



March is National Nutrition Month



March is National Nutrition Month, which means it's a great time for your family to start eating healthier and exercising more! As a parent, what are some ways that you can help your children eat healthy and maintain active lifestyles? Here are a few tips and ideas to keep in mind as you work towards these goals.

When families share meals together, everyone wins! Regular family dinners have been linked to lower rates of substance abuse and depression as well as higher grade point averages in adolescents. In addition, research shows that children who eat with their families at least three times per week are more likely to be in a healthy weight range. There are many benefits to eating together, but we know it can be challenging when home schedules get busy! Below are some tips and resources to help.

Make talking about emotions part of your regular conversations. Say things like "I was sad when the grocery store was out of grape jelly, but now I found flavor that I like too!" or "I was so happy when my friend gave me a gift that I said thank you 5 times! By talking like

this, you helped your child identify an emotion, what caused the motion, and a healthy reaction to it. You can also use the emotion wheel like the one below to help explain each emotion.

Eat as a Family!

- Turn your television off and silence cellphones to avoid distractions during family dinner time.
 - Check out **The Family Dinner Project** (<https://thefamilydinnerproject.org>) for ideas on conversation starters, food & fun during mealtime.
 - Ask your kiddos to be 'helpers' before and after dinner. This website offers age-appropriate suggestions for getting your children involved (<http://www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/guide/guide-cookery-skills-age>).
 - When schedules are tight, prepare an easy meal. Who says you can't eat cereal or a peanut-butter & jelly sandwich after 4pm?
 - Can't make dinner work? Schedule breakfast together.
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Nutrition: Consider Portion Size



When it comes to deciding how much food to serve on your plate, take a look at ChooseMyPlate.gov for some useful guidelines on healthy portion sizes. One research study, published in *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, found that the amount of food that parents serve themselves is directly related to the amount served to their children. In other words, if you are serving yourself larger portions, you are also more likely to be serving your child large portions of food- and your child is likely to eat it. So in honor of *National Nutrition Month*, let's make it a goal to eat healthy and move more!

FUN WITH YOUR KIDS

Healthy Snacking! Ants on a Log

Ingredients

1 bunch celery
Peanut butter
Raisins

Directions:

Chop celery into several sticks. Fill the inside of each stick with peanut butter. Line up raisins on peanut butter.

For more articles like this see

-- Oregon Parenting Together --



Blog of the Month



This week I really struggled trying to find the right title for this blog entry. I know what message I'd like to share, but the title is a bit hard to put into words. The theme of this entry is to find the power in accepting help from others as you navigate your unknown path to becoming the best parent you can be. Let me back up a bit and hopefully it will start to make sense.

[-- Read More --](#)

Upcoming Parenting Classes

Make Parenting a Pleasure *(English)*

Scotts Mills Elementary School
805 1st St
Scotts Mills, Oregon
Every Thurs., Jan. 10 to April 4
5:00-7:30pm
Call (503) 873-4394 to register

Nurturing Parenting *(English & Spanish)*

Weddle Elementary
1825 Alder Dr NE
Keizer, Oregon
Every Tues., Jan. 22 to April 9
5:30-8:00pm
Call (503) 399-3604 to register

Nurturing Parenting *(English & Spanish)*

Scott Elementary
4700 Arizona Avenue
Salem, Oregon
Every Thurs., Jan. 31 to May 2
4:45-7:15pm
Call (503) 399-3302 to register



Make Parenting a Pleasure *(Spanish)*

Salem Keizer Coalition for Equality
3850 Portland Rd NE #100
Salem, Oregon
Every Wed., Feb. 20- May 1
10:00-12:00pm
Call (971) 239-9662 to register

Make Parenting a Pleasure *(English)*

Western Christian School
9045 Wallace Rd NW
Salem, Oregon
Every Thurs., March 7-April 25
6:30-8:00pm
[Click here to register](#)

To find Parenting Education classes near you click on the county below:

[-- Marion County --](#)

[-- Polk County --](#)



During snacktime, let your child make shapes out of his snacks by rearranging them into things like a circle, a stick figure or anything he can think of! You can take turns making shapes and guessing what they are too.

[More Vroom Tips](#)
