

**BRETA ALSTROM, RDN, LD**

# **YOU ARE HOW YOU EAT**

**Reinforcing Innate Feeding Behaviors**

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PEDIATRIC NUTRITION | FAMILY NUTRITION | INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE

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Pediatric Research

Pediatric Clinical Nutrition

Prenatal Nutrition

Eat With B the RD

# Discussion Flow

## TOPICS TO BE COVERED

Weight Determinants

Weight and Health

Feeding and Growth

Supporting Feeding Behaviors

TableTalk

Modeling Healthy Food Behaviors

# Objectives

## YOU WILL:

1. Learn 2 major ways weight impacts health
2. Develop age appropriate mini-meals
3. Develop activities that teach children about food and nutrition
4. Develop activities that allow children to explore foods and expand their palates

# Weight Determinants

## GENETICS

Your genes code for weight and size just as they control for height.

1

## RESTRICTION

Restricting food causes bingeing and other negative food behaviors later on.

2

## INCONSISTENCY

Yo-yo dieting can cause excessive weight gain and higher rates than before dieting.

3

## JUDGMENT

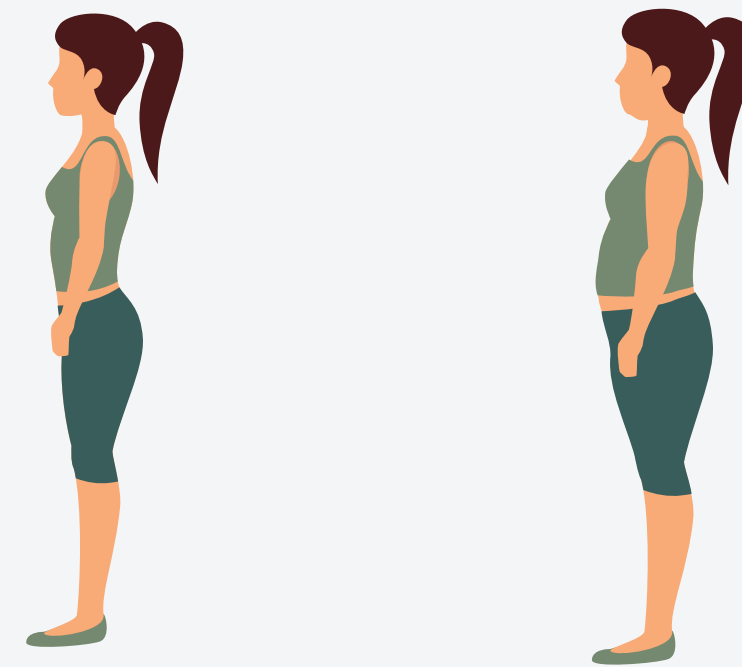
Weight judgments cause an increase in stress. Stress influences eating behaviors and biology.

4

# Weight and Health

## WEIGHT DOES NOT REFLECT HEALTH

- Weight is often used as a measure of health
- Other risk factors contribute more to adverse health effects
- Genetics, environment, stress levels, and nutrition status all play a role in weight control



