

# Using Positive Language around food

By changing our language about nutrition, we help children in building positive relationships with food

## Try to avoid:

### Using negative language around the implications of sometimes food

- You have to eat all of your vegetables or else
- Fruit is good or guilt free
- Chocolate is bad for us
- Carbs (like bread) are fattening
- If you don't eat your carrots you will go blind



## Instead use:

- Is your tummy full?
- Fruit is an everyday food
- Chocolate is a sometimes food
- Wholegrain carbohydrates such as wholemeal and grainy bread, gives us sustained energy to play sport
- Carrots and other colourful vegetables help our eyes be healthy

### Labelling Food with Emotive Language or myths

- Lollies are full of sugar, unhealthy and fattening
- Soft drinks rot your teeth
- Junk food makes you fat



- Lollies are a sometimes food
- Soft drink has a lot of sugar; too much sugar flowing around our teeth can damage them and cause holes
- Too much 'sometimes foods' is not great for our body or mind

### Using gendered language around food

- Steak is a man food
- Salad is for girls
- Real men don't eat quiche
- Girls get the pink lollies



- Iron in steak helps our bodies grow
- A salad has lots of ingredients, something for all of us
- Aren't we lucky that we can all enjoy quiche, it's very versatile
- What colour would you like?

### Using food as a reward

- Nice work on your homework, here is a chocolate
- Good job, you can have a lolly
- You have behaved well, you earned pizza
- It's your birthday, let's eat cake



- Reward with activities- go outside, dance, play ball
- Let's play your favourite board game
- We can call 'another carer or grandparent' about your good behaviour
- It's your birthday; what friends would you like to celebrate with?

### Focusing on don't or can't messages

- Don't eat that, its full of fat/sugar/salt
- Don't eat chocolate, it makes you unhealthy
- If you don't eat that you can't have dessert
- You shouldn't eat junk food
- I am on a diet, I can't have that



- Would you like some 'e.g. fruit' it's crunchy and sweet
- Let's savour this chocolate as we only eat it sometimes
- There is some dessert if your tummy is not too full
- Highly processed food has very little nutritional value
- I am eating food that helps my body feel good, so I will skip that today, I might have some another day

# To help children build positive relationships with food, we can:



## Talk about the properties of food

- Sight or appearance: What colour is it? What shape is it?
- Touch: Does it feel (slimy, smooth, bumpy, rough)?
- Smell: What does it smell like?
- Taste: Does it taste (salty, sweet, sour)?
- Texture: What does it feel like in your mouth (E.g. crunchy, smooth, mushy, chewy)?
- Colour: Carrot sticks are orange and crunchy
- Does it make your mouth water?
- Can we eat it raw or cooked?

## Talk about food and the environment

- Most 'sometimes' food comes in single use plastic that ends up in land fill
- Eating more fresh fruit and vegetables allows us to reduce single use plastic that other foods are packaged in
- A lot of water, energy and land are used when creating highly processed food for little to no nutritional benefit
- Eating more foods that are grown and made locally means less fuel spent on transport and more money and jobs stay local
- Australia uses around 2600 gigalitres of water to grow food that is wasted – this equates to the volume of water in five Sydney Harbours
- Eating more plant based foods such as nuts, legumes, grains, fruit and vegetables not only helps us to be healthy, it can help reduce our environmental impact

## Talk about how food can help our body and mind

- Food with protein helps build our muscles e.g. meat or eggs
- Delicious every day foods help us go about our day with ease and energy
- Eating a variety of fruits and vegetables helps our bodies be healthy
- Fruit has lots of fibre which creates good gut bacteria which helps improve our immune system and bowels
- Grainy or wholemeal foods have fibre that helps keep us full
- Foods with calcium helps our teeth and bones be strong (e.g. milk, cheese and yoghurt)
- Everyday foods like vegetables improve our mood and concentration helping us learn
- Eating lots of everyday food increases the opportunity to develop our cooking and creative skills
- Highly processed foods (or sometimes food) can be easy to overeat leaving less room for nutritious foods

Be a good  
role model



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