healthpoweredkids™

IT'S MEALTIME, RELAX AND ENJOY!

Today in class we talked about some of the benefits of slowing down when we eat and spending more time enjoying food. Here are some of them:

1. Healthy weight. There is good research evidence that eating slowly leads to eating less which leads to a healthier weight.
2. Better digestion. It takes our bodies time to break down food and take from it what we need. We can start the process off right by chewing well, which in turn leads to slower eating. More time between bites also gives time for our bodies to react to what we've already consumed.
3. Less stress. Eating slowly, and paying attention to our eating, can be a great form of relaxation and mindfulness. When we are in the moment, breathing deeply and fully, rather than rushing through a meal thinking about what we need to do next, we are taking good care of our whole selves, not just our bodies.

AT HOME ACTIVITY

As a family try some of these tips for eating slower at home.

1. Sit at a table to eat. Sitting down at a regular spot to eat tells your brain you are having a meal. If you eat on the run or while moving around doing something else you can quickly lose track of how much you've eaten and may not feel as satisfied.

2. Remove distractions. If you are doing something else like watching a show or reading while you eat, you can't focus on how much you are eating or how fast. Your pace will often be determined by the mood the activity puts you in.
3. Chew! You might think that you chew your food, but there's a good chance you are swallowing a lot of it whole. Ask your child about the chewing activity we did in class today.
4. Dim the lights. Just like with activity, your surroundings can have a big influence on your mood which in turn can impact your eating. Bright, harsh lights add tension and can make us feel rushed and agitated. Try dimming the lights and even playing some slow, relaxing music during mealtime and see what happens.

STRETCH!

Stretching is important at any age to allow joints to move through a full range of motion. Stretching can prevent injury, ease sore or tight muscles, promote better posture and encourages a healthy lifestyle.

Before stretching, warm up by doing some slow, whole body movements, like going for a five minute walk or marching in place, so muscles are easier to stretch. Stretch to the point of gentle pull, not pain. Stretching should feel good.

Allina Health

healthpoweredkids.org