

Healthy food in early years

We all want our children to have a great start in life and along with early social interaction with their peers and a good education, a healthy lifestyle and diet can also significantly help our children to achieve.

The following information can help early years settings across the county to provide children with healthy and nutritious food.

Eat Better, Start Better

The Eat Better, Start Better programme is delivered by [The Children's Food Trust](#) and includes a great range of downloadable tools, including:

- Code of practice
- Menu planning
- Developing a food policy guide

To find out more, visit the [practical tools for early years settings webpage](#).

Additional information

Take a look at the handy [autumn / winter menu and recipes booklet for early years settings](#). It includes example menus, recipes and nutritional information.

The [healthy packed lunches for early years leaflet](#) offers some great practical tips for healthy, safe and tasty packed lunches.

Change4Life

The [Change4Life website](#) offers a range of information, recipes and fun ideas for helping children to stay healthy.

Additional information

Have a look at the tips for [healthier lunchboxes](#), [food facts](#) and [recipe ideas](#).

Infant and toddler forum

The [infant and toddler forum website](#) provides a wide variety of information about healthy eating for toddlers, including portion size and ten steps for a healthy toddler. There's also a range of [factsheets](#) available for health and childcare professionals, including:

- Healthy eating for toddlers
- Meals snacks and drinks for toddlers
- Protecting toddlers from tooth decay
- Overweight and obesity
- Why toddlers refuse food
- Toddler meals: How much do they need?

Additional information

Take a look at [Sam's story](#) and see how his eating habits develop as he gets older and the affect it has on his life.

Dental health

The food and drink we consume, especially as children, can have a major impact on our dental health. Every time a child has a sugary drink, the bacteria in dental plaque produce acid that attacks their teeth. It's important to reduce the amount and frequency of having food and drink containing sugar and only give sweet foods, including dried fruit, at mealtimes.

Additional information

To find out more about dental health and tips for cleaning teeth, take a look at the [healthy lifestyles dental health leaflet for 0 to 17 year olds](#).

To find out more about healthy eating for children, please contact:

Kristan Pritchard

Herefordshire Council's public health team

kristan.pritchard@herefordshire.gov.uk