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Feeding Toddlers: Creating a Peaceful Mealtime Lesson Objective

Time: **80 minutes**

New York State Parenting Standard: **Standard 1: Roles and Responsibilities,
Standard 2: Human Growth and Development,**

Aim: For students to gain appropriate expectations regarding toddler nutrition and food habits.

Objectives: Students Will:

- 1.) Learn what an appropriate serving size is for toddlers.**
- 2.) Identify solutions when a toddler refuses to eat.**
- 3.) Identify safety concerns of foods and toddlers.**
- 4.) Create a menu and make a snack appropriate for toddlers.**

Materials Needed:

Lesson outline, Handouts: “Day in the Life of a Toddler” How Much is a Serving?” and Food Guide Pyramid.

Feeding Toddlers: Creating a Peaceful Mealtime Lesson Outline

- I. Description of a Toddler: “The toddler- a short, cherubic, smiling, uncertain little person with an overhanging belly and a bulging behind”.
 - A. Students will take a “post-it” for the activity – On the post-it they will write a word that they feel describes a toddler.
 - B. The word toddler will be written on the board. The students will stick their post-it underneath. Words will be shared aloud to get a sense of the students’ perception of toddlers. (Usually there are at least a few, if not more, negative adjectives – sloppy, messy, cranky, terrible, etc.)
 - C. Why do toddlers get a bad rap?

- II. Overview of Toddler Development
 - A. Key Developmental Tasks
 1. Self-control
 - a. ability to control their own impulses
 - b. feeling that they can control events around them
 2. Language Development
 - a. Child discovers every object, action and relationship has a name.
 - b. parents/caregivers need to create opportunities for language imitation and growth – singing, talking, playing
 3. Fantasy and Play
 - a. children create characters and situations to express inner feelings
 - b. symbolic play – playing in response to images in their mind
Imitation – copy what they recall/remember not just what they see
 4. Locomotion/Activity
 - a. physical milestones – walking, running, climbing, dancing
 - b. safety is an important consideration

- III. Gaining Knowledge
 - A. Autonomy – movement, independence , level of activity
 1. Toddlers need to feed themselves, carry items, walk alone, ride a tricycle
 2. Parents/Caregivers need to be aware of dangers and be a step ahead

 - B. Nutrition/Feeding - important but parents/caregivers often have inappropriate expectations that cause problems and stress at mealtime.
 1. I will feed you; you’re making a mess.
 2. Finish everything on your plate.
 3. Eat your vegetables.
 4. No dessert until.....

- IV. Learn by Doing
 - A. Get a student to volunteer that is hungry.

1. Give them a very large mixing bowl and mixing spoon and pour a whole box of cereal into the bowl (you may or may not want to add milk)
 2. Ask them how they felt – overwhelmed, can't seriously eat all of this.
 3. Explain that this is how a toddler feels when we expect them to eat much more than a real serving size.
- B. Role –play various “toddler scenarios”, then as a class brainstorm some techniques that can be used to resolve the situations
1. Scenario - Toddler is trying to feed himself.
Solution – Provide appropriate food and/or utensils so they can try to feed themselves. Have the toddler wear a bib if a “mess” is a concern.
 2. Scenario - Toddler is refusing to eat.
Solution – Check portion size, time of day – Toddlers do better with smaller, more frequent meals.
 3. Scenario - Toddler is crying.
Solution – Toddler may be tired, ill, or just NOT hungry. Play some soft music and stay calm.
 4. Scenario – Toddler spits his food out and repeatedly puts his hands in his mouth.
Solution – Check temperature of food, if new food toddler may Not want to try.
 5. Scenario – Toddler repeatedly takes food and drops it on the floor.
Solution – Most older infants/toddlers realize they can control objects – dropping, throwing, rolling. Create a game and let the toddler drop toys into a pot/bucket on the floor. Realize that there will be some mess. Use a sheet or mat to make the clean up easier.
 6. Scenario – Toddler has eaten only peanut butter and jelly for two weeks.
Solution – That's O.K. This is nutritious and many toddlers go through spurts where they refuse to try something new and only want the same thing. Refer to the food guide pyramid for two year olds to ensure they are getting the recommended amount of servings.

V. Extend the Knowledge

- A. Key points when providing nutrition for toddlers.
 1. Recommended daily servings.
 2. Portion size or what counts as a serving.
 3. Nutrients/Nutritious value of the food consumed.
 4. Food Safety
- B. Using the Food Guide Pyramid and “How Much Is a Serving?” handouts to create a day of meals for a toddler. Students can work with a partner or in a small group.
 1. Reminder ** Safety needs to be a consideration. (Hot dogs, raw carrots, mozzarella cheese are choking hazards).
 2. Use the worksheet, A Day in the Life of a Toddler, to complete the assignment.
 3. Upon completion of the menu choose one of the creative snacks and write it on newsprint.
 4. Each student will vote on the list of snacks and the one that gets the most votes will be made in the following class.

A Day in the Life of a Toddler:

Breakfast:

Snack:

Lunch:

Snack:

Dinner:

Snack: