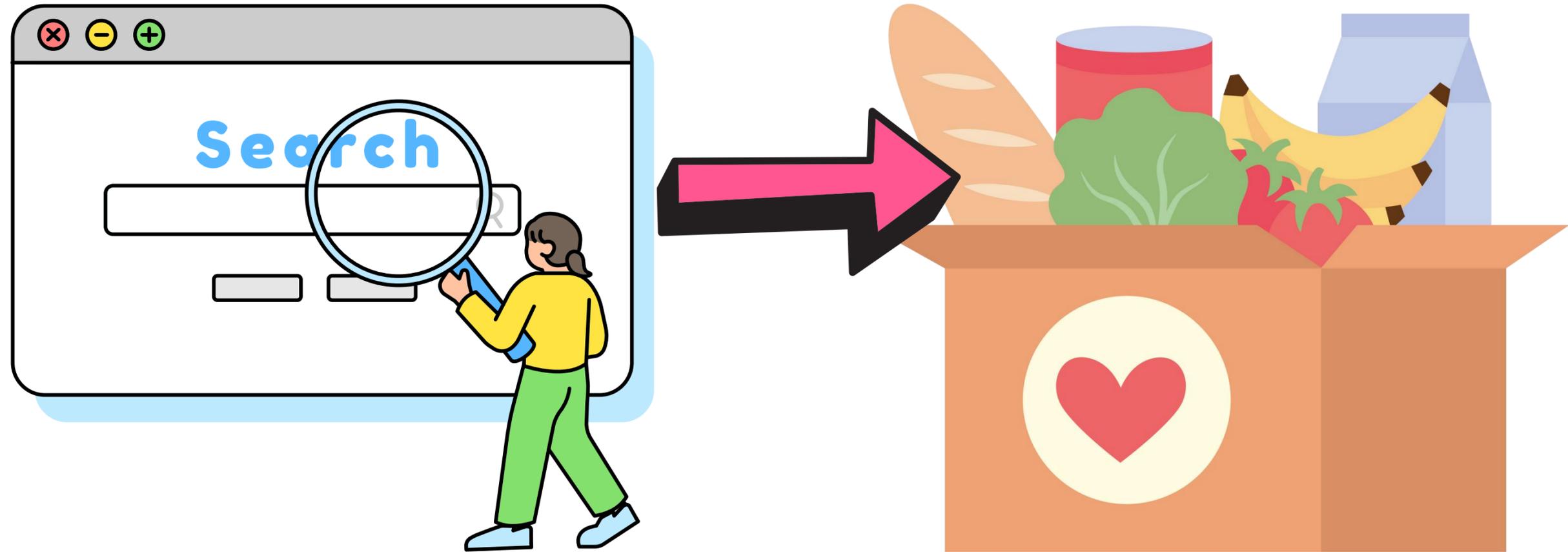

Lunch Box Cards


School Letter for Parents

 **Kids Eat in Color**
Learn more at kids.eatincolor.com Follow us at [f](#) [t](#) [i](#) [@kids.eat.in.color](#)



Food Access Resources



Where We Are

KEY FACTS: CHILDHOOD FOOD INSECURITY AND THE ROLE OF PEDIATRICIANS



1 in 7* U.S. children live in households with food insecurity

** COVID-19 has increased that number to as many as **1 in 4***

CHILDHOOD FOOD INSECURITY IS ASSOCIATED WITH:

- Poor Health Status 
- Developmental Risk 
- Mental Health Problems 
- Poor Educational Outcomes 

FOOD INSECURITY MAY PRESENT IN A FAMILY AS:

- Food Anxiety 
- Diet Monotony 
- Decreased Nutrition Quality 
- Inadequate Food Intake 



How to Talk to Families about Food Access

- Do not make assumptions or asked bias questions
- People may be more comfortable having a private conversation
- Ask questions in writing when children or others are able to listen in
- Use standardized questions for everybody
- Ask permission and thank them for their honesty
- Offer “support” not “help” allowing for individual agency, choice, and dignity
- Provide resources being sensitive to cultural, religious, ability & individual health life choices and circumstances



Food Access Resources and Beyond



Intake center for King County hub:
1-833-453-0336

Free Summer Meals for Kids:
Text food or “comida” to 509-509
Search for: Summer Meals for kids site finder

SUN Bucks:
Families will get a one-time \$120 benefit per year for each eligible child

- SOME areas may have:
- Free meals during school
 - Backpack programs
 - Community dinners
 - Food banks + pantries
 - Produce voucher programs

