



EARLY CHILDHOOD

Smart Parenting

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI EXTENSION ■ MARCH 2011

Berry Brownie Pudding

Ingredients

- 4 cups whole milk
- 2 packages (4 serving size each) vanilla pudding mix
- 1 cup of 1-inch brownie pieces
- 2 cups sliced strawberries
- 1 cup blueberries

Preparation

1. Add milk to pudding mix and prepare according to directions on box (instant pudding may be substituted).
2. Place half of brownie pieces on bottom of a medium glass bowl and layer with half of vanilla pudding, 1 cup of strawberries and 1/2 cup of blueberries.
3. Repeat layers with remainder of ingredients. Serve immediately or cover and refrigerate.

(Source: *Midwest Dairy Council*)

Published in partnership with Parents as Teachers and LINC.

MU Extension contributors:
Marsha Alexander, Dr. Carole Bozworth,
Dr. Nina Chen, Kris Jenkins, Lynda
Johnson, Glenda Kinder, Susan Mills-
Gray, Diana Milne and Lisa Wallace.

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI
 **Extension**

Live. And Learn.

A Case for Whole Milk for Toddlers

Timing is important when switching to low-fat milk

Whole milk is a good option for toddlers over age 12 months who aren't breast-feeding and who aren't drinking a toddler formula. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), in their **Guide To Your Child's Nutrition**, these "young children need calories from fat for growth and brain development," and "this is especially important in the first two years of life."

Susan Mills-Gray, MU Extension nutrition and health specialist, notes that the only other real benefit of whole over low-fat milk is that many people think it tastes better, so if kids don't get used to low-fat milk and refuse to drink it, whole milk may be the only way that they will drink milk.

Whole milk might also be better if you have a very picky eater who isn't overweight and is simply not getting enough fat and calories from the rest of his diet. You don't want all of your child's calories to come from milk though, so talk to your doctor if you feel like you are in this situation.

Although the AAP touts the benefits of whole milk for younger toddlers, they do say that "after age 2, you can switch your toddler to skim or low-fat milk, like the rest of the family."

Is the difference between whole milk and low fat milk really that much of a difference? A quick comparison of milk

nutrition labels (per 8 ounce serving) shows that it really does:

- **Whole Milk - 150 Calories - 8g Fat**
- **2% Milk - 120 Calories - 4.5g Fat**
- **1% Milk - 100 Calories - 2.5g Fat**
- **Skim Milk - 80 Calories - 0g Fat**

So, if your 5-year-old goes from whole milk to 1% milk and typically drinks three cups of milk a day, he would save 150 calories a day. Although that doesn't sound like much, you gain about a pound for every 3500 calories you consume, and those extra 150 calories might cost your child an extra pound in body weight every three weeks or so (150 calories/day x 23 days = 3450 calories = 1 pound).

So what should you do? According to the AAP recommendations, if your toddler isn't going to continue breast-feeding, you should switch him to whole milk at 12-months-old. Next, switch to skim or low fat milk at two years of age.

Making the switch at an early age is much easier than when your child is older and more likely to be resistant to switching to low-fat milk. An early switch to low-fat milk also helps to ensure healthy habits for the rest of your child's life.



Get off the sofa and exercise!

The benefit of helping your kids to love to get moving? Lifelong health!

Active kids have a better chance of a healthy adulthood. Exercise is important for growing bones and developing muscles. According to Kris Jenkins, MU Extension human development specialist, "If your preschooler is spending more time on the sofa than the family dog, it's time to get him/her up and moving." Try a few of these fun, fitness activities for kids:

- **Walk like a duck.** This game works the brains and body! Give the child a specific animal to imitate. If your child doesn't know how it walks, demonstrate. If you have more than one child, set the game up like a race.
- **Mirror me.** An easier version of *Follow the Leader*. Make faces, touch your toes or stretch like a tree. Older preschoolers can follow as you hop or skip.
- **Singing Fit.** Choose songs with movements added and start singing. Some great choices are "Head and Shoulders, Knees and Toes" or "The Hokey Pokey." Speed up the songs as fast as you can to keep it fun for older preschoolers.
- **March On.** Create a family band to encourage movement. Use pot lids, a box and wooden spoons. Be creative. The kids will enjoy creating a racket as they march. Young preschoolers will be challenged to line up and march in time to the music. Older kids can do make a circle or march backwards..

Help your kids have fun with fitness. They will not just get fit, but they will burn off excess energy, develop coordination and learn to follow directions.

Sugar drinks can promote obesity

New research has found that nearly 1 in every 3 child in our country is at risk of being overweight. According to Glenda Kinder, MU Extension nutrition and health education specialist, "Being overweight is now the most common medical condition of childhood!" Complications of obesity include high cholesterol, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and many other health and social problems.

One study found that children who reduced sugar in their diet by the equivalent of one can of soda per day had improved glucose and insulin levels. This means that by eliminating one can of soda per day, you can reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes in your child, regardless of any other diet or exercise changes.

You might wonder if there are so many factors that

contribute to obesity, why are sugary drinks such a big deal? Sugary drinks are the main source of added sugar in the daily diet of children. Each 12-oz serving has the equivalent of 10 teaspoons of sugar.

"Between **56% and 85%** of children in school have at least one can of soda every day," add Kinder. These sugary drinks provide a lot of empty calories very quickly because it's easy to consume more than your body needs before your body signals can indicate you're full.

It's not just soda that is a concern; all types of sugary drinks are a problem. These would include, but are not limited to:

- **Fruitades:** lemonade, limeade, Gatorade
- **Fruit drinks:** Hi-C, Hawaiian Punch, Kool-Aid (100% fruit juice is a better choice, but juice should also be limited to

6 oz. per day for young children.)

- **Soda:** Coke, Pepsi, 7UP, Mountain Dew, Dr. Pepper
- **Energy Drinks:** Red Bull, Rockstar, Monster

For your child's health, eliminate sugary drinks at home. Just don't buy them! Replace with water, milk or real fruit/vegetable juices. Remember to encourage your child to drink lots of water.

Small changes every day can lead to success and healthier families.

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics and Centers for Disease Control

Bates County
1 N. Delaware, Butler, MO 64730
660.679.4167

Cass County
302 S. Main St.
Harrisonville, MO 64701
816.380.8460

Clay County
1901 NE 48th St.
Kansas City, MO 64118
816.407.3490

Henry County
100 W. Franklin, Room 16
Clinton, MO 64735
660.885.5556

Jackson County
1106 W. Main St.
Blue Springs, MO 64015
816.252.5051

2700 E. 18th St., Suite 240
Kansas City, MO 64127
816.482.5850

Lafayette County
14 E. 19th St., Suite 102
Higginsville, MO 64037
660.584.3658

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI
 **Extension**

extension.missouri.edu
equal opportunity/ADA institution

