**Nutrition Plus, Inc.**

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**December is:**

National Pear Month

National Root Vegetable and Exotic Fruit Month

1st - National Eat a Red Apple Day

19th - National Oatmeal Muffin Day

25th – Christmas

31st – New Year’s Eve

**Important dates**

December 31st - Checks/direct deposits go out

**Helpful Tips to Destress**

Would it help you if we tried to decrease some of the stress at mealtime? Here is some wisdom from the Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) on creating a positive mealtime experience.

First, set a routine and keep it consistent. This structure allows children to feel safe in their decisions to eat or not to eat. For example, before and after lunch, perform the same pattern of activities every day. **Before lunch**, this pattern of activities could include story-time, handwashing, setting the table, and sitting at a designated table. **After lunch**, the pattern of activities could include handwashing, cleaning up, brushing teeth, taking a bathroom break, and settling down for quiet time.

To encourage adequate nutrition intake, ensure children have enough time to eat without being rushed. Providing enough time allows children to recognize and respond to their fullness (also known as satiety) cues.

**December 2020**



Allow children to determine how much they eat. It is normal for a child’s appetite to vary, and doing

so, helps them learn to listen to their body’s hunger cues. Children in tune with their hunger and

fullness cues are more likely to consume the proper number of calories and maintain a healthy

weight throughout life. Allow children to decide what to eat from the foods that are offered.

To get them to try new things, try:

\*Serve as a role model by eating the same food as the children.

\*Taste everything and try not to show your personal preference.

\*Provide small amounts of new foods in combination with popular and more familiar foods.

\*Encourage children to try new foods, but do not pressure them.

\*Make positive, encouraging statements throughout the meal.

\*Encourage children to make positive comments about the foods they are eating.

\*Smile and use positive reinforcement when children eat their food.

\*Use mealtime to teach children about the benefits of the foods they are eating.

“The skin on your apple has good fiber that helps to keep your heart healthy!”

“The whole grains in your waffle will give you energy, which can help you run faster!”

“The chicken on your plate has protein that can help your muscles grow!”

“Drinking low-fat milk helps your bones stay strong to support your body!”

“When you eat healthy meals, you can learn and play better in school!”

**Handprint Wreath**



*Supplies:*

Pencil

Cardboard or a cereal box for multiple kiddos

6-8 (per kiddo) green colored card stock or construction paper (two different shades bring some neat variation)

Red Cardstock or construction paper (or red pom- poms would be really cute!)

Scissors

Glue

round plate

Small round bowl

Ribbon-any color

\*Trace your child’s hand onto the cardboard to make a template then cut out template.

\*Onto a 12-inch green colored cardstock, trace your circle for your wreath.

\* Place your bowl in the center of your new wreath form and trace. Cut out both circles.

\* Using your hand template, trace and cut out about 20-25 hands out of the remaining colored cardstock or construction paper.

\*Glue each hand one on top of the other facing different directions for variety.

\*Finish it off with a few 1 inch red “berries” cut out of construction paper or pom-poms, glued in groups of 3.

\* Write the child’s name, age and date it was done!

**Macaroni and Cheese**



*Ingredients:*

Water to boil

10 ½ oz. whole grain-rich elbow macaroni

½ cup butter

½ cup + 3 TBSP flour

1 ¼ tsp. salt

¾ tsp. Dry mustard

½ tsp. pepper

½ TBSP. paprika

5 cups milk

½ tsp. Worcestershire sauce

½ cup grated parmesan cheese

2 ½ cups cheddar cheese, shredded

½ cup bread crumbs for topping

2 cups cheddar cheese, shredded for topping

\*Bring water to boil. Boil macaroni for about 10 minutes then rinse in cold water. Set aside.

\*Combine flour, salt, dry mustard, pepper and paprika in a bowl.

\*Melt butter over medium heat. Add flour mixture. Cook for 2 minutes over medium heat, stirring continuously. Do not brown.

\*Slowly add milk, stirring continuously. Cook until smooth and thickened.

\*Add Worcestershire sauce, parmesan cheese and cheddar cheese to white sauce. Stir over low heat until cheese melts.

\*Combine well-drained macaroni and sauce. Mix well. Put all together in a large casserole dish or cake pan of choice. Cover with lid or foil. Bake at **350°** for 30 minutes in conventional oven or at 325° for 25 minutes in convection oven.

\*Combine remaining cheddar cheese and bread crumbs. Sprinkle over top of casserole and bake an additional 5 minutes, uncovered, until lightly browned.

*Serves 12. 1 portion = 1.25 oz. meat/meat alternative and 1.25 oz. grain equivalent*.

***Thanks for all you do for our children.***