

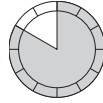
Lesson Plans — **Parent**

Session Four

Portion Size



Session 4 — Portion Size *50 minutes*



Learning Objectives

*Facilitator: These are for your preparation.
Do not read to parents.*

Parents/Caregivers will work to:

- 1) determine and serve appropriate portions for preschoolers;**
- 2) measure and compare portions sizes for adults and children;**
- 3) help children self-serve portions;**
- 4) set portion size goals for home.**

Learning SEEDS

- Children's stomachs are about the size of their fists.
- As a guide, for preschoolers, child portions are about one tablespoon per year of the child's life.

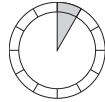


Materials Needed:

- Attendance sheet
- Parent goals poster
- Flip chart and stand
- Markers
- Video 7: "Child Portions" for Activity 4.1"
- Computer and projector
- Three child-size plates (*One with no marking, others marked: Child Plate 1, Child Plate 2*)
- Three 10-inch adult-size plates (*Marked: Adult Plate 1, Adult Plate 2, Adult Plate 3*)
- Printed instructions and questions for measuring stations for Activity 4.2 (*in large bold font and in a plastic sleeve or laminated to put on the table or hang on the wall*)
- Supplies for the measuring stations — Activity 4.2
- Serving spoon
- Two tablespoons
- Two 1/4 cup measuring cups
- Dried beans
- Uncooked rice
- Separate serving bowls for beans and rice
- Goldfish crackers, single servings (*2 packages*)
- Tablespoons to send home (*one for each family*)
- Child-size cups (*4 ounces; one for each family*)
- 1/4 cup measuring cups (*one for each family*)
- Things to Try at Home* cards for Session 4
- Pens
- Sticky note pads for tables



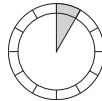
Welcome (5 minutes)



Welcome parents and caregivers back to the program.

Post the ground rules, review them briefly, and add any other suggestions to the list.

Check In About Last Session's Lesson (5 minutes)



Say:

“Last session we talked about the internal cues of hunger and fullness. We talked about the roles and responsibilities of the parent and child at mealtimes, and the challenges we face when we are responding to our children’s cues of hunger and fullness. At the end of the session, we reviewed **Observe, Talk, Try** for our *Things to Try at Home* activity.”

Say:

“At the end of the session we made plans to **Observe, Talk, Try** different things at home around mealtimes.”

Say:

“What were some of the things that you tried at home?”

Say:

“How did it go?”

Say:

“What did you notice?”

Say:

“How did it work for your family?”

Say:

“Let’s take a few minutes and share what you found out when you did the *Things to Try at Home* activity.”

Display goals poster.

Say:

“Here is our goals poster for today.”

Read the goals aloud to the parents.

Say:

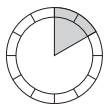
“Today we will work together to:

- explore how much three- to five-year-old children should be eating;
- measure and compare portion sizes for children and for adults, and;
- share ideas for helping children serve themselves recommended amounts of food.”

Anchor

Activity 4.1

Discussion and Video (10 minutes)



Say:

“Today, we’re going to talk about recommended portion sizes for preschoolers. We all have foods that we like to serve our children, yet we might not think about:

- **how much** we feel them or
- **how much they many have already eaten** during the day when we might not be with them.”



Ask:

“What do you think about or consider when deciding how much food should be on your child’s plate?”

Write the parents’ responses on a flip chart page.

Add**Say:**

“So how much do children really need to eat? Here’s a video about that.”

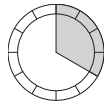
Start Video (Running Time: 5 min. 35 sec.)

[Video #7: “**Child Portions**”]

Information on child-size portions.

Apply**Activity 4.2**

Measuring Portion Sizes (20 minutes)

**Say:**

“Now you have a chance to practice measuring portion sizes. There are two stations set up with instructions to practice serving child-size portions. Please split up into groups of 3 or 4.

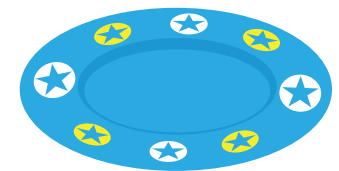
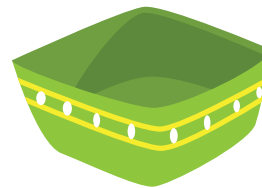
Say:

“Let’s have one group start at the food station and another group start at the snacks station. Follow the instructions at your station. You will have 5 minutes to practice measuring. When I call time, both groups will switch stations.”

