

# FOOD TO GROW ON

## *9 best-kept secrets for getting children to eat foods that are healthier for them*

Is mealtime often a nightmare when trying to get your child to eat healthy? Relax, it doesn't have to be this way. Eating is the one behavior your child truly does have control over, and that's okay, because after all we want our children to grow up to be assertive and independent, don't we?

As parents, we need to know that it is the CHILD that decides how much they will eat, and IF they will eat at all. Of course you want your child to eat the most nutritious foods possible, and thankfully, that is what you can control. It's you, the

PARENT that determines what your child eats, when they eat and where they eat. If meal time is a constant struggle for you as a parent, consider that your expectations might be too high. Just like any of us adults who may be resistant to change or trying new things, children are no different. The only way a child can learn to like a new food is by repeated exposure, which takes

anywhere from ten to twenty times. When offering new foods, it's best that the parent not make any comments about the new food. This can be hard to do, but as parents, if we tell the child he has to eat a specific food, we risk creating problems with feeding and distorting growth. Also resist the "clean plate" syndrome or the temptation of bribing your child with dessert. This can also create unhealthy eating habits and promote obesity. Never reward a child with food.

As a parent, we can sneak healthy foods like vegetables

