

**Healthy Ever After: Kids!**  
Torrance Memorial Medical Center  
and Torrance Unified School District  
Prepared by Emily Parker, MS, RD

**Session 3c: “Why do you eat?”**  
**Kindergarten through Second Grade**

- I. **Objectives:** Following this session, students will be able to:
  - a. Explain why our bodies need healthy food.
  - b. Name at least two external influences on our foods choices (i.e. family, friends, media, advertisements, aroma/presence of food, etc.).
  - c. Name at least two factors that influence personal food choices (i.e. hunger, fullness, taste preference, etc.).
  - d. Describe body signals of hunger and fullness.
  - e. Discuss ways to make sure we fully enjoy our food.
- II. **Instructor:** Classroom teacher and/or parent docent
- III. **Target Audience:** Students in kindergarten, first grade, and second grade classes of Torrance Unified School District
- IV. **Setting:** Classroom or School Cafeteria/Assembly Room
- V. **Materials:**
  - a. Visual Aid Pictures
  - b. Snack Items - Honey Sticks
    - i. Napkins
    - ii. Sample cups
  - c. Coloring Sheets, Crayons/Markers
- VI. **Total Session Time:** 30-45 minutes
  - a. **Lesson Time:** 15-30 minutes
  - b. **Snack Time:** 5-10 minutes
  - c. **Activity Time (Optional):** 10 minutes
- VII. **Preparation**
  - a. Review Notes, Practice Lesson
  - b. Collect/Compile Materials
  - c. Snack (per TUSD Registered Dietitian)

## VIII. Lesson Outline

- a. Introduction
  - i. Instructor introduction(s) using fruit/vegetable name(s) (i.e. “Linda Lime”).
  - ii. Explain that today we are going to talk about WHY we eat and how to ENJOY our food.
  - iii. Today’s topic: “*Why do you eat?*”
- b. Review Lesson 2C Fabulous Flavor, transition to “Why We Eat” topic
  - i. “*Who remembers what we did in our last session?*”(Talk about creating flavor with herbs and spices, onion and garlic – Show Herbs and Spices slide)
  - ii. “*Has anyone tried any new flavors recently?*”
  - iii. “*Well, today we are going to think about WHY we eat, and how to ENJOY our food. What do you think of that idea?*” (Allow kids to respond.)
- c. External and Internal Eating Cues
  - i. “*So, first, let’s take a look at this picture.*” (Show “Reasons We Eat” slide) “*It shows some of reasons we might eat. What do you notice here?*” (Hunger, Television, Friends, Family, Time, Advertisements (mention with TV), Emotions (i.e. happy celebration)...) “*That’s right. Sometimes we eat because it is **time** to eat, like when lunch time comes. Our **bodies** also tell us when we are hungry, like when our stomach’s growl before we eat. Other times we eat because our family is having a meal, or because it is a celebration with friends. Sometimes the things we see on television make us want to eat a food. I even know some people who eat because of feeling bored, sad, happy, or upset.*” (Engage with students if they have comments or questions.)
  - ii. “*Here are some other things that help us decide if and when to eat.*” (Show “More Reasons We Eat” slide) “*If we **see** a food we like, or we **smell** something cooking, or maybe we **hear** a food package being opened or a food sizzling on the stove (or we hear a song that reminds us of a food, like a food ad on TV or the ice cream truck coming through our neighborhood), if we keep **thinking** about a food we might decide to eat it, and of course, if we like how a food **tastes** or **feels** in our mouth, then we will probably enjoy eating it.*”
- d. Food Preferences
  - i. “*Now we all have different ideas and preferences about food – that means we each like and dislike different things. Can you think of a food that **looks** good to you?*” (Allow children to respond.) “*How about one that maybe doesn’t look so good to you?*” (Allow children to respond.)
  - ii. “*Can you think of a food that **smells** good to you?*” (Allow children to

