



Nutrition Edition

Your Guide to Child Health and Nutrition



Nutrition Edition
Issue 80

CCFPRoundtable.org

Celebrate Earth Day with Children

APRIL 22ND IS EARTH DAY!

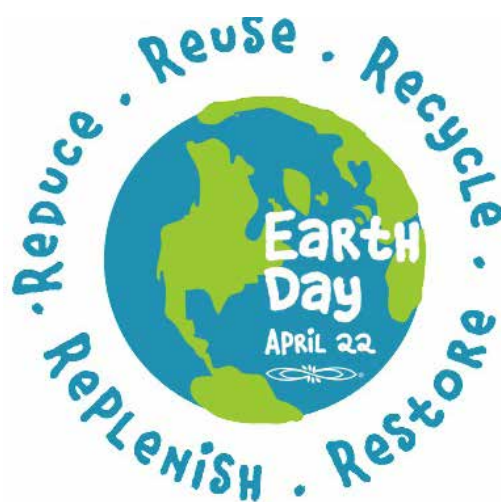
Recognized as an international day for celebration and awareness, this day helps us remember our relationship with the planet and the positive impact we can bring about. This year the focus is to *End Plastic Pollution*.

Children are great environmental stewards and enjoy being outdoors, so grab the kids and get outside to help our planet this Earth Day! We can all make a difference by committing to more responsible choices, engaging with community groups and campaigns and teaching environmental awareness to the next generation.

Have fun while helping to create a greener, more sustainable future for our planet and the little ones we care for by taking part in some of these ideas and activities!

GO FOR A NATURE WALK

Take a walk in nature and see if you can identify plants, flowers and trees. Ask kids to find each color of the rainbow in nature. Turn over rocks



and see what lives underneath them. Touch different textures, smell various leaves. See if they can identify at least 3 different sounds. Being aware and observant of nature helps us to connect with it.

ASSIGN A "LIGHT MONITOR"

Children love having a job, it helps them feel responsible and proud. Crown a child light monitor for the day, every day; their job being to make sure all lights are turned off when not in use. It's an opportunity to discuss how most of our energy comes from non-renewable sources

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DID YOU KNOW...

- Earth Day has been celebrated every year since its inception in 1970. Although it began as an American movement it has spread around the world and is known internationally as Mother Earth Day.
- Recycling, reuse and remanufacturing account for 3.1 million jobs in the U.S.
- Recycling saves 3 to 5 times the energy that waste incinerator power plants generate.
- Kitchen scraps, trimmings from fruits and vegetables, egg shells and coffee grounds can be composted to feed the earth.
- There is a television in the bedrooms of 23% of babies under age one and 36% of toddlers 1–2 years old.
- African-American children are exposed to approximately 50% more junk food ads than white children.

Mentalfloss.com, ecocycle.org, uconnruddcenter.org, comercialfreechildhood.org

Quotable Quotes

“Eating is so intimate. It’s very sensual. When you invite someone to sit at your table and you want to cook for them, you’re inviting a person into your life.”

– Maya Angelou

INSIDE:

- Screen Time: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly
- Recipes
- April Showers Activity
- Food Funny

Celebrate Earth Day with Children

— Continued from front page

and why it is important to minimize our usage. It will also save money on the electric bill!

MAKE RECYCLING INTO A SORTING GAME

Sorting games are a great way for kids to learn about shapes, sizes, similarities and differences. Save all your recyclable materials for the week, such as cardboard, plastic bottles and containers, paper and aluminum cans to create a fun and environmentally friendly game while also getting kids in the habit of recycling early on.

REJECT PLASTIC

Getting the kids involved in spotting all the ways we use plastic in our everyday lives is a great way to raise awareness of just how much we rely on it. Have children point out or tally how much plastic is in the house, you just may be surprised! Try giving up bottled water, carrying reusable shopping bags, buying powdered laundry and dishwasher detergent in cardboard, using bar soap instead of liquid and packing lunches in reusable containers. These are all great ways to limit the plastic in our lives.

READ ENVIRONMENTALLY THEMED BOOKS

Learn about the environment while also having some special snuggle time (while screen free!) by reading great books like *The Lorax* by Dr Seuss, *Where in the World is Awey* by Michael Franti or *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein. These books, and many more, help children understand important issues for our planet and foster their growth into environmentally conscientious, caring people.

ORGANIZE OR JOIN IN ON A CLEANUP

Sign up your childcare, preschool or family to participate in a local shoreline, park or neighborhood clean-up. Pick up litter and pull weeds to help beautify your local neighborhood space. Get your hands dirty and our environment clean!

MAKE ART FROM FOUND OR REUSED OBJECTS

Let children get creative with scraps of paper, wood, yarn, fabric and collected leaves, twigs, pinecones, etc.... Painting with water and a paintbrush on sidewalks, rocks or decks is also fun and mess free, plus it's a good way to get some extra outside time.



photo: kids.nationalgeographic.com

PLANT A TREE

Trees beautify an area, provide shade, filter pollutants, offer space for wildlife to forage and roost and produce oxygen. Plant one in your yard or join a local group that offers plantings to neighborhoods or areas that need it most.

Take the opportunity to participate in some fun Earth Day events while also teaching children about ways to make a positive impact by their actions. Remember, Earth Day isn't simply a one day celebration but a reminder to honor our planet and environment every day. Direct action is a great way to make a lasting impression on a child and to make a difference in our beautiful planet!

— Rachel O'Neal, *Child Health and Nutrition Specialist*

KIDS' HEALTH & SAFETY

Screen Time: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly



REGARDLESS of engaging in “good” or “bad” screen time, the fact is that digital entertainment is displacing many activities that are integral to childhood development. Excessive screen time is linked to poor school performance, attention problems and childhood obesity. Most marketing of unhealthy food is done through screens, with ads for junk food strategically placed on children’s programming. While we can’t control the pace or direction of technology, we can take steps to help keep our children healthy and limit the amount of screen time they are exposed to. Note these facts and do your part to make a difference in a child’s life!

