



May 2017

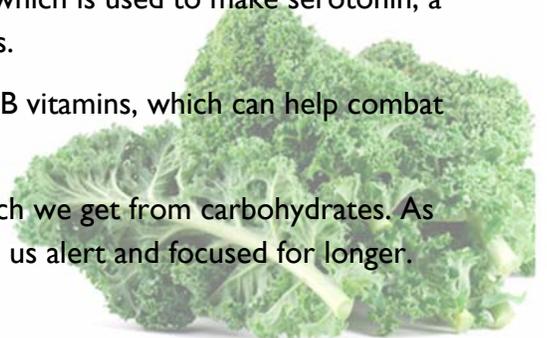
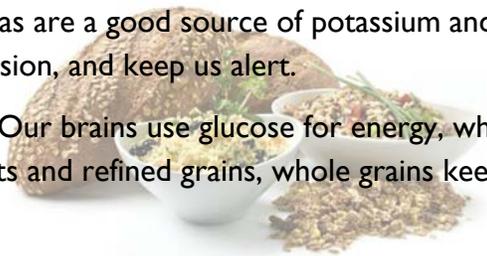
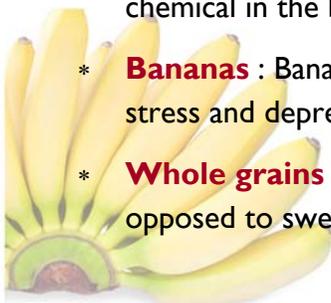
# Healthy Living With Head Start



## Good Mood Foods

A healthy mind is just as important as a healthy body. As May rolls in we start to get a preview of summertime sunshine. Make the most of this exciting time of year by learning how a healthy lifestyle can help you manage your mood, stay positive, and enjoy your days.

- \* **Fish** : Full of omega 3 fatty acids that fight depression, boost learning and improve memory.
- \* **Dark Chocolate** : A small amount of dark chocolate (in moderation) can boost endorphins in our brains, which make us feel happy.
- \* **Leafy Greens** : A good source of folate, which is shown to decrease depression, confusion, and can help increase your mood.
- \* **Turkey** : A good source of the amino acid tryptophan, which is used to make serotonin, a chemical in the brain that gives us happy, positive feelings.
- \* **Bananas** : Bananas are a good source of potassium and B vitamins, which can help combat stress and depression, and keep us alert.
- \* **Whole grains** : Our brains use glucose for energy, which we get from carbohydrates. As opposed to sweets and refined grains, whole grains keep us alert and focused for longer.



# Being Mindful of Mental Health

## Early childhood mental health is just another way to say **Social and Emotional Development**

Mental Health for young children means they are growing in their ability to understand and share feelings, have close and positive relationships, and explore the world around them. Just like keeping your body healthy, it is important to be mindful of social and emotional health. Make it a point to exercise your child socially and emotionally to help build these skills:

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expressing needs          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paying attention     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Managing emotions           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Solving problems          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Following directions | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Show interest and curiosity |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Getting along with others | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Overcoming adversity | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learning and exploring      |

As children grow keep in mind that these social and emotional skills will be the tools they depend on for their entire life. Help your child get ready for success in school now by focusing on these skills:

- \* Teach children how to **manage emotions** to help them to cope in difficult situations as they grow.
- \* Show your child how to **overcome adversity** to help them face their own challenges head on.
- \* Build your child's self-esteem to give them the confidence to **learn and explore** on their own.



### Fun ways to help your child develop their social and emotional skills:

1. **Play an emotion guessing game** - Hold a piece of paper in front of your face. Slowly lower it to reveal your face showing an emotion. Children guess the emotion you are feeling, and then show everyone their face with that same emotion. Then, talk about what might make you feel this way.
2. **Stop and smell the roses** - Help children learn how to take deep breaths by "smelling the flowers" and "blowing out the birthday candles." Knowing how to breathe deeply is an important part of learning how to calm down when a child is angry or upset.
3. **Happy helper** - When leaving the house, ask your child to help you carry things. Afterward, thank them for helping.
4. **Family BFF's** - Talk to your children about how families are like a special group of friends. Mention how you use kind words, share, and help each other just like with friends at school.



# DIY Solution Tool Kits

Learning how to solve problems effectively can be a difficult part of growing up. Help your family learn to find their own solutions with a solution tool kit. Just like a tool box, a child can use this as a resource when they are struggling to find the right tool to fix a problem in their life. Make sure to keep things simple and easy to understand with lots of pictures and bright colors.

## Materials Needed:

- \* Binder ring
- \* Paper/index cards
- \* Crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- \* Hole punch



## Directions:

- \* Cut paper into manageable sized squares (about 6 inches) or use blank index cards.
- \* Draw our pictures representing a solution on each page and write the a one or two word explanation (include your child in this so they are part of the solution planning).
- \* Help your child color and decorate each page while you talk about the different situations you may use the solutions for.
- \* If you are able, laminate the pages to make them last longer.
- \* Put a hole in the top left corner of each page and put all the pages on the binder ring to form a booklet.
- \* Pick a special place to keep the solution kit with your child, making sure it is easy for them to reach and put away.

# Making Mealtime Memories

## April Showers Bring May Flowers!

Kids are encouraged to take more bites of fruits and vegetables when you get creative with how you present them. Making animals, faces, and flower arrangements out of food is visually interesting and fun, both to eat and to create! This fresh, fun arrangement is full of vitamin C, fiber, and antioxidants to support your family's health.

### Ingredients

- \* Your favorite fruits:
  - Cantaloupe
  - Honeydew melon
  - Berries
  - Pineapple
  - Mango
- \* Wooden craft sticks
- \* A cup, jar or vase for display



Tip: To keep little helpers safe, cut fruit into shapes beforehand, arrange on a plate, and allow children to build their own flower arrangements.

### Directions

- \* Carefully cut melons in half and cut out large slices of fruit with no skin.
- \* Using a paring knife or cookie cutter, carefully cut into flower shapes, circles, hearts, diamonds, or any shape you like (get creative!)
- \* Using a second fruit, cut another shape that is slightly smaller, so that you can layer fruits on top of one another.
- \* Place your first fruit onto a craft stick, about 3 inches from the top.
- \* Place second, smaller fruit on top and place a berry on top to be the center of the flower.
- \* Mix it up by adding other fruits to your arrangement to make it colorful and delicious.



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Please contact Amy Nieves, Head Start Dental/Nutrition Specialist, with any questions or comments at (607) 433 - 8060

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