



Choosing Healthy Affordable Foods

Choosing a variety of flavorful foods is important for physical and mental health. For example, whole grain breads, cereals and pastas offer taste and essential vitamins, minerals, and fiber (which aids digestion).

Health-promoting foods offer immediate benefits, like increased energy, and long-term benefits, such as the disease-fighting phytochemicals. Eating a healthier diet does not have to be difficult. Try following these tips:

- Get acquainted with the food guide pyramid, an easy-to-use visual tool that helps you learn more about different food groups and how to choose from them.
- Choose a variety of foods, including fruits, vegetables and whole grains.
- Choose a diet low in saturated fats and foods prepared with less salt.
- Eat moderate amounts of total fat and sugar.
- Drink plenty of fluids, including eight or more glasses of water each day. Water is an essential body fluid—replacing it each day is important to bodily function.

- If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.
- Be physically active each day. Thirty or more minutes of moderate physical activity for adults (60 minutes for children) most days of the week and preferably daily, is recommended for optimal health.

Foods that offer health benefits don't need to cost more. Buying healthy food can be difficult for families and individuals who are faced with rising costs and who have limited resources, but help is available. The Kansas Food Assistance program, also known as the food stamp program, can provide extra money each month to buy food of your choice at the grocery store.

The Kansas Food Assistance program is open to persons of any age who meet program guidelines, such as limited income and financial resources, including cash and checking and saving accounts. Certain resources such as your home and car are not counted.

For more information, contact your county Social and Rehabilitation Service.

Mary Meck Higgins

Helping Children Cope with Divorce

Children of divorce often live double lives. They are likely to spend a large part of their childhoods in two separate households following two different sets of directions. Often, they juggle two different sets of expectations. Some of this can not be avoided when a divorce has occurred—what used to be a pair of parents in one home now has split into two different households. In order to prevent a child from feeling torn in opposite directions, he or she needs some consistency.

It is helpful for divorced parents to let each other know what is going on when the child is at their house. Is the child encouraged to wash dishes as soon as they are done eating in one home and then disciplined for getting up from the table too quickly in another? Do both parents help with homework? These differences can be confusing to a child.

Divorced spouses are going to disagree on some issues. Giving the child as much consistency as possible, will reduce the stress on the child. If the unsolved differences that caused a divorce in the first place block attempts to communicate, it is helpful to at least be aware of the areas of disagreement.

John Merritt and Charlotte Shoup Olsen

Children love that human touch—holding hands, a warm hug,
or just a friendly pat on the back.

PARENTS CORNER

Giving Life to Hope

By the end of their sixth year of life, successful children will begin to envision a positive future for themselves. "What do you think you might like to be when you grow up?" "A policeman!" "A doctor!" "A ballerina!" The specifics are not important. What is critical is the enthusiasm a child has about the future.

When children tell you about these hopes, look beyond their words to understand what they find attractive about what they might do. In a sense, every child makes a personal contract with himself or herself: "When I grow up, I'm going to do something important."

Children need their parents encouragement and confidence. "Yes, my little one, you are going to do something special when you grow up." Every child needs a cheerleader.

From "Success by Six Cards," a cooperative effort between United Way and the Kansas Cooperative Extension Service. Submitted by Chuck Smith

Just Listen

Have you ever tried to fix something but actually made it worse? This also can happen in conversations. Often one spouse shares a problem with the other, and the listener automatically assumes it is his or her job to help come up with a solution. When the listener offers advice, he or she can't understand why the other party just wanted someone to listen and understand, not offer a solution. It helps to be quick to listen but slow to offer advice . . . until you know it is welcome.

John Merritt and Charlotte Shoup Olsen

If you are patient in one moment
of anger, you will avoid a hundred
days of sorrow.

Tibetan proverb

Need More Time?

If everyone's day has 24 hours, why does it seem like other people have more time? The reality, of course, is that everyone has the same amount. However, learning basic time management skills can free up time for activities and interests.

Time management is similar to money management. The concepts are easy to implement, and the results are almost immediate. If you are feeling overwhelmed, start with small changes. For example, people who readily identify 'prime' time with television may not realize they also have their personal 'prime' time—an hour or more during the day when they are most productive. Identifying your 'prime' time and learning to use it productively can free up time for other activities. Try these time-saving tips:

- Prioritize. Identify what is most important and move it to the top of the list.
- Try to do the least pleasant task first. Once the job is done, it's not necessary to spend time thinking about it.
- Learn to say "no." Consider what can be accomplished realistically and turn down additional requests.
- Learn to delegate. Others may not do the job exactly as you might, but the fact that they're doing it allows you time for other activities and interests.
- Minimize paperwork. Sort the mail the same day it is received; place bills and other mail that needs a response in one place.
- Reconsider your routine. Perhaps doing a load of laundry each morning or evening can free up Saturday morning.
- Be flexible. Ask yourself: Is this still important? If not, move on to your next priority. And, give yourself a small reward for accomplishing your tasks.

Katey Walker

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