Not better, not worse, just different

**Stress and chronic dieting result in higher mortality rates than overweight/obesity.**

# Parent's and Child's Weight

## CHILD WEIGHT

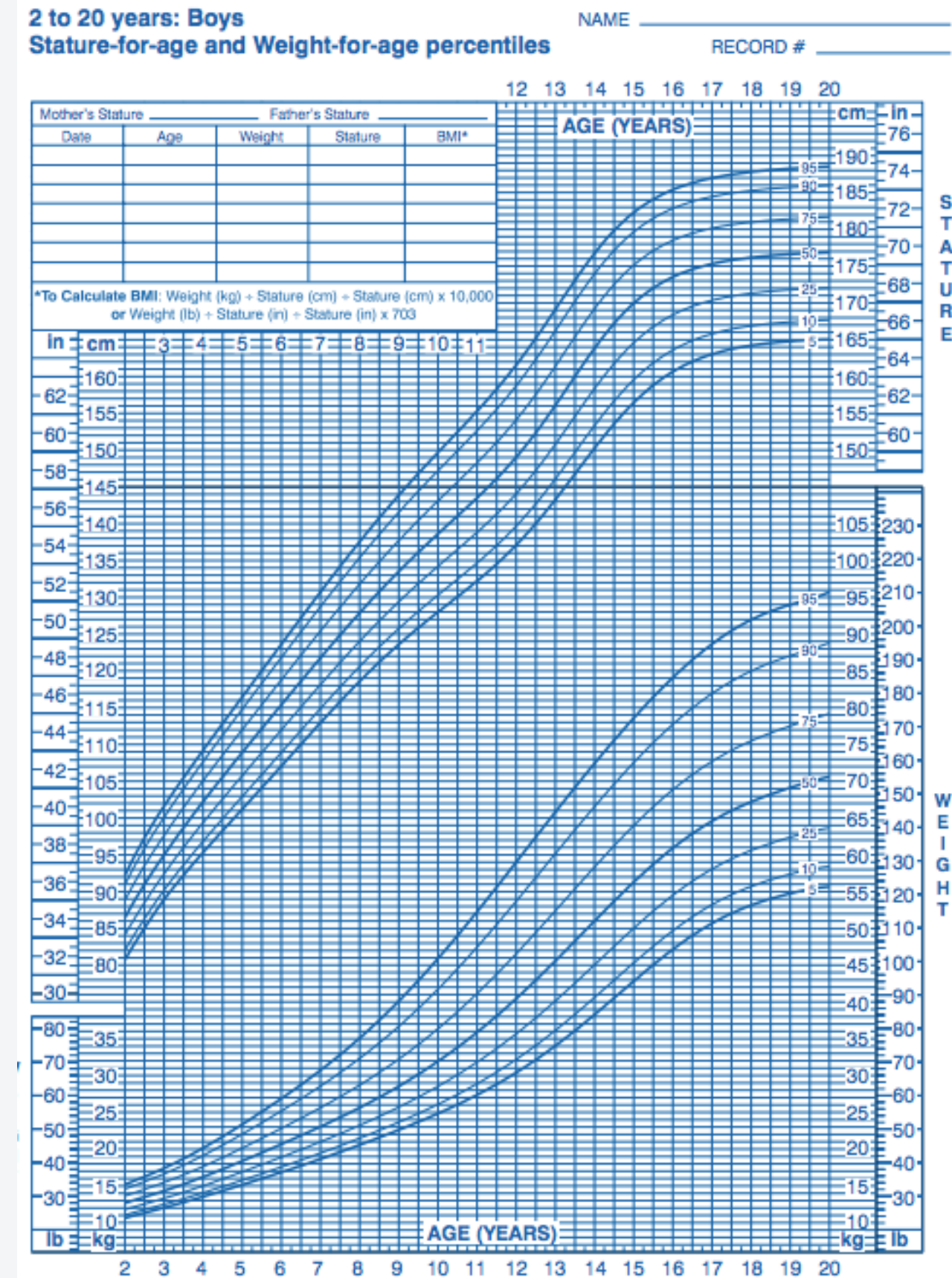
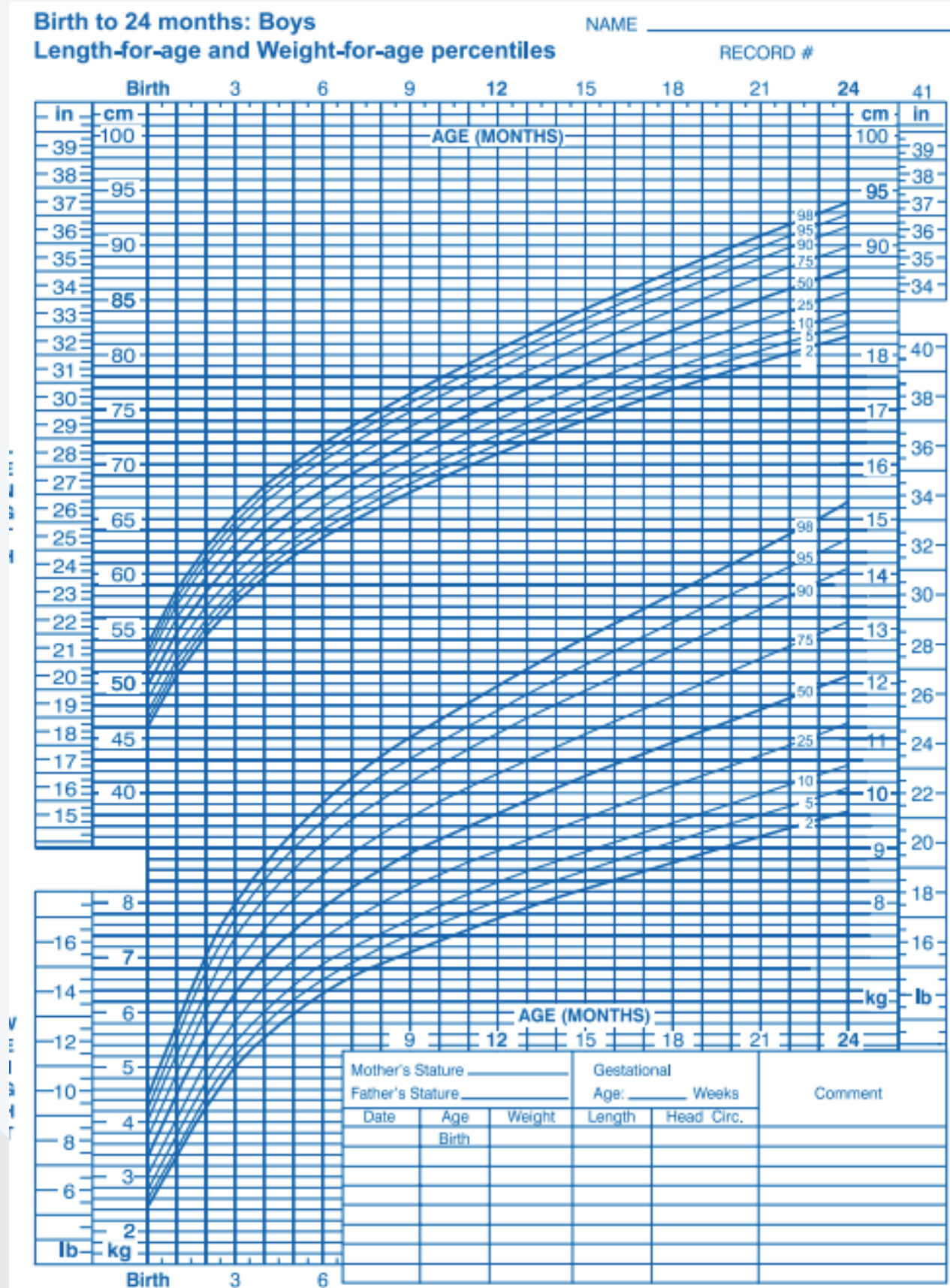
- Genetics
- Restriction
- Inconsistency
- Judgment