- respond.) *“How about one that maybe doesn’t smell so good to you?”* (Allow children to respond.)
- iii. *“Can you think of a **sound** that you like that has to do with a food?”* (Allow children to respond.) *“How about a food sound that maybe doesn’t sound so good to you?”* (Allow children to respond.)
  - iv. *“Is there a food that you **think** about?”* (Allow children to respond.)
  - v. *“What food do you especially like to **taste** or **feel**?”* (Allow children to respond.)
  - vi. *“Wow. Thanks for sharing your ideas with me. It is fun to learn about people’s food preferences. The great thing about food likes and dislikes is that they **change**. If you don’t like something today, you might like it another day. (Move to “Try Something New!” slide) That’s why it is always a good idea to try new things – our tongues and minds change sometimes! One day you might give a food a “THUMBS DOWN” or an “Okay,” and another day you might give it a “THUMBS UP!””* (Share a personal example if you have one.)
- e. Eating Because Our Bodies Need Food
- i. *“Now with all of these reasons to eat. Do you think we should **always** eat whenever one of these reasons comes up?”* (No. Let children respond.)
  - ii. *“Good thinking. We don’t always actually **need** to eat every time we see a food that looks good, or we think about a food we like. Our bodies only need a certain amount of food, and as we all know, our bodies should mostly have healthy ALWAYS foods to eat.”*
  - iii. *“So, when do we know that it really is a good idea to eat?”*
  - iv. *“First, it’s a good idea to eat when our stomachs are telling us we are hungry. (Move to “Eat Because Your Body Tells You To” slide) That means our bodies need some energy or we need food to help us grow. Do you remember some healthy ALWAYS foods that can give us energy and help us grow?”* (Fruits, grains, nuts/seeds, milk/yogurt, turkey, fish, chicken, beans, vegetables, etc.)
  - v. *“The other reasons we might eat, like if we are bored or see an ad on TV, or because we feel angry, are not always actually healthy reasons to eat. (Move to “Think Twice About Eating If...”)* *If our bodies do not actually need food, but we eat anyway, it can hurt our bodies. It’s like trying to fill up a car gas tank that is already full – not a good idea...So, the next time you find yourself wanting to eat something because you feel bored or see it on TV, ask yourself if your stomach is really hungry, or if you are just wanting the food because of the ad or your emotions.”*
  - vi. *“So, let’s practice. (Move to “Let’s Pretend” slide) Let’s pretend you are sitting at home, feeling a little bored. You just had a healthy snack and your*

*stomach feels comfortable after eating. You start to get a little bored. “Hmmm,” you wonder, “What can I do?” Then you start thinking about a SOMETIMES food. Now, is it really time to eat a sometimes food?” (No. You just had a healthy snack.) “So, it’s okay to think about that sometimes food for a minute, but then it’s a good idea to remind yourself that you just had a snack and that maybe you are thinking about the sometimes food because you are bored.”*

- vii. *“Now. When you are bored, what other things could you do besides eat?” (Move to “If You’re Bored, Try…” slide; Allow children to share ideas: draw, read, play outside, play a game, play with a pet, etc.)*
- viii. *“Great thinking. And, if you want to eat a food just because you see it, smell it, or hear it, does that mean your body needs it?” (No.)  
“That’s right. We want to check in with our stomachs and our bodies to make sure we are really hungry before we eat, especially if we are wanting to eat a SOMETIMES food. Thinking twice before we eat helps us take care of our bodies.”*

f. Fullness Cues

- i. *“Now. Let’s pretend that you are enjoying a healthy lunch of your favorite ALWAYS foods. How do you know when to stop eating?” (Allow children to respond.)*
- ii. *“Good ideas. (Move to “Eat Just Enough” slide) If our stomachs start to feel a little full (not stuffed), or we just feel like we’ve had enough and don’t need anymore, it’s a good time to stop. It can take up to 20 minutes for our stomachs to tell us we have had enough to eat. So, it’s best not to gobble up our food or eat in a rush. We don’t always need to finish everything on our plates or in our lunch boxes. It’s okay to save some food for later. If we can’t finish our meal all at once, the best thing to do is to eat our leftovers as a snack or meal at another time. (Move to “No Need to Eat It All” slide) If we keep eating even when we are full we might get a stomach ache, or feel uncomfortable. Has that ever happened to you?” (Allow students to respond.)*
- iii. *“Remember, some days our bodies need more food and some days they need less food. (Move to “Respect Our Bodies” slide). It’s important that we listen to the hunger and fullness signals our bodies and stomachs send to us so that we can stay healthy and grow. Eat when you are hungry. Stop eating when you’ve had just enough. And, make sure you are eating because your body needs energy, not just because you are bored, or you see something that looks good.”*

g. Fully Enjoying our Food

- i. *“Well, the last thing we are going to talk about today is ENJOYING our food. Does anyone say “MMMM!” or “Yummm!” when you are eating your favorite food? If so, you are practicing ENJOYING your food!”* (Share a personal example, or allow kids to explain if time.)
- ii. *“It’s a great idea to enjoy our food because it makes us feel happy and it helps us eat the amount of food our bodies need.”*
- iii. *“So, here are some tips to help us enjoy our food* (Show “Enjoy Your Food” slide):
  1. *Take a Look at It Before You Eat It! Notice the shapes, colors, sizes.*
  2. *Think about it – where did it come from? Who made it?*
  3. *Be Grateful – be glad you get to have the food to help your body grow and have energy. Be thankful!*
  4. *Slow down a little when you eat – taste your food! If we rush, we might not really taste what we eat. And, we might eat too much.*
  5. *Turn off the TV or other screens when you eat – focus on the meal and the others around you. That way you can really taste the food!*
  6. *Does anyone else have any ideas about enjoying your food?”* (Allow kids to share; share any ideas you have.)
- iv. Closing
  1. *“Great job today! We learned all about why we eat. There are a lot of reasons we might want to eat – not all of them mean we really need to eat. It’s best to be sure we really are hungry before we eat. And, it’s okay to stop eating when we feel just a little full. No need to keep eating until we’re stuffed. And, when we do eat, let’s take the time to ENJOY our food!”*

