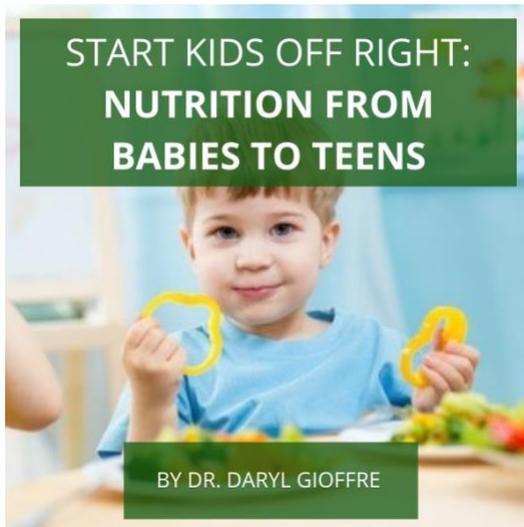


Start Kids Off Right – Nutrition From Babies to Teens



Being a parent these days is hard enough, before you even start thinking about what to feed your kids!

There are so many questions new parents have about what to feed their babies when they are ready to start solid foods.

Even when kids get older, parents want to do what's right for their kids and start them on a healthy path. And clearly, a lot of parents could use some help.

One in 3 children are overweight, and 1 in 5 are considered obese. And if I were to bet, I would say that rates of obesity have increased, if not skyrocketed, in 2020.

So today, we're going to talk about childhood nutrition from introducing foods to a baby on through the teen years and everything in between. There's a lot to cover so let's jump right in.

Babies

First and foremost, the important thing to know is that until babies reach 12 months, solid foods are a bonus and they are still getting most of their nutrition from breast milk or formula. So take the pressure off yourself in terms of introducing foods on a certain schedule.

In fact, my wife Chelsea breastfed both of our children exclusively until they were 8 months before introducing solids. She's such a rock star.

Once we did start foods, we focused on VEGGIES! Are you surprised? We started with veggies by steaming them in a double boiler and either mashing or chopping in very small cubes. The first 2 foods were avocado and steamed sweet potato (separately).

We always added cold pressed coconut oil and healthy salts, which make the food taste good AND deliver healthy fats and minerals. We would also sweeten more bitter veggies with onion and leeks, but never any other foods mixed in so we could see if they developed any sensitivity to new foods.

Steamed peas make a great solid food – and a great mess. In fact, we often fed our babies in the bathtub to make clean up easier.

I recommend starting early with BITTER greens to help their palates tolerate more veggies. Eventually, would add a splash of veggie broth spices or garlic to get them used to different flavors. And always steamed and never roasted, as steaming fills the food with water, whereas baking and roasting take water away.



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or

Moving out of vegetables alone, we introduced quinoa at around 9 months with many different spices and either olive or coconut oil, and then mashed mung, lentil, or adzuki beans between 10 and 12 months.

My recommendation is not to introduce ANY fruit until at least 1 year. Our babies got strawberries and bananas on their first birthdays!

Toddlers and Preschoolers

If you start the way we did, by the time they are toddlers, your kids will be very tolerant of a diet loaded with veggies. If you start the way most people do, toddlers and preschoolers become more and more picky. That gets you into a situation where you have a lot of ground to make up.

Now, I won't lie to you. It's a huge challenge. When our kids see another child eating ice cream or cookies, their first instinct is that they want that too.

How do we explain to a 3 year old that he or she can't have what other kids are eating 24-7? It's not easy, but I'll tell you, it is amazing what kids at this age understand about what good food is.



I can remember Brayden and Alea as young as 2 and 3 saying, “Good food makes me strong like Dadda! It makes me smart like Mama! Junk food makes me tired, and makes me slow.”

So the important thing is that you keep talking about this stuff, and it does make an impression on them. **The best way to do that at this age is to get them involved!**

I recall one day Brayden came home from preschool, and I must have heard the word COOKIE come out of his mouth a million times. Of course, he wanted more after their class Halloween party.

As Tony Robbins says, I had to do a pattern interrupt. I asked Brayden if he would want to make a chia pudding with me. He said yes, and then I asked what flavor he wanted, pumpkin, chocolate, or vanilla coconut.

Letting them choose what they want makes them feel empowered, and so much more inclined to participate. So not only did I successfully get Brayden off the cookie train, but I also got him to spend some quality time with his daddy, and we made a delicious, healthy alkaline treat for the entire family. He added the ingredients one by one, he blended it, he named the treat, and then he taste-tested it (and practically ate the entire bowl)!

The other thing to keep in mind at this age – and at all ages from babyhood on through teen years really – is supplementing their food with added nutrition. We started giving small amounts of [Daily Greens](#) and [Acid-Kicking Minerals](#) mixed with water in a baby bottle before their first birthdays!

By age 3, they can have a half scoop mixed with 4 ounces of water or in a smoothie. This is what our kids think of as juice and it’s so good for them!

School-Age Kids and Teens

The challenge with this age is that they are making nutrition choices for themselves more and more. That is WHY obesity rates increase after age 5 in children.

But that's also an opportunity. By continuing to help them make healthy choices, you are setting them up for a LIFETIME of healthy eating and living.

The most important thing you can do at this age is appeal to their logic and reasoning, which you cannot do with younger children. In other words, **emphasize good choices!**

This goes for all parenting, right? It usually doesn't work well to criticize decisions kids make that we don't agree with.



So at our house, we emphasize "good choices." We praise our kids when they make good choices and give positive reinforcement.

As kids get older, you can remind them that, yes, it's your choice what you eat, but we hope you make healthy choices just like we hope you make choices to be a good student, a kind friend, and so on. That way, they know that making choices you don't agree with doesn't mean they are bad kids.

And when they do make poor food choices, use it as a lesson. Talk to them about how they feel after they eat that ice cream cone. When you rarely eat sugar, it does not feel good.

This is also the age where it is so important to set a good example for your kids and by doing so, set them up for making the right choices themselves. Kids don't actually have a vendetta against green things! The problem is often that the adults around them aren't practicing what they preach.

It's simple. If they see you eating fried food and cookies, they are going to think it's okay to eat that too. If they see you eating a plate full of delicious vegetables, they are going to think it's okay to eat that too.

You won't need to say, "Eat your vegetables!" when the whole family is eating a meal of nearly all vegetables.

One last thing...

All children and teens should get at least 600 IU or 1,500 mg daily of anti-inflammatory omega-3 fats.

There is NO way that the foods your kids are eating are rich enough in omega-3, so they are deficient without a supplement. Research shows fish oil supplements help children with ADHD and keep their brains sharp in school.

Our [Alkamind Daily Omega-3](#) is the best quality supplement on the planet. It's the ONLY one with the ideal 2:1 ratio of EPA to DHA in a highly concentrated form. So you can take less and get more benefit from it. Plus it's heavy metal free and guaranteed for potency and freshness, so no fishy taste.



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