## PARENT REACTIONS

- Failure
- Their actions determine a child's weight
- Results in blaming the child
- Attempt to conform to societal norms



# Growth Charts





# Children Know How To Eat

## TRUST THEIR CHOICES

- We all have an innate sense of hunger and fullness
- Trust that a child knows what their body needs
- Mistrust comes from restriction and excessive control of eating and feeding behaviors



# How to Feed a Child

## TIMING

- 2-3 hours between meals and snacks
- 15-30 minutes for meal and snack completion

## ALLOW HUNGER

- Limit grazing
- Limit sugary drinks
- Stick to timeline

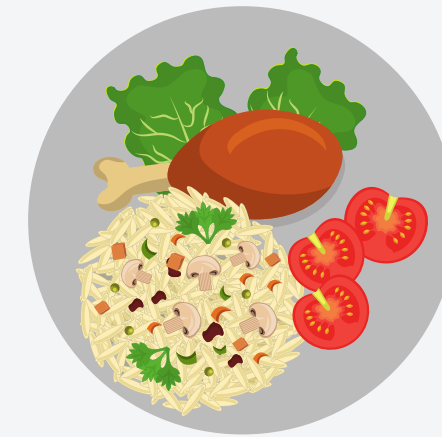
## KNOW YOUR ROLE

- Satter's Division of Responsibility (sDOR)
- Adult is responsible for what, when, and where
- Child is responsible for how much and if at all

