Healthy eating habits, though, cover more than just learning how to choose the healthy foods to eat. Healthy eating habits also include learning when to eat, when not to eat, how much to eat, when to say "enough", where to eat, how to eat and when to shop for food. Once families decide that healthy eating habits are an important facet of life, they can then take steps toward acquiring these habits.

1. Choosing healthy food: Very simple. Buy and eat food as close to it's natural state as possible. Instead of buying canned fruit, choose fresh fruit; instead of canned or frozen vegetables, choose fresh ones; choose whole wheat products instead of processed flour products. Check the labels of the boxes of food you are buying. The ingredients should be simple. If there are a lot of ingredients that you can not pronounce, read or understand... find an alternative! Discard sugary, high sodium and highly processed foods that will only work to hinder mental and physical vigor. It is best to adhere to a diet rich in fruits, nuts, grains and vegetables. Children will often go through eating binges where they will refuse to eat, eat only one or two things, become very picky diet rich in fruits, nuts, grains and vegetables. Children will often go through eating binges where they will refuse to eat, eat only one or two things, become very picky, so how can we, in the ever increasing pace of disease and suffering. Our fast paced lives demand fast paced eating habits are an important facet of life, they can then take steps toward acquiring these habits.

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- Requiring a child to eat everything on their plate
- Making a child’s “favorite” dish instead of expecting them to eat what everyone else is eating
- Letting children eat between meals because they are hungry after having refused to eat during mealtime
- Allowing children to have empty calorie foods as a treat or reward
- Giving in to the child’s whims

2. When to eat: As obvious as it may seem, the best time to eat is when one is hungry. Taking in food only at regular intervals and less frequently as one grows older will promote healthy mental and physical strength. Avoid eating between meals or for entertainment and associating food with certain activities, i.e. popcorn and television. Have set meal times and forego snacking.

Continued on page 4

Christine Gillan, Coordinator
of Early Childhood Education and Care Centers (ECEC)
P. O. Box 5005, Westlake Village, Ca 91359 (805) 413-7300
**Directors might begin to rethink their meals . . .**

and research the foods served at McDonalds, Burger King, Colonel’s chicken, Del Taco, and Taco Bell. Some items may be good but others are not. **WE ARE WHAT WE EAT!**

What is breakfast like at your care center? Children do not need high sugar cereals, chocolate milk, doughnuts, cookies and other sweet foods. Work at making breakfast a healthy eating time. Read your labels and find out what your children are really eating!

In its refined form, sucrose is commonly known as table sugar. When sucrose occurs in fruits and vegetables it is accompanied by other essential nutrients such as vitamins, minerals and water. Refined table sugar contributes no nutrients—only calories. For this reason, calories from table sugar are frequently called “empty calories”. Eating too many empty calories can lead to obesity accompanied by a deficiency of some essential nutrients. Children who are allowed to eat too many foods containing refined sugar may also have tooth decay.

Since the Seventh-day Adventist Church has a health message, our school policies include eliminating the following from school lunches: all pork products, shellfish, shrimp, chocolate and soda. The parents understand at the onset of their child’s enrollment that we practice this health message as adults. (If we do not, we need to find out why we don’t.)

Parents have asked why we do not give children chocolate and here are the reasons:

- Children are usually born with lots of energy and serving chocolate at lunch or breakfast intensifies nervous energy and affects some children’s abilities to focus.
- Chocolate contains tyramine, a chief suspect in causing headaches.
- Chocolate contains caffeine, which may cause stomach distress, headaches, irritability, uncontrollable nervous energy and heartburn.

Soda drinks are high in sugar; so we never serve them at Wee Care. We cannot control what parents feed their children at home, but we can make suggestions as to what constitutes a healthy diet for children.

Water is very important for good health and should be given often to every child as well as whenever they ask for water. Lack of water may cause dehydration, muddled thoughts, stress-related headaches, worse short-term memory and lack of concentration. Together, we can all work to protect our children’s health.

By: Martha Shepherd, Director

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**Fast Food Really Can Be Unhealthy**

Obesity is widely recognized as a major public health problem in the U.S., and health experts are particularly concerned about the dramatic increases in obesity among children. Two major causes are lack of exercise and diet; when it comes to diet, many have blamed fast food. Though it is surprising, there have been few scientific studies that have actually considered the impact of fast-food on body weight. To fill that gap, researchers review data on over 3,000 young white and black adults who too part in a 15-year follow-up study on cardiovascular risk factors. The authors studied how often the subjects ate at fast-food restaurants over the 15-year period and they measured changes in bodyweight over that time.