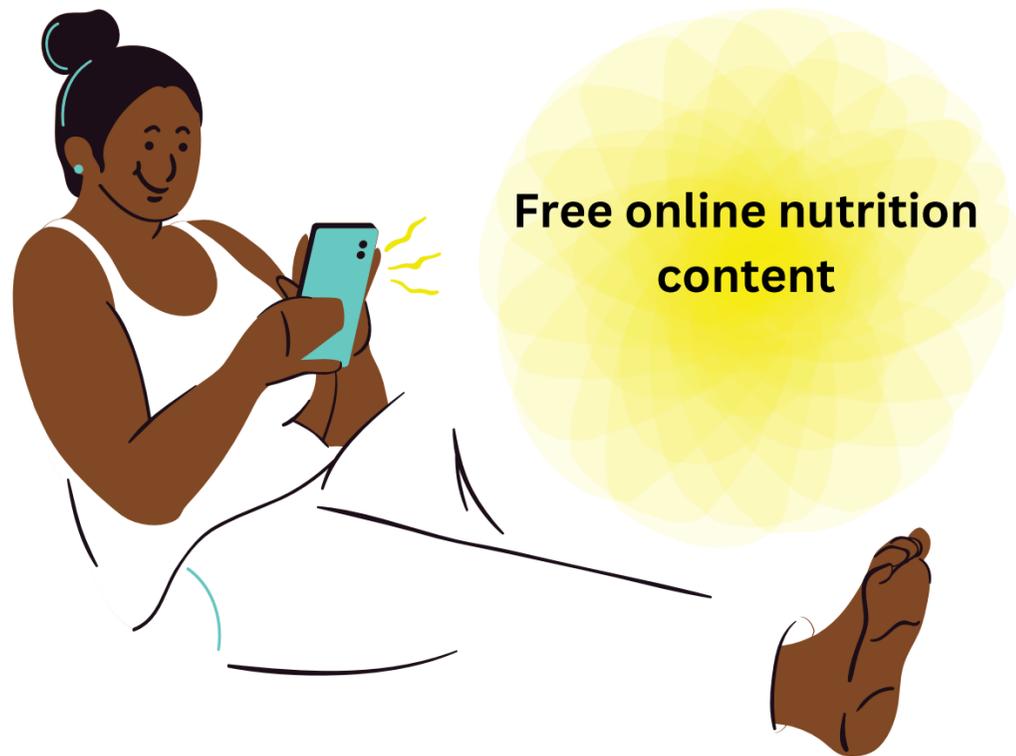


General Community Resources



Pediatric Wellness Resources

Scan me



RAISING CONFIDENT EATERS: Free Nutrition Resources for Families

Say goodbye to food fights and hello to confidence! Our free, on-demand nutrition content created by registered dietitians will help you nurture your child's feeding journey in a positive way.

Access expert videos, tools, and resources to support their growth and build trust in their ability to feed themselves well.

MultiCare Mary Bridge Childrens
marybridge.org/pediatric-wellness

FOOD ADVENTURE BOOKS FOR KIDS

All Food Is Good
By: Moll Jackson Ehlert

A Bear, A Bee and a Honey Tree
By: Daniel Bornstrom

Bee Bim Bop!
By: Linda Sue Park

Blueberry Cake
By: Sarah Dillard

Every Night is Pizza Night
By: Kerri Lopez-Alt

Fry Bread
By: Kevin Noble Maillard

Paletero Man
By: Lucky Diaz

I Want Ice Cream!
By: Elisabetta Pica

Soup For One
By: Eihan Long

Thank You, Omsul
By: Oge Mora

What Can You Do with a Paleta?
By: Carmen Tafolla

LIBRARIAN APPROVED!

5 KEYS TO FEEDING WELL

When we respect the Division of Responsibility* trust is built and meals go better

CAREGIVER DECIDES

CHILD DECIDES

What to eat

When to eat

Where to eat

Whether to eat

How much to eat

MultiCare Mary Bridge Childrens

Learn more about our Pediatric Wellness program, free classes, and community food resources.

*The Division of Responsibility is defined by Ellyn Satter

General Resources for Providers

Harvard implicit bias test (Select “Weight IAT”)- <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>

Ellyn Satter Institute - <https://www.ellynsatterinstitute.org/>

Get Permission Institute - <https://getpermissioninstitute.com/>

Children’s Feeding Collaborative videos: <https://publichealth.sccgov.org/collaboratives/childhood-feeding-collaborative/child-feeding-skills-update-and-impact-parent-referral-5-keys-class>

Point MultiCare article: [Health consequences of food insecurity \(unily.com\)](https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/health-consequences-of-food-insecurity)

How to Talk to Kids about Weight and Health: [How to Talk to Kids About Weight \(A Guide for Parents\) - Kids Eat in Color](https://www.kids-eat-in-color.com/how-to-talk-to-kids-about-weight-and-health)

Books

Helping without Harming by Ellyn Satter

Secrets of Feeding a Healthy Family by Ellyn Satter

Anti-Diet by Christi Harrison

Intuitive Eating by Evelyn Tribole and Elyse Resch

Anxious Eater, Anxious Mealtimes by Marsha Dunn Klein

The Deepest Well by Nadine Burke Harris

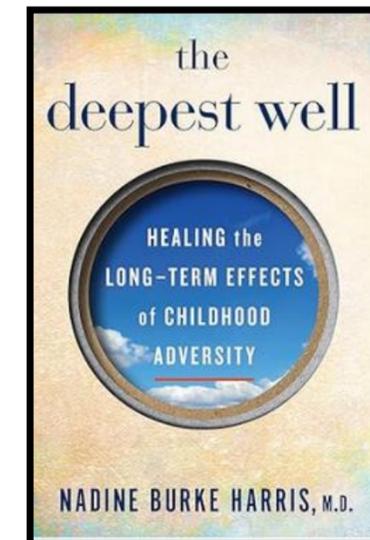
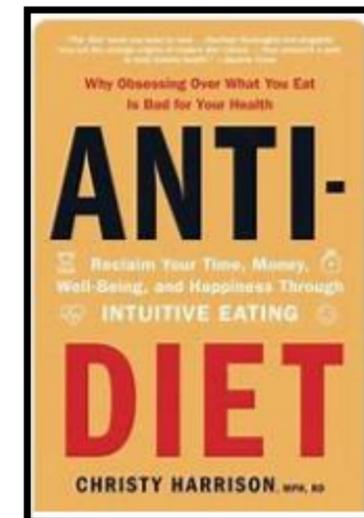
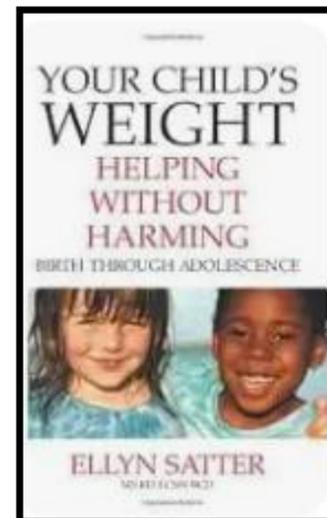
Teen Resources

YMCA ACT Program

Center for Discovery – self evaluation available

Hear Me WA - teen source for mental health

Intuitive Eating Workbook for Teens by Elyse Resch



Additional Resources

- Joint international consensus statement for ending stigma of obesity (article) <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41591-020-0803-x>
- Stigma Experienced by Children and Adolescents with Obesity. AAP policy statement.
<https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/140/6/e20173034/38277/Stigma-Experienced-by-Children-and-Adolescents>
- The Bizarre and Racist History of the BMI (article) <https://elemental.medium.com/the-bizarre-and-racist-history-of-the-bmi-7d8dc2aa33bb>
- Impact of weight stigma/anti-fat bias (NEDA) <https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/weight-stigma>
- 7 Ways to Uproot Your Anti-Fat Bias (article) <https://humanparts.medium.com/7-ways-to-uproot-your-anti-fat-bias-54f01d76ec3b>
- Ellyn Satter, “Stop Being Hysterical About “Obesity” <https://www.ellynsatterinstitute.org/family-meals-focus/11-update-stop-being-hysterical-about-obesity/>
- [Evidence for intuitive eating](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/eating-mindfully/201406/the-evidence-intuitive-eating) <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/eating-mindfully/201406/the-evidence-intuitive-eating>
- [Confident Body, Confident Child online resources](https://www.confidentbody.net/about.html) <https://www.confidentbody.net/about.html>
- <https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/risk-factors>
- [Journal of Eating Disorders](https://jeatdisord.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s40337-020-00292-6) <https://jeatdisord.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s40337-020-00292-6>
- [Consent for weight management strategy](https://www.haesaustralia.org.au/resources/Documents/Consent%20for%20Weight%20Management%20Strategy.pdf)
<https://www.haesaustralia.org.au/resources/Documents/Consent%20for%20Weight%20Management%20Strategy.pdf>
- [Counseling on behavior change: Molly Kellogg Change Talk](https://mollykellogg.com/PDFs/69-ChangeTalk.pdf) <https://mollykellogg.com/PDFs/69-ChangeTalk.pdf>
- [The dieting mind \(video\)](https://vimeo.com/160497138/f14774bc7e) <https://vimeo.com/160497138/f14774bc7e>
- [The Center for Body Trust \(formerly Be Nourished\)](https://centerforbodytrust.com/) <https://centerforbodytrust.com/> [Bad Body Day Tool Kit](https://centerforbodytrust.com/bad-body-day-toolkit/)
<https://centerforbodytrust.com/bad-body-day-toolkit/>



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