# Division of Responsibilities- Adults

## WHAT

- You provide the plate of food
- Foods should be enjoyable
- Allow indulgence



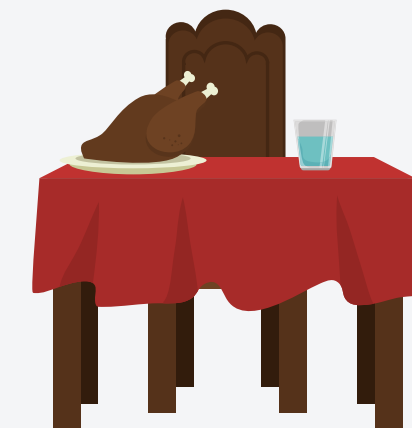
## WHEN

- Timing
- If a child refuses food do not provide food until the next scheduled feeding opportunity
- Consistency is key



## WHERE

- Table
- Distraction free



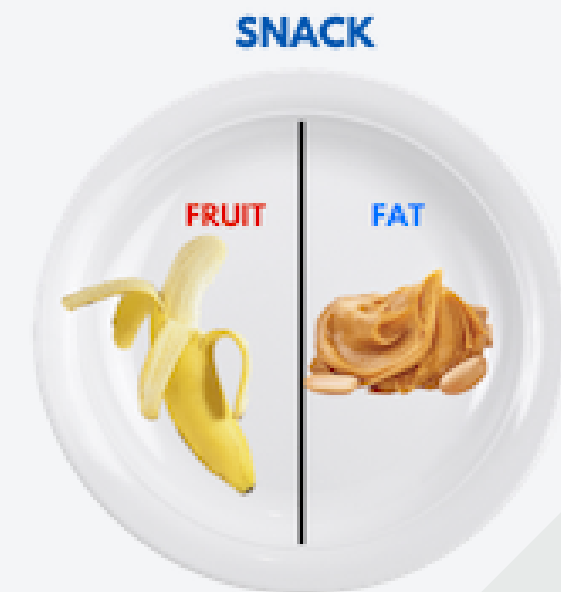
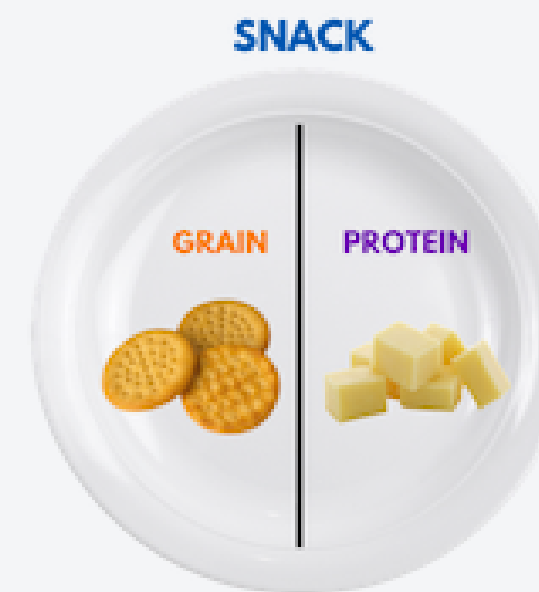
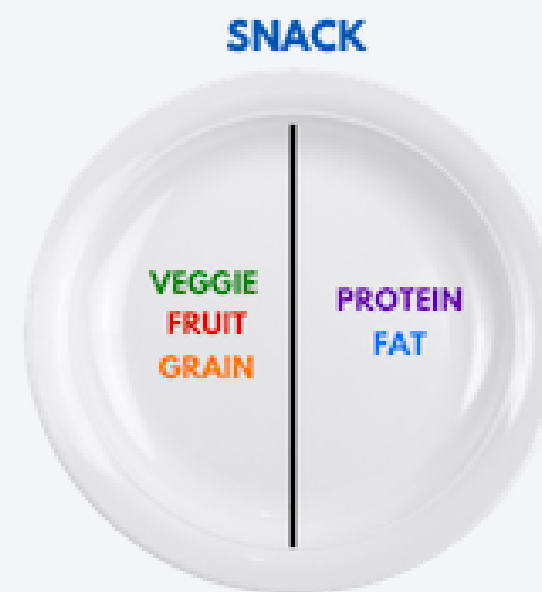
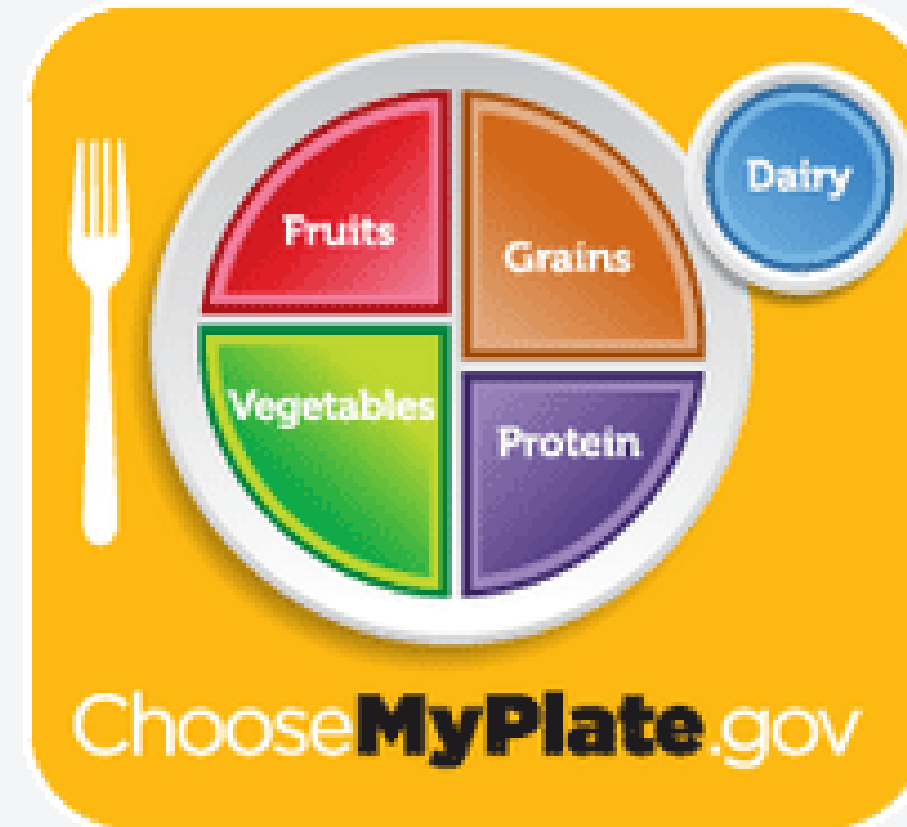
# Making Meals

