

LETTER-TO-PARENTS

Eat smart at home



Dear Parents,

Hi, there! I am EatSmart Doggie. Everybody thinks that I am smart and stylish because I am very careful about what I eat and I only choose healthy food items. Let me share with you a few healthy eating tips.

Many of my friends become frustrated when their children are fussy about food. They would ask, "EatSmart Doggie, how can we make children less fussy about food and stay away from food that is high in salt, fat or sugar?" My response would be, "Parents, have you set an example for your children? Do you eat healthily at home?" Deeds speak louder than words. This is the key to teach children proper behaviour. Doing is far more effective than nagging.

Children love to imitate. Parents are naturally the best models for imitation. If you and your child(ren) put the following healthy eating principles into practice at home, your "good behaviour" and guidance will make it so much easier for children to acquire good eating habits.

1. Eat regular portions at regular hours, and make breakfast a habit.
(Research has shown that children who eat breakfast learn better!)
2. Eat different types of food. Avoid fussy eating.
3. Choose natural and 3 low 1 high (low salt, low fat, low sugar and high fibre) food.
4. Adopt healthy cooking methods (e.g. steaming, blanching, stir-frying with little oil, and baking, etc.).
5. When eating out, EatSmart dishes from EatSmart restaurants are good choices.
6. Avoid using food as reward or tool for expressing love. Many parents cheer up their children by giving them sweets resulting in dependency.

Make an impact beyond your home. You can help improve the eating environment at school and in so doing, influence other children and their families. Pay attention to meals provided at school and support your school to choose healthy ingredients and cooking methods. Through home-school cooperation, healthy eating environments could be created at home and in the school – kids will no longer be confused by inconsistent eating environments.

Indeed, effective parenthood does not come by easily. However, you will get there if you try hard.

Healthy life starts from an EatSmart home!



Best regards,

EatSmart Doggie



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Department of Health

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www.startsmart.gov.hk