

## Phrases that HINDER and HELP

What you say has an impact on developing healthy eating habits. Negative phrases can easily be changed into positive, helpful ones!



### Phrases that *HINDER*

### Phrases that *HELP*

#### AVOID THIS...

*Eat that for me.*  
*If you do not eat one more bite, I will be mad.*

Phrases like these teach your child to eat for your approval and love. This can lead your child to have unhealthy behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs about food and about themselves.

#### SAY THIS...

*This is kiwi fruit; it's sweet like a strawberry.*  
*These radishes are very crunchy!*

Phrases like these help to point out the sensory qualities of food. They encourage your child to try new foods.

#### AVOID THIS...

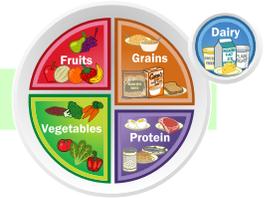
*You're such a big girl; you finished all your peas.*  
*Jenny, look at your sister. She ate all of her bananas.*  
*You have to take one more bite before you leave the table.*

Phrases like these teach your child to ignore fullness. It is better for kids to stop eating when full or satisfied than when all of the food has been eaten.

#### SAY THIS...

*Is your stomach telling you that you're full?*  
*Is your stomach still making its hungry growling noise?*  
*Has your tummy had enough?*

Phrases like these help your child to recognize when he or she is full. This can prevent overeating.



#### AVOID THIS..

*See, that didn't taste so bad, did it?*

This implies to your child that he or she was wrong to refuse the food. This can lead to unhealthy attitudes about food or self.



#### SAY THIS...

*Do you like that?*  
*Which one is your favorite?*  
*Everybody likes different foods, don't they?*

Phrases like these make your child feel like he or she is making the choices. It also shifts the focus toward the taste of food rather than who was right.

#### AVOID THIS...

*No dessert until you eat your vegetables.*  
*Stop crying and I will give you a cookie.*

Offering some foods, like dessert, in reward for finishing others, like vegetables, makes some foods seem better than others. Getting a food treat when upset teaches your child to eat to feel better. This can lead to overeating.

#### SAY THIS...

*We can try these vegetables again another time.*  
*Next time would you like to try them raw instead of cooked?*  
*I am sorry you are sad. Come here and let me give you a big hug.*

Reward your child with attention and kind words. Comfort him or her with hugs and talks. Show love by spending time and having fun together.

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