## CREATING A MEAL

- At least 3 food groups
- Allow choice

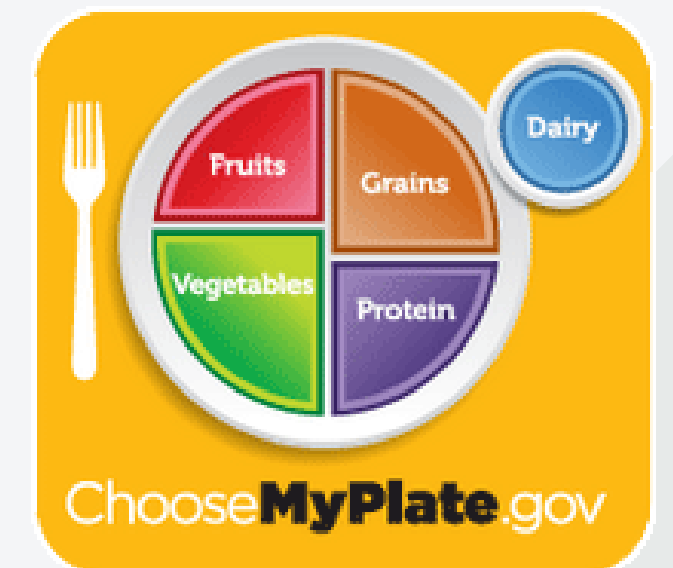
## SNACKS AS MINI-MEALS

- Pair a carbohydrate with a protein or fat
- Carbs are:
  - Fruits
  - Vegetables
  - Grains



# Carbohydrate

# Protein or Fat



# Division of Responsibilities- Child

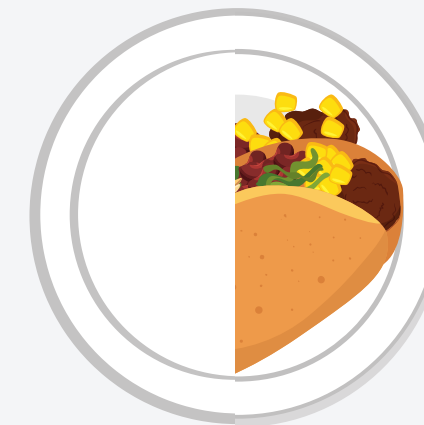
## HOW MUCH

- Do not require a certain food group is eaten first
- Respect hunger and fullness



