



Children'sSM
Healthcare of Atlanta

The No-Stress Way to Feed Your School-age Child

Kindergarten and beyond

The time has come for your child to put on his backpack and head to school. Even though he may be a full-time student now, he still has a job—and so do you! Keep up with the Ps and Cs while he's hitting the books.

Parents' jobs—the 3 Ps

Plan for a positive eating experience

- **Party of five** — Besides three meals a day, kids generally need two healthy snacks.
- **Stock the shelves** — Keep healthy snacks easy to reach, ready-to-eat and at your child's eye level in the refrigerator and pantry.
- **How was your day?** — Meals and snack times should be social, so leave phones, screens and homework for later. Ask everyone in the family to share something good about their day.

Prepare and put food on the table

- **Load up on healthy** — Prepare several choices of nutritious foods. Continue to offer new foods and foods your child says he doesn't like, along with familiar foods. Offering two different veggies makes it more likely your child will choose to eat veggies.
- **Build a little helper** — Expect your child to help with making dinner, setting the table and doing the dishes. Everyone pitching in together makes it faster and more fun.

Provide with patience

- **Be the change you want to see** — Eat the same foods and drink the same drinks you want your child to have.



Child's jobs—the 3 Cs

Choose to eat (or not to eat)

- **Telling time** — Kids have the right to refuse what you have provided, and you have the right to remind them when their next snack or meal will be served.

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Choose what to eat (from what you provide)

- **No pressure** — Do not force your child into trying anything.
- **Resist the urge** — Your child might try to convince you he'll suffer if he doesn't eat something he likes. Remind him if he is hungry enough, he will find something to eat from what has been prepared. Making him something different sets you up as his personal chef for life.
- **Choice is the key** — Older children can begin to choose their own after-school snack. Make the healthy choice the easy choice by keeping it easily accessible and at your child's eye level.

Choose how much to eat

- **Ditch the "Clean Plate Club"** — To set your child up for lifelong healthy habits, let him call the shots on how much to eat.
- **Just desserts** — Dessert is a treat, not a nightly menu item. When offering dessert, you only need enough for everyone to have one serving. And everyone should get some, even if they didn't finish dinner.
- **It's not a tool** — Don't punish, reward or bribe your kids with food. Especially with treats and desserts. Food isn't a tool for discipline; it should be a healthy, happy part of our everyday lives.

Remember, how we feed our children is just as important as *what* we feed our children.

Simplify your life with the Ps and let your child choose with the Cs...that way the whole family can relax, enjoy their food and create a happier household and healthier habits to be Strong4Life.