



Prevention of child overweight in the school setting Satter Feeding Dynamics Model

Maintain Satter's Division of Responsibility (sDOR) in feeding. Adults provide the *what, when* and *where of feeding*; children provide the *how much* and *whether of eating*.

1. **Maintain the structure of meals and snacks so children can do a good job with eating meals**
 - a. Provide school breakfast for all children.
 - b. For children through middle school, restrict drinks, munchies, and treats between times—even nutritious ones—so children can go to lunch hungry and ready to eat.
 - c. For elementary children, have recess before lunch to let children run off steam before they eat.
 - d. Give children at least 20 minutes of eating time *after they sit down* with their lunch.
 - e. For pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade children, provide nutritious, *sit-down* snacks *without other activities* midmorning and midafternoon.
2. **Reassure children that they will be fed in a timely fashion—and fed enough**
 - a. Make school meals a priority in the program day. Schedule lunch mid-day.
 - b. Offer meals that are adequate in energy for all children. Offer extra helpings of low-cost foods like breads and other starchy foods so children can fill up.
3. **Do considerate menu planning, but don't cater to the least common denominator**
 - a. Offer a variety of good-tasting food from which children can pick and choose.
 - b. Don't limit the menu to foods that children readily accept.
 - c. Pair familiar foods with unfamiliar, favorite with not-so-favorite.
 - d. Continue to offer foods that are rejected at first.
 - e. Acknowledge food acceptance, but don't push or be a cheerleader.
 - f. Use enough fat and salt so food tastes good and is satisfying.
4. **Make decisions about ala carte, vending machine, and school-store foods based on child development principles**
 - a. Grade-school and middle-school children are still forming their food habits and need adults to manage feeding structure and food selection.
 - b. High school children are working on autonomy and identity. They benefit from on-campus opportunities to experiment with food selection and structure.
 - i. Set and enforce policy about *where* adolescents will be allowed to eat and drink. Don't allow eating in classrooms, hallways, and other public spaces.
 - ii. Provide designated spaces for adolescents to do their between-meal eating and drinking.
5. **Provide children with social and emotional support for their eating**
 - a. All grownups—both at school and at home—support the school nutrition program, refrain from making derogatory comments, or displaying negative attitudes
 - b. Trusted adults introduce young children to the lunch room, teach them what to expect, and show them how to behave.
 - c. Trusted adults sit down and eat with younger children.
 - d. Teachers and other people in authority teach children to refuse food politely and otherwise behave respectfully with school nutrition personnel.
 - e. School nutrition personnel greet children pleasantly, take an interest in them, and maybe even know their names.
 - f. School nutrition personnel give children the opportunity to say “yes, please,” or “no, thank you.”
 - g. School nutrition personnel take no for an answer. They don't entice, persuade, or force children to take food they don't want.
 - h. School nutrition personnel recognize that rude food refusal likely comes from prior experience: Lack of learning opportunities or a history of fending off unwanted food.

Do developmentally appropriate nutrition education

1. With young children, do experiential programming. Expose them to new food.
 - a. Have hands-on classroom activities: Drawing, studying, growing, preparing.
 - b. Offer tastes, but give permission not to eat. Don't persuade, force, shame or cheerlead.
 - c. Repeatedly offer foods in the lunch room as children learn about them in class.
 - d. Assume that children will learn to make do with less-favorite foods.
 - e. Teach contextual lessons about food—what cultures eat what foods, where food comes from, how it is grown, how it gets to us.
 - f. Teach historical lessons about food—how it has figured in social and cultural patterns.
2. Teach food acceptance *skills*, including:
 - a. Remaining calm in the presence of new or disliked food.
 - b. Being confident they don't *have* to eat—or even taste.
 - c. Saying “no thank you.”
 - d. Sneaking up on new food—Look but not taste, taste but not swallow (use napkin), swallow but not take any more.
 - e. Reinforce children's intuitive awareness that their bodies know how to eat and grow.
3. Teach about intuitive capabilities with food regulation.
 - a. Support children's ability to eat based on feelings of hunger, appetite, and fullness.
 - b. Teach “everybody's different” with respect to energy needs, size, and shape.
4. Teach respect for diversity.
 - a. With respect to individual and cultural food preferences and traditions.
 - b. With respect to size and shape.
5. Wait until middle school to teach any systems of food selection.
 - a. Children begin thinking abstractly, can first apply nutrition principles at about age 12 years.
 - b. Even after that, taking leadership with food selection is grownups' job.

Maintain the division of responsibility with activity. Adults provide *structure, safety and opportunities*. Children choose *how much and whether to move and the manner of moving*.

1. Reassure children they will be allowed to move in ways that feel safe and comfortable.
2. Have recess and provide safe places for children to move around and play.
3. Take every child's body as a given, and don't try to slim children down or make them bigger or stronger.
4. Emphasize *participation* rather than skills or scoring.
5. Have physical education celebrate the joy of movement for *all* children.
6. In physical education class, avoid activities that favor more-talented children at the expense of less-talented, such as competitive activities.
7. Focus activities on finding what every child is good at and every child's body is capable of.
8. Encourage shy children and those who are physically over-cautious to try themselves out and find pleasure in movement.

Emphasize the division of responsibility in parent education, programming.

1. Teach and support the division of responsibility in feeding and activity.
2. Emphasize *providing*, not pressuring or depriving.
3. Emphasize and support the family meal in all education—with children as with adults.
4. Avoid competing with family mealtime with programming of extracurricular activities.

For more about feeding according to the Satter Feeding Dynamics Model, see Ellyn Satter's books, videos, and articles, published at www.EllynSatterInstitute.org.