## IF AT ALL

- Not obligated to eat
- No "one bite" rule



# Table Talk

**AVOID DEMONIZING**

**TEACH NUTRITION**

**ALLOW FOR  
EXPLORATION**

**DITCH THE DIET**

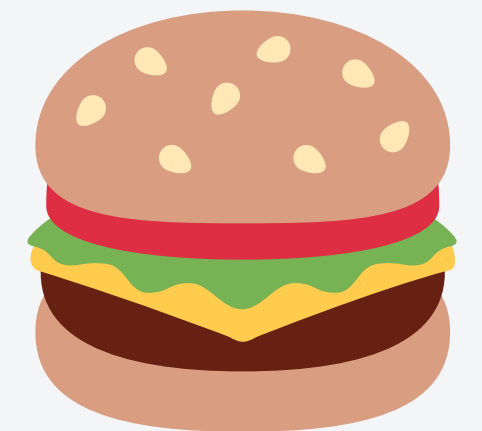
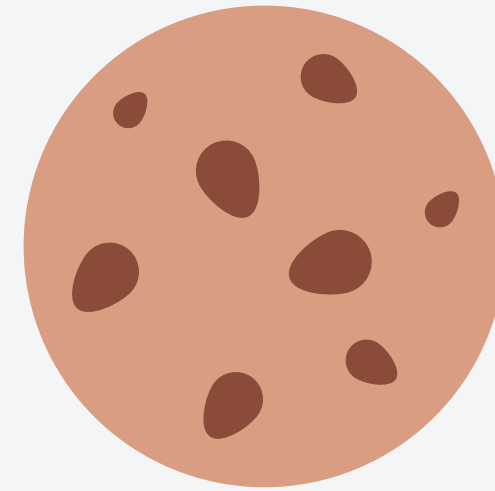
# Avoid Demonizing

## WHAT IT IS

- Using words and phrases that create negative perceptions around food
- Ideas that indicate food has negative health outcomes

## ALL FOODS FIT

- Avoid negative talk about food
- Find merit in all foods
- Allow sweets before veggies





# Teach Nutrition

## KEY CONCEPTS



### FOOD GIVES YOU ENERGY

What is the purpose of food?

Food provides energy for us to play and grow! Our bodies need energy for everything we do.



### ALL FOODS HAVE NUTRITION

Cookies, chips, burgers, salads, meat, beans, vegetables, fruits, etc.

All food has energy and nutrients necessary for life.



### FOOD IS MORE THAN NUTRITION

Why do we eat?

To live and grow, to celebrate and enjoy, to comfort and connect.

# Allow Exploration



## TRYING NEW FOOD

Providing opportunities for children to try new food will help expand a child's palate



## PLAYING WITH FOOD

Not all children are ready to try new foods. Allowing children to play with and do activities with food helps build familiarity.



## COOKING FOOD

Cooking experiences give children control over what they get to eat. Try using "build your own" recipes

# Ditch the Diet

## YOUR WORDS MATTER

- Avoid words and phrases that reflect negatively on food
- Affecting food and health perceptions

## YOUR BODY IMAGE MATTERS

- Children learn what is modeled for them
- Negative body image results in negative health outcomes

## YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH FOOD MATTERS

- Your food perceptions become a child's food perceptions
- Projecting food beliefs can be damaging



