Remove distractions. Turn off the television and computer, and avoid talking on the phone or texting. Focus your attention on each other.

Talk to each other. Talk about what made you laugh or what you did for fun today. Ask questions!

Pass on traditions. Tell the kids about the foods your mom and grandma made that you loved to eat as a child.

Let go a little to gain a lot. It’s natural for moms to worry about their preschoolers’ eating habits. Offer healthy foods, and let your kids choose from them. This will make mealtimes more enjoyable for everyone.

Set a regular schedule for meal times. Young children need routines to practice new skills like trying healthy foods.

Patience works better than pressure. Let children choose how much to eat. Kids are more likely to enjoy new foods when eating them is their own choice.

Help your children feel more independent. Let them pick from healthy food choices you offer. For example, they may choose between an apple, an orange, or a whole-wheat pita with salsa for a snack.
Active Engagement

Cooking together can mean more “mommy and me” time on busy nights.

Take them shopping. Ask your kids to pick a new fruit or vegetable that they want to try for dinner.

Let them learn by serving themselves. Let your kids serve themselves at dinner. Teach them to take small amounts at first. Assure them they can get more if they’re still hungry.

Let everyone help. Kids learn by doing. The younger one might get the napkins while the older kids help with fixing foods and clean-up.

Active Engagement

Trying New Foods

Start Simple, and Be Patient.

Kids learn to like new foods by

- having them offered over and over;
- having them served with familiar foods;
- seeing friends, older kids, and grown-ups eating these foods;
- tasting them prepared in different ways;
- choosing foods to try themselves; and
- starting with small amounts.

Find quick and tasty recipes that don’t cost a lot to make at: http://www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhardhealthy/lifestyle/QuickandEasy/smartstartrecipes.htm.

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