

LET'S MOVE! Child Care

Fall season is harvest time.

Here's a tip!

Fall is the perfect time to serve fresh vegetables and fruits from the garden and orchard.



Hand in Hand Learning Center worked with volunteer Master Gardeners to plant a garden. Kids have fun being active in the garden and helping to maintain it, and they enjoy eating the fruits and vegetables they help grow. The garden is an extension of the classroom – it's used for learning about food, harvesting, and healthy habits. Throughout the year, parents are invited to garden with their children, teachers, and center staff. Kids experience new tastes and textures by trying a variety of foods such as cabbage, sweet potatoes, Swiss chard, kale, and spinach. They've also tried jicama, eggplant, zucchini, brussel sprouts, hummus, guacamole, Pico de Gallo, roasted vegetable pizza, and even baked tilapia.

At the **Neighborhood House Association (NHA) Head Start** in San Diego, CA, registered dietitian Kristine Smith, and the Nutrition Services chef overhauled the menu to make preschooler meals healthier. They switched from heat-and-serve style to one that involves producing all meals from scratch using fresh, whole, natural and organic ingredients. The center highlights a new fruit or vegetable every month through fun lessons and activities, like painting pictures of apples, reading a book on oranges or cooking a recipe with the featured produce. Try using the *Harvest of the Month* materials from the Network for a Healthy California, which include a variety of fun lessons and activities for young learners ages 2-5.

Here are more tips from [TXT4TOTS](#) on making vegetables and fruits from the harvest more appealing!

- 1 Make snack time fun. Cut up vegetables to make a face. Cherry tomatoes can be eyes, a carrot can be the nose, and a red pepper slice makes a great smile.
- 2 Fruits and veggies are healthy snacks. To prevent choking, cut grapes in half and chop carrots finely or into thin strips before giving to your child.
- 3 Check in with your childcare provider. Ask how many fruits and veggies your child is getting at daycare. Check the menu for ideas to make at home.
- 4 Make vegetables fun! When eating carrots, act like rabbits. Wiggle your noses and make rabbit noises. For menu ideas visit www.choosemyplate.gov.
- 5 Talk to your family about healthy food and drink choices for your child. Ask your parents how they introduced healthy choices to you and which ones you really liked as a child.

For other ideas and resources, check out the Let's Move! Child Care website at www.healthykidshealthyfuture.org.

For quick tips on healthy eating and activities, check out Let's Move! Twitter at <https://twitter.com/letsmove>.

For more information on TXT4TOTS, see <http://www.hrsa.gov/healthit/txt4tots/>.