# Modeling Healthy Behaviors

**METHODS TO IMPROVE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH FOOD**

# Intuitive Eating

## WHERE TO START

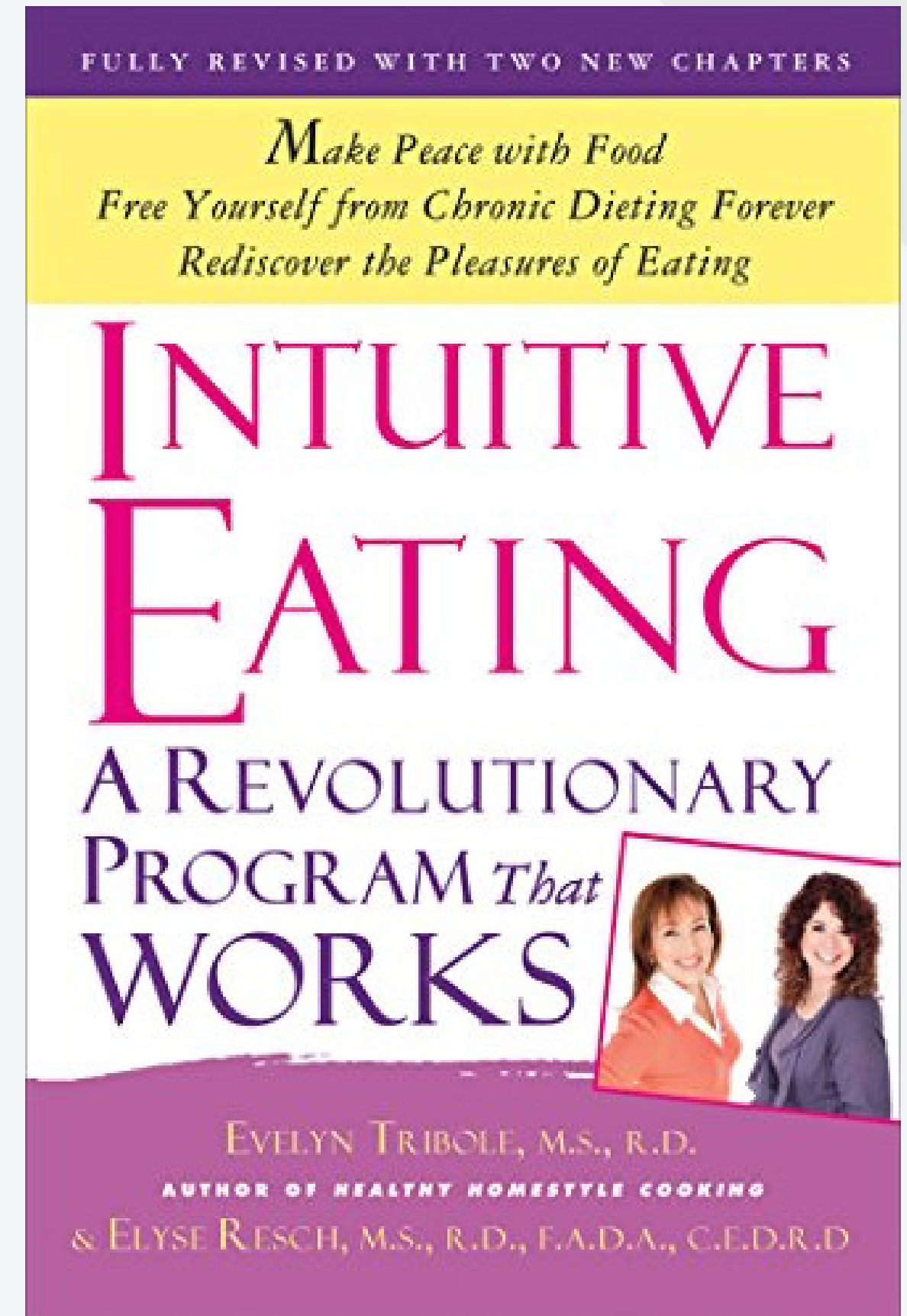
- Begin exposing yourself to intuitive eating concepts