Note to Facilitator: Move around to different stations to help parents read instructions and answer questions. If the group is very small (4 families), or if it is difficult to run two stations at the same time, have all participants begin at the foods station and complete the activity. Then, as the facilitator, READ the questions and lead the discussion. Move the group to the snacks station next and repeat this process.

FIRST STATION**Foods station:**

- Dry beans
- Uncooked rice
- 1 child-size plate
- 3 numbered adult-size plates (10-inch or larger)
- Measuring tablespoon
- Standard serving spoon
- 1/4 cup measuring cup



Instructions:

Printed in a bold large font (about size 26) and BULLETED or NUMBERED — possibly laminated or inserted into a binder sleeve and taped to the table or on the wall at eye level for easy reading.

- Using a regular serving spoon and Adult Plate 1, serve the amount of beans and rice that you would normally serve yourself on one plate and then what you would serve your child of the beans and rice on Adult Plate 2.
- Now, switch to the tablespoon and serve a child-size portion (*one level tablespoon of food per year of life*) onto Adult Plate 3.
- Measure the same portion that you did for Adult Plate 3 using 1 tablespoon of food per year of life and put this on the child-size plate.
- Next, use the 1/4 cup measuring cup to serve the beans and rice again on both the child-size and adult-size plates.

Questions:**Ask:**

“How did the portions you served yourself and your child compare?”

Ask:

“How did serving one tablespoon per year of life compare to your initial serving?”

Ask:

“How did the child-size serving look on the two different size plates?”

Ask:

“What will you do differently at home based on this experience?”

SECOND STATION**Snacks station:**

- Individual serving bag of crackers (*Goldfish*)
- Tablespoon
- Two child-size plates (*marked Child Plate 1 and Child Plate 2*)

Instructions:

Printed in a bold large font (about size 26) and BULLETED or NUMBERED — possibly laminated or inserted into a binder sleeve and taped to the table or on the wall at eye level for easy reading.

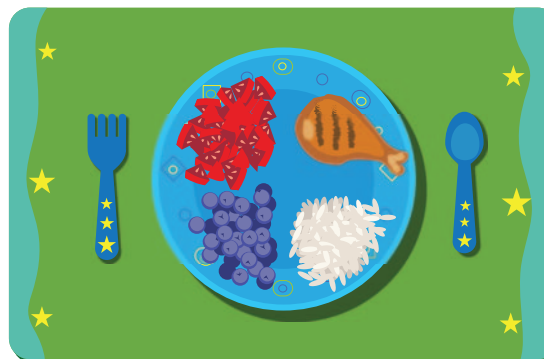
- Pour 1 full snack size bag onto Child Plate 1, or pour the recommended serving according to the package onto the plate.
- Using the tablespoon and Child Plate 2, measure out the snack for a 4-year-old child using the recommended 1 tablespoon per year of life.

Questions:**Say:**

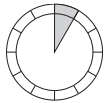
“How does the serving size on the package compare to the recommended serving for a preschooler?”

Say:

“What will you do differently when serving snacks to your children at home or on the go?”



Discussion (5 minutes)



Ask:

“What other foods could you measure using this method?”

Write parents’s responses on a flip chart — share examples such as yogurt, pudding, cooked cereal, combination foods like tuna salad or casseroles, scrambled eggs, etc.

Ask:

“Are there foods that might not work using this method?”

Write parents’s responses on a flip chart — share examples such as bread, tortillas, crackers, string cheese, cooked meat, liquids, etc.

Ask:

“What other ways could you measure out these foods?”

Write parents’s responses on a flip chart — share examples such as using child-size cups (4 oz) for liquids and child-size plates for foods, serving small amounts of food, or cutting foods into small pieces.

Note to Facilitator: In case of questions from parents that go beyond what is included in this session, let parents know that several resources are available to help support preschool feeding. Write this resource on the flip chart:
<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/browse-by-audience/view-all-audiences/children/kids>

If possible, print out some pages from this website (or other appropriate USDA website) and distribute to parent. Include the web address on the handouts.

Note to Facilitator: For questions you are unable to answer, it is important NOT TO GUESS or use personal anecdotes or advice. Instead, you could say:

“I don’t know the answer to that. Let me write your question down after class and follow up with you at our next session after I talk with the state nutrition team to get more information for you.”

