

Children can learn to eat vegetables

2nd June, 2014



For many parents, getting their kids to eat their greens is a constant battle. It often seems that whatever vegetables are served up to young children, they are refused with a

vengeance. This can lead to young ones adopting poor diets. A new study from the University of Leeds in the U.K. suggests parents can train their children to like vegetables. The study showed that children under the age of two can get to like vegetables they initially rejected if they are offered them five to ten times. Researchers said even the fussiest of eaters will succumb to repeated exposure to vegetables. This is good news for parents worried about their children's dietary intake and levels of nutrition.

The study was conducted on 332 children aged between four months and three years from Britain, Denmark and France. Each child was given between five and 10 servings of at least 100g of artichoke puree. The younger children consumed more of the artichoke than the older children. Professor Marion Hetherington said: "If they are under two they will eat new vegetables because they tend to be willing and open to new experiences. After 24 months, children become reluctant to try new things and start to reject foods - even those they previously liked." She added: "If you want to encourage your children to eat vegetables, make sure you start early and often."

Sources: BBC / Science 2.0 / PlosOne.com

Writing

Compare and contrast fruit and vegetables. Which do you prefer? Why?

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

greens / constant battle / poor diets / under the age of two / fussy eaters / nutrition / conducted / servings / older children / willing / new experiences / reluctant / encourage

True / False

- The article says getting kids to eat vegetables is a battle for parents. T / F
- Research suggests parents can train their kids to like vegetables. T / F
- The key age to get kids to like vegetables is four. T / F
- The study said parents should give vegetables to kids up to ten times. T / F
- Researchers focused on children in four European countries. T / F
- Researchers tried to get children to eat garlic in their study. T / F
- The study says kids are less willing to try new things from the age of 2. T / F
- Researchers suggest encouraging kids to eat vegetables once a month. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------|
| 1. constant | a. result in |
| 2. refused | b. carried out |
| 3. lead to | c. give in |
| 4. initially | d. never-ending |
| 5. succumb | e. ready |
| 6. conducted | f. at first |
| 7. consumed | g. not in favour of |
| 8. willing | h. turned down |
| 9. reluctant | i. urge |
| 10. encourage | j. ate |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you think of the survey in the article?
- How are vegetables different from fruit?
- Is a tomato a fruit or vegetable? Why do you say so?
- Should parents give children dozens of different types of vegetables?
- What vegetables do you dislike now? Why?
- How have your food tastes changed over the years?
- Do children eat too much rubbish nowadays?
- What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| 1. getting their kids to eat their greens | a. diets |
| 2. they are refused with | b. try new things |
| 3. adopting poor | c. intake |
| 4. even the fussiest of | d. to be willing |
| 5. children's dietary | e. is a constant battle |
| 6. The study was conducted | f. liked |
| 7. between five and 10 | g. on 332 children |
| 8. they tend | h. a vengeance |
| 9. children become reluctant to | i. servings |
| 10. even those they previously | j. eaters will succumb |

Discussion – Student B

- What springs to mind when you hear the word 'vegetable'?
- Why do kids dislike so many vegetables?
- What vegetables did you dislike as a kid?
- How can you get children to eat more vegetables?
- How important is it for children to eat vegetables?
- What are you fussy about?
- Do you eat enough vegetables?
- Should children eat mainly fruit and vegetables?

Spelling

- refused with a eanvcngee
- like vegetables they aytlliin rejected
- the fussiest of eaters will cusubmc
- repeated sxuerpeo to vegetables
- children's ryadite intake
- levels of ntotiniru
- The study was onctdduce on 332 children
- artichoke euerp
- younger children umdoescn more
- children become ctanreltu
- those they isvrpeyuol liked
- acrueeng your children

Answers – Synonym Match

1. d	2. h	3. a	4. f	5. c
6. b	7. j	8. e	9. g	10. i

Role Play

Role A – Vegetables

You think vegetables are the most important thing for growing children. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their food types aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): fruit, protein or carbohydrates.

Role B – Fruit

You think fruit is the most important thing for growing children. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their food types aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): vegetables, protein or carbohydrates.

Role C – Protein

You think protein is the most important thing for growing children. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their food types aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): fruit, vegetables or carbohydrates.

Role D – Carbohydrates

You think carbohydrates are the most important thing for growing children. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their food types aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): fruit, protein or vegetables.

Speaking –

Rank these with your partner. Put the biggest battles to get kids to do things at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| • eat healthily | • say 'please' and 'thank you' |
| • go to bed early | • do as they are told |
| • tidy their room | • be nice to siblings |
| • do their homework | • be quiet |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	F	d	T	e	F	f	F	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.