Recognizing that a number of factors can influence weight gain, the authors took into account various factors, such as smoking, physical activity, TV watching, and soft drink intake. Whey they did this, the researchers found that the more people ate fast food, the more their body weight increased. Compared to those who visited fast-food restaurants less than once a week, people who ate fast food more than twice a week over the 15-year study period gained an extra 10 pounds, and they also developed early signs of diabetes.

The authors note that fast foods may cause these health risks for a number of reasons, including the large portion sizes, the attractive taste, and large amount of the kinds of carbohydrates that are associated with weight gain and diabetes. (Pereira MA et al: Lancet, January 1, 2005, pp. 36-42)

Comment: The fast-food study doesn’t come as a surprise, but it is important, providing the best evidence to date that fast-foods, when consumed frequently may indeed contribute to the growing problem of obesity and diabetes. At the same time, federal health authorities have published new guidelines, which are a welcome improvement over the previous “food pyramid”. It’s also worth noting that the role of exercise was considered so important that emphasis on physical activity was included as part of these new good guidelines. Continued page 3
Yummy Bites with Good Stuff

In bowl, combine 1 can (15 oz.) black beans, drained; 1 can (7 oz.) corn, drained; 1 medium tomato, diced; and 1/4 cup mild salsa. Serve with corn chips. Have the children use the corn chips as spoons to hold the beans.

Nutrition per serving: 196 cal; 6g protein; 9g fat; 26g carbohydrates; 21mg calcium; 5g fiber.

Heat toaster oven to 375°F. Cut a 1/2" thick slice from a tube of precooked polenta. Place on foil, spread with 2 tsp. shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese. Bake until cheese melts.

Nutrition per serving: 48 cal; 2g protein; 1g fat; 7g carbohydrates; 33mg calcium; .5g fiber.

Diet & Nutrition, continued

The science behind these new guidelines is up to date, but how likely are Americans to change their diets to meet these suggestions? A New York Times former restaurant critic tried the diet for four days, and declared it difficult at best (Grimes W: New York Times, January 23, 2005). In his View, “In the world of the guidelines, food is a kind of medicine that, taken in the right doses, can promote good health. In the real world, of course, people regard food and its flavors as a source of pleasure. And therein lies just one of the problems with the guidelines, which my wife took one look at before saying with a shake of her head, ‘No one is ever going to eat like this.’ . . The new guidelines are not just health policy, they’re cultural policy, too.

To comply fully, Americans will have to rethink their inherited notions of what makes a meal, and what makes a meal satisfying.” Put in simpler words, changing dietary patterns is a difficult process, but it’s important to begin that process, even if it means making changes slowly.

Reprinted from CHILD HEALTH ALERT, P. O. Box 610228, Newton Highlands, MA 02461

Crescent City Discoveryland

If you have ever walked in the presence of angels, then I would have to guess you have been under the tutelage of Donna Smith at the Crescent City Discoveryland Preschool. At least, that was my experience.

The morning could not have been more perfect: bright, warm sunshine, mild breezes and a classroom of peace and calm that education experts dream about for a perfect learning environment. After morning worship and a prayer inviting Jesus into the classroom, Director and Head Teacher, Donna Smith happily assisted the children as they made yarn octopus, a final activity after a week of studying the letter “O”. There were no ditto sheets today, no elongated lessons, nor miniaturized textbook requirements. Just plain learning made fun.

Making my way to the dramatic play area, I noticed how neatly all the toys were put into their proper place. As I turned toward the reading area, a blond young lady approached and asked if I cared for some tea. I graciously accepted and promptly sat in a little chair at a little table and waited for my “tea” and “cake,” which was served with a smile and gently hummed song. It was a delicious experience – even when “clean up” time arrived which signaled outdoor play time.

Needless to say, clean up time indoors did not take long! Oh, the joys of being outside and free! The enticing new playground equipment, made possible by a grant from the Del Norte County Children and Families Commission, drew all of us (adults included). We played hide and seek, raced down the slides, painted with water and jumped on the bridge.

