

HEALTHY HABITS START EARLY Marie LoPresti RD, Senior Public Health Nutritionist-  
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An imaginary conversation between a year old and his mom

-Hi Mom! She is such a sweetheart, I love my mom!

-Good morning lovable! It is time for breakfast...

-I only hope that mom remembers what she learned at the nutrition office. The lady

Nutritionist said to get me a small training cup. I like that idea! I am ready!  
Mommy can

put my milk there and sometimes a little juice and when the meal is over she can  
put

water for me to have anytime. My friend Randy does not want to use the cup, but I  
guess his mom can try giving it to him later.

-Here is your bottle son while I prepare the rest of your breakfast.

-Gulp, gulp, and gulp!

-If mommy can only see that after this full bottle I am so stuffed! This is not going  
to be

pretty. Here she comes to try to feed me all that food. You know, the spoon is the  
airplane, my mouth the hangar! Picture this...food all over the place.

-Son, as soon as we are finished I am going to take you down to play.

\_Alright, I want to play. It is good for me so let me open the hangar. Let us get  
moving.

-Son you did it, but you do not look happy. What is the matter? Yeah, your belly  
looks

puffy. I think next time I am going to let you try using your own spoon as the

Nutritionist said. That way you can stop when you are satisfied. A small training cup  
for

your liquids is also something I need to get for you.

-Oh, thank you, mom. She remembered. The nutritionist said something about my appetite being less than before because I will not be growing as much this next year as I did my first 12 months. We are making progress here. I love the nutritionist, too! I wonder what she meant when she said not to give me sweets, liquid candy, and "junk" foods? I guess I will know about that later. Mommy, give me some water and help me brush my teeth!

Healthy nutrition choices and appropriate eating habits may come easy for many as the skills are handed down from their folks. On the other hand, it may be a skill to develop with the right nutrition information.

The Osceola County Health Department encourages families to take advantage of the various nutrition related programs available to the community. The Women Infants and Children Program (WIC) is a supplemental nutrition program that serves families within specific income guidelines. Besides receiving food vouchers for certain food items, the information shared by the staff of nutritionists will enhance your food knowledge and skills. Children between birth and five years of age, pregnant, women after giving birth, and breastfeeding moms may qualify for this excellent program. The number to call is (407) 343-2085 in Kissimmee or (407) 892-5574 in Saint Cloud (Tuesday through Thursday).

Another program of interest is Closing The Gap- A diabetes prevention and education program. Instructions in a group setting include: healthy nutrition for wellness, weight management, cholesterol, high blood pressure and diabetes control. School age children, teens and their parents can choose to participate in the "Smart Kids Program"-a weight management initiative. The number to call for reservation is (407) 343-2082 or (407) 343-2076. These activities are free of charge and are provided in English and Spanish.

The University of Florida, through their Extension Services, offers a variety of nutrition

related classes in the county. For information call (321) 697-3000.

Internet web sites of interest: [www.doh.state.fl.us/family/wic/index.html](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/family/wic/index.html),  
[www.nutrition.gov](http://www.nutrition.gov), and [www.diabetes.com](http://www.diabetes.com).