Say:

“You have shared several ideas. Remember, it’s okay to start with small servings on child-size plates using 1 tablespoon of food per year of life.”

Say:

“Remember, though, that these recommendations are just a starting point — young children’s appetites change from day to day.”

Say:

Remember that it’s the child’s job to determine HOW MUCH to eat, so if your child doesn’t eat it all, that’s fine, and if your child wants more, have him or her put some more on the plate.”



Say:

“Another suggestion that was made in the video was to create opportunities for children to serve themselves at meal and snack times.”

Ask:

“What are your thoughts about children serving themselves?”

Ask:

“How many of you think that your children serve themselves outside of the home at places such as school?”

Say:

“Head Start and many other child care centers are required to allow children to serve themselves.”

Ask:

“What do you think some of the benefits of children serving themselves might be?”

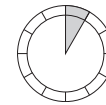
(Examples: Children eating the right amounts when parents aren't around; independence and self-confidence)

Ask:

“What do you think some of the challenges might be when children are allowed to serve themselves?” *(Examples: Children might spill food; children might take too much because they like the food.)*

Ask:

“What are some strategies for dealing with these challenges that allow children to still be able to serve themselves?” *(Examples: Use child-friendly utensils or plate; stop children when they have served enough and say that if they are hungry when done, they can take some more food later.)*

Away**Try at Home** (5 minutes)

Hand out the *Things to Try at Home* cards.

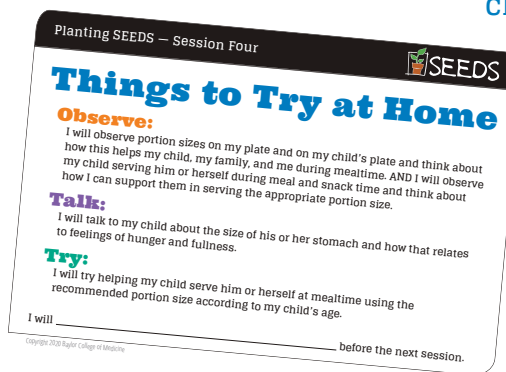
Say:

“I’m passing out the *Things to Try at Home* cards. This is a chance to take what we have talked about in this session and make a plan for something you can work on before our next session. I’m also passing out a child-size cup for you to take home to use for

serving drinks to your child, as well as a tablespoon and a 1/4 cup measuring cup for you to use in serving your children or allowing them to serve themselves.”

Say:

“Here are some examples to help you start thinking about what you would like to try at home before our next session.”



1. **“Observe:** I will **observe** portion sizes on my plate and on my child’s plate and think about how this helps my child, my family, and me during mealtime. AND I will **observe** my child serving him or herself during meal and snack times and think about how I can support them in serving the appropriate portion size.”
2. **“Talk:** I will **talk** to my child about the size of his or her stomach and how that relates to feelings of hunger and fullness.”
3. **“Try:** I will **try** helping my child serve him or herself at mealtime using the recommended portion size according to my child’s age.”

Say:

“Choose one of these or come up with an idea of your own. You might have noticed that there are two examples of things to observe before our next session. How many of you will allow your child to serve themselves at some point before the next session? When you do this think about how you can support your child in serving him or herself the appropriate portion size and we will share how things went then we meet next time.”

Say:

“On the other side of this card is a reminder of some of the strategies that we learned today that can help you as you feed your child during the time before our next session.”

Read the Learning SEEDS out loud.

Say:

“Learning SEEDS:

- 1 Children’s stomachs are about the size of their fists.
- 2 As a guide, for preschoolers, child portions are about one tablespoon per year of the child’s life.”

Pass out child portions handout from the USDA website to parents.

Say:

“Here is a handout for this session that has some reminders about children’s portion sizes that we have talked about today.”

Say:

“Take the handout home to use with your family. See how it goes and talk about it with your family. Think about what worked. What didn’t work as well? If there was a challenge, what do you think you would do differently the next time you used these ideas?”

Say:

“Remember to post your cards on your refrigerator. Also, use the card as a reminder of some of the strategies that we discussed today and of the plans you made to **Observe, Talk, or Try.**”

Developed by The SEEDS Research Team, Baylor College of Medicine Children’s Nutrition Research Center and Washington State University Extension.
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Illustrations: Brian White

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