CHILDREN SPEND TOO MUCH TIME WITH SCREEN MEDIA

- On any given day, 29% of babies under the age of 1 are watching TV and videos for an average of 90 minutes.
- Time with screens increases rapidly in the early years. Between a child’s first and second birthday, on any given day, 64% of babies and toddlers are watching TV and videos, averaging slightly over 2 hours.
- Screen time can be habit-forming: the more time children engage with screens, the harder time they have turning them off.
- African-American and Latino children ages 0 to 8 spend more time with screen media, including television, video games and computers than their white peers.
- Rates of televisions being placed in bedrooms are more than twice as high among African-American (69%) and Hispanic (66%) children than for white children in the same age group (28%).

SCREEN TIME IS AN IDENTIFIED FACTOR IN CHILDHOOD OBESITY

- Time with screens is an important risk factor for childhood obesity in both low-risk and high-risk populations.
- For each hour of television viewing per day, children consume an additional 167 calories.
- Bedroom televisions are associated with obesity risk in children of all ages.

SCREEN TIME CAN UNDERMINE LEARNING FOR BABIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN

- Screen time for children under three is linked to delayed language acquisition.
- The more time preschool children spend with screens, the less time they spend engaged in creative play (the foundation of learning) and constructive problem solving.
- For babies and preschool children, time with screens is negatively correlated with time spent interacting with parents—which is essential for learning. Even when parents co-view, they spend less time talking to their children than when they’re engaged in screen-free activities.
- Toddler screen time is associated with problems in later childhood, including lower math and school achievement, reduced physical activity and victimization by classmates.

RESEARCH SHOWS BENEFITS OF REDUCED SCREEN TIME

- Reducing screen time can help prevent childhood obesity.
- Children who spend less time watching television in early years tend to be more physically active, have a healthier diet and do better in school.
- Limiting exposure to television during the first 4 years of life may decrease children’s interest in it in later years.

We have the power to change these alarming facts. Join in the international celebration of Screen-Free week, April 30th to May 6th, by swapping digital entertainment for the joys of reading, daydreaming, playing outside, being creative and spending time with family and friends. Devices can still be used for work or school but go without them during family time. You may be surprised at how much fun you have and you may just choose to go screen free more often!

— *Adapted from:* commercialfreechildhood.org

Balsamic Chicken & Asparagus with Cherry Tomatoes

Balsamic vinegar	¼ cup	Chicken, skinless, boneless,	cut in strips	2 pounds
Olive oil, divided	¼ cup	Salt		to taste
Honey	1 Tbsp	Pepper		to taste
Dijon mustard	1 Tbsp	Asparagus, trimmed		2 pounds
Garlic, minced	2 cloves	Cherry tomatoes, halved		3½ cups
Red pepper flakes	pinch			

1. In a small bowl, prepare vinaigrette by whisking together balsamic vinegar, 2 Tbsp oil, honey, mustard, garlic and red pepper flakes. Set aside.
2. Season chicken with salt and pepper. In a large skillet over medium heat, sauté chicken in remaining oil until golden brown, 3–5 minutes per side. Remove from pan and set aside.
3. To the same pan, add asparagus and tomatoes, season with more salt and pepper and sauté until the asparagus is bright green and tomatoes are slightly wilted, about 5 minutes.
4. Move the veggies to one side, add chicken back to pan. Pour in vinaigrette. Toss veggies and chicken, cook until the chicken is done and the vinaigrette is thickened, about 5 minutes more.

Yield: 12 servings

Meets requirement for meat/meat alternate and vegetable

— *Delish.com*

Peruvian Vegetarian Causa

Potatoes (Yukon Gold)	2 pounds	Filling variations	2 cups
Olive oil	½ cup	Sliced avocados, mixed vegetables with beets	
Lime juice	¼ cup	bound together with mayonnaise, sliced or	
Salt and pepper	to taste	chopped tomatoes and corn kernels.	
Chili paste (optional)	2 Tbsp	GARNISH:	
		Eggs, hard boiled, sliced	4
		Black olives, sliced	10

1. Boil potatoes in a large pot of salted water until cooked through. Drain and peel. Mash with a potato masher until smooth. Stir in the oil, chili paste, lime, salt and pepper to taste.
2. Line a casserole dish with plastic wrap. Spread half the potatoes into the bottom of the dish and smooth out. Spread the desired filling evenly over the potatoes. Spread remaining potatoes evenly over the filling. Press down gently to firm up the causa. Cover and chill thoroughly.
3. Lay a serving platter upside-down over the top of the causa dish. Flip the dish and platter over, letting the causa fall onto the platter. Remove the plastic wrap.
4. Garnish the causa decoratively with the hard-boiled eggs and olives. Cut into portions and serve cold.

Yield: 10 servings

Meets requirement for vegetable

— *Cecilia Sequeira*

ACTIVITY CORNER

April Showers Activities



Masking Tape Fun

You can use masking tape to make lines (straight and curved), designs (zigzags, grids) hopscotch/obstacle courses, alphabet mazes and large tic-tac-toe boards all over the floor to get children moving. Ask children to follow the lines. Can they jump between them? If they're on a grid can they put a foot and a hand each in a different box? Can they follow the letters through the maze?




Sock Match

Place numbered sock pairs around the room. The kids locate all of the socks and practice numbers while hanging all of the socks on a clothesline. Try greatest to least and least to greatest. Make sure the kids move around to complete the task.

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Food Q. What days do eggs hate most?
Funny A. Fry-Day!