Then, the shaving cream came out! The children lathered their hands and arms, table and chairs. They drew pictures and letters then made them disappear with a single swipe and giggle. Even cleaning up with a hose brought squeals of laughter. Could more fun be had?

The perfect morning culminated in an outdoor lunch hour, lending itself to more learning, what teachers call “teachable moments.” All too soon 12:30 arrived and with it were parents eager to hear of the morning’s activities.

I took a moment to reflect on the mission of the Discoveryland Preschool nestled within the Crescent City Seventh-day Adventist Church. Pictures may be worth a thousand words, and stories might be exciting tales, but, the experience… The experience was priceless.

Parents March 2005, p. 184

“See my beautiful yarn octopus?”

Teachable moments
3. How much to eat: Teach children to eat until they no longer feel hungry - until they are satisfied. Requiring them to finish everything on their plate can lead to over-eating, feeling "stuffed" and gluttony. Going too long between meals tends to make one feel hungrier, thus causing the “eyes” to be “larger than the stomach.” Children need to be trained to gauge their serving portions and take-in amounts. "Intemperance in eating, even of food of the right quality, will have a prostrating influence upon the system, and will blunt the keener and [honorable] emotions." (Counsels on Diet and Foods, E.G. White, 1954)

4. How to eat: "Mealtime should be a season for social intercourse and refreshment. Everything that can burden or irritate should be banished. Let trust and kindliness and gratitude to the Giver of all good be cherished, and the conversation will be cheerful, a pleasant flow of thought that will uplift without wearying." (Secrets of Child Training, E.G. White, 1954) Make the mealtime a pleasant family gathering where positive communication takes place and manners are mirrored, trained and reinforced. Politeness and table manners are just as important at home as they are in public.

Never ignore or make excuses for inappropriate table manners – there are no “stages,” but there are plenty of testing behaviors. Focus on teaching children from the beginning the various manners expected of them so their demeanor when in public will be enjoyable and courteous.

5. Where to eat: Children can and should learn there are only a few places where it is appropriate to feed. There should be a designated area for eating with expectations consistently applied, i.e. sitting at the table. Allowing children to eat wherever they want will naturally lead to eating whenever they want and whatever they want. These lend themselves to intemperance and self-indulgence. Adults are to be their example and guide; their constant monitors. If a child decides to throw a tantrum because they did not get what they wanted, when they wanted, where they wanted, adults have a prime opportunity to teach appropriate behavior and thus help to build upright character traits in the young.

6. When to shop for food: The old adage is true: never go shopping when hungry! Avoid snacking while shopping and try to time shopping trips for when the children have been fed and rested. Engage children in conversation while moving through the store, explaining the process of selection and choice. Stay alert to the warning signs of inappropriate behavior so as to head it off quickly. Once finished with the shopping, be sure to compliment the children on their appropriate behavior and talk about any incidents that may have occurred. Purchasing a tangible reward for appropriate behavior is not necessary as appropriate behavior is an expectation. Besides, tangible rewards will not guarantee the future probability of appropriate public behavior. In fact, it may backfire and encourage inappropriate behavior during future shopping trip! What if the child misbehaves during a shopping trip? Remove the child from the public eye, even if that means leaving a grocery cart full of would-be purchases at the check out lane. Enduring inappropriate public behavior only allows the child a stage on which to perform and a quick exit will do much to help improve future shopping trips.

7. Learn more about healthy food choices. Be active in your own education of healthy foods. Consider organic fruits and vegetables, non-dairy products, meatless menu items. They impart nourishment to the body and give a power of endurance and vigor of intellect that are not produced by a diet of processed foods or foods saturated with insect repellents, additives, colorings and preservatives. Be wary when “professionals” say that calcium and protein can only come from animals. Remember, we are created beings and our Creator provided for all our needs within the natural realm.

By: Christine Gillan

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**Dates to Remember . . .**

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<tr>
<td>May 18</td>
<td>SECC Director's Meeting</td>
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<td>May 18—20</td>
<td>ECE Curriculum Review Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 20</td>
<td>Union CDC Advisory</td>
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<td>July 28—Aug 7</td>
<td>CCC Director's Meeting (specifies TBA)</td>
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<td>Sept. 28</td>
<td>NCC Director's Meeting</td>
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<td>Oct. 13</td>
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<td>Oct. 19</td>
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<td>Nov. 7—10</td>
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Julie Masterson, Editor (805) 413-7302