Alabama A&M and Auburn Universities

Food Guide Pyramid for Young Children

- **Fats & Sweets**: Eat Less
- **Milk Group**: 2 Servings
- **Vegetable Group**: 3 Servings
- **Meat Group**: 2 Servings
- **Fruit Group**: 2 Servings
- **Grain Group**: 6 Servings

Check out this helpful Web site for more nutrition information: [www.usda.gov/cnpp](http://www.usda.gov/cnpp)
The Food Guide Pyramid for Young Children helps you feed your preschoolers so they grow and stay healthy. The Pyramid puts foods in five groups: grains, vegetables, fruits, milk, and meat. Each of these food groups has some, but not all, of the nutrients and energy children need. No one food group is more important than another. The small tip of the Pyramid shows fats and sweets. Go easy on these because they have a lot of calories from fat and sugars.

**Question:** How do I know if my child is eating enough?

**Answer:** Young children's appetites change from day to day based on how they are growing and how active they are. As long as they have lots of energy, are healthy, growing well, and eating a variety of foods, they are probably getting enough of the nutrients they need from foods they eat. Talk to your doctor if you are worried about your children.

**Question:** Is it okay for my child to eat between meals?

**Answer:** Most young children need a snack or two, plus their three meals a day. For simple snacks, try:
- peanut butter
- cheese spread or slices
- whole grain crackers
- nonsugar-coated, ready-to-eat cereals
- vegetables and fruits

To stop the risk of choking, change the form of the foods:
- Cut frankfurters into thin strips.
- Cut grapes in small pieces.
- Spread peanut butter thin.

**Question:** Should I worry about my child choking on food?

**Answer:** Always watch children during meals and snacks. Very young children, 2- and 3-year-olds and even 4-year-olds, can easily choke on some foods. These foods include:
- frankfurters
- chunks of meat
- chips
- raw celery
- nuts and seeds
- raisins
- whole grapes
- cherries with pits
- popcorn
- marshmallows
- pretzels
- large pieces of fruit
- raw carrots
- peanut butter (spoonfuls)
- round or hard candy

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