## CHALLENGES

- Intuitive Eating may challenge prior food beliefs
- Weight may increase

## OUTCOMES

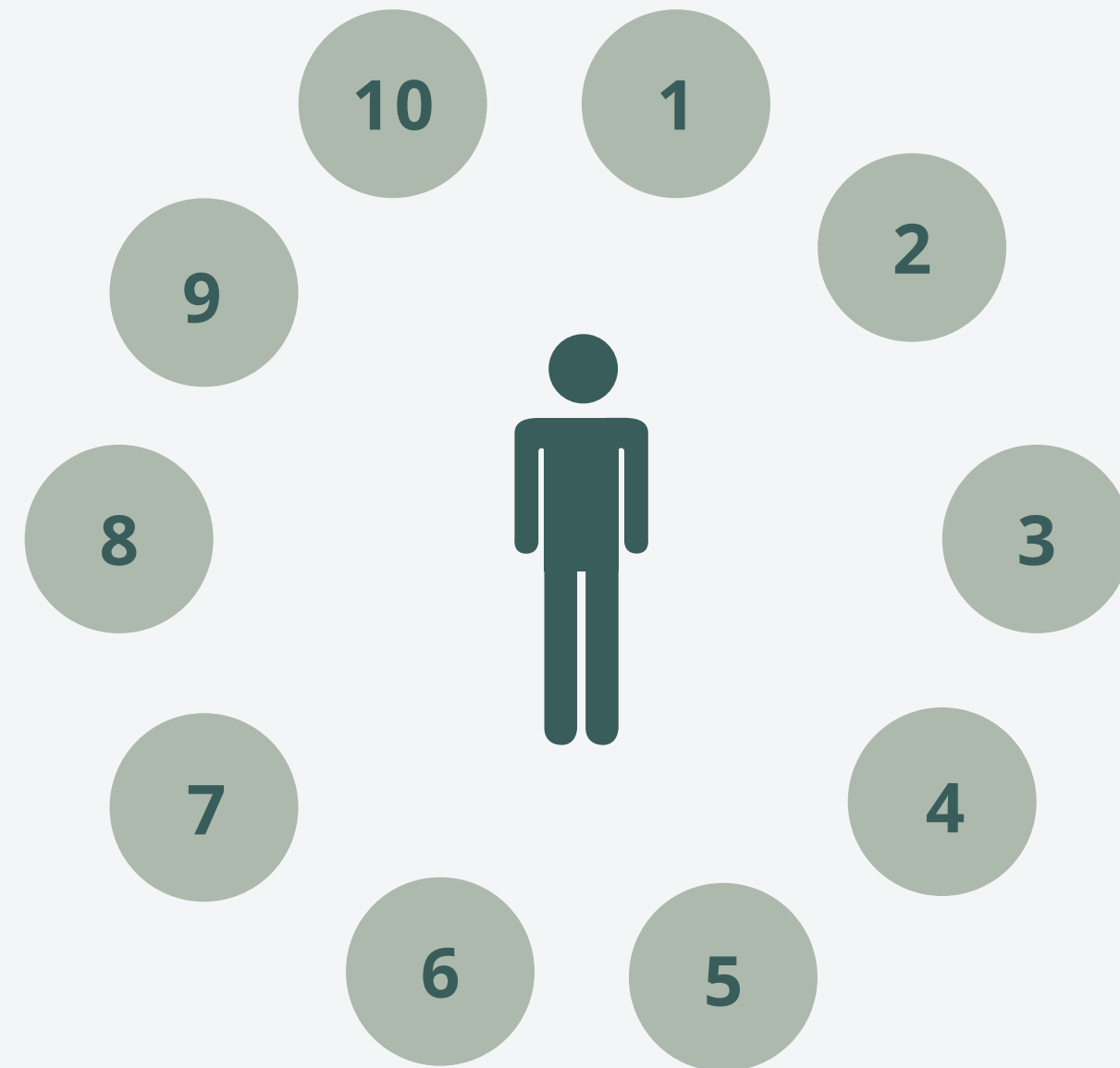
- Healthier relationship with food
- Less anxiety around eating
- Better mental and physical health outcomes



# Intuitive Eating

## IE PRINCIPLES:

1. Reject the diet mentality
2. Honor your hunger
3. Make peace with food
4. Challenge the food police
5. Feel your fullness
6. Discover the satisfaction factor
7. Cope with your emotions without using food
8. Respect your body
9. Exercise: feel the difference
10. Honor your health--gentle nutrition



# IE Contradictions

## PORTION CONTROL

- IE is not about limiting the amount of food on your plate
- IE is about listening to your hunger and fullness cues which may result in smaller portions

## EATING WHATEVER, WHENEVER

- IE is not about binging on junk food making you feel out of control
- IE is about knowing you CAN eat whatever whenever you want

## FREE PASS TO EAT LESS NUTRIENT DENSE FOODS

- IE is not a free pass to never eat a vegetable
- IE is about honoring your body's needs without judgment

# Child Nutrition vs. My Nutrition

**IT'S REALLY NOT THAT DIFFERENT!**

## CHILD NUTRITION

- Timing

## BOTH

- What to eat, if at all
- Meals with at least 3 food groups
- Mini-meals
- Intuitive Eating

## YOUR NUTRITION

- All Aspects of sDOR



# Thank You!

## QUESTIONS?

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