IX. **Special Treat:** (Honey Sticks) – You can use the Mindful Eating Exercise with this “Honey Tasting.”

- i. *“Now we are going to enjoy one of nature’s sweet treats: honey! Do you remember how honey is made? Has anyone tasted honey before? Each of us gets one half of a honey stick. Let’s savor the flavor!”*
- ii. Distribute snack (1/2 honey stick per child)
- iii. Enjoy honey, talk about flavor, practice tasting new things, etc. Remind kids to rinse their teeth with water after eating the honey.

X. **Optional Activities (if time/interest):** “Who is Enjoying His Food?,” “Fun Things To Do” , “Sonia’s Food Messages” Sheet

- a. Distribute one or two coloring sheets to each child

- b. Distribute crayons/markers as needed
- c. Encourage children to talk about foods they enjoy, things they like to do to relax and pass the time.

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**Session 3c: “Why do you eat?”**  
**Third through Fifth Grade**

**VII. Objectives:** Following this session, students will be able to:

- a. Explain why our bodies need healthy food.
- b. Name at least two external influences on our foods choices (i.e. family, friends, media, advertisements, aroma/presence of food, etc.).
- c. Name at least two factors that influences personal food choices (i.e. hunger, fullness, taste preference, etc.).
- d. Describe body signals of hunger and fullness.
- e. Discuss ways to make sure we fully enjoy our food.

**VIII. Instructor:** Classroom teacher and/or parent docent

**IX. Target Audience:** Students in kindergarten, first grade, and second grade classes of Torrance Unified School District

**X. Setting:** Classroom or School Cafeteria/Assembly Room

**XI. Materials:**

- a. Visual Aid Pictures
- b. Snack Items – Honey Sticks
  - i. Napkins
  - ii. Sample cups
- c. Activity Sheets

**XII. Total Session Time:** 30-45 minutes

- a. **Lesson Time:** 15-30 minutes
- b. **Snack Time:** 5-10 minutes
- c. **Activity Time (Optional):** 10 minutes

**XI. Preparation**

- a. Review Notes, Practice Lesson
- b. Collect/Compile Materials
- c. Snack
  - i. Docents/teacher/children need to wash their hands before handling beverages
  - ii. Per TUSD Registered Dietitian

## XII. Lesson Outline

- a. Introduction
  - i. Instructor introduction(s) using fruit/vegetable name(s) (i.e. “Linda Lime”).
  - ii. Explain that today we are going to talk about WHY we eat and how to ENJOY our food.
  - iii. Today’s topic: *“Why do you eat?”*
- b. Review Lesson 2c Fabulous Flavor, transition to “Why We Eat” topic
  - i. *“Who remembers what we did in our last session?”*(Talk about creating flavor with herbs and spices, onion and garlic – Show Herbs and Spices slide)
  - ii. *“Has anyone tried any new flavors recently?”*
  - iii. *“Well, today we are going to think about WHY we eat, and how to ENJOY our food. What do you think of that idea?”* (Allow kids to respond.)
- c. External and Internal Eating Cues
  - i. *“So, first, let’s take a look at this picture.”* (Show “Reasons We Eat” slide) *“It shows some of reasons we might eat. What do you notice here?”* (Hunger, Television, Friends, Family, Time, Advertisements (mention with TV), Emotions (i.e. happy celebration...)  
*“That’s right. Sometimes we eat because it is **time** to eat, like when lunch time comes. Our **bodies** also tell us when we are hungry, like when our stomach’s growl before we eat. Other times we eat because our family is having a meal, or because it is a celebration with friends. Sometimes the things we see on television make us want to eat a food. I even know some people who eat because of feeling bored, sad, happy, or upset.”* (Engage with students if they have comments or questions.)
  - ii. *“Here are some other things that help us decide if and when to eat.”* (Show “More Reasons We Eat” slide) *“If we **see** a food we like, or we **smell** something cooking, or maybe we **hear** a food package being opened or a food sizzling on the stove (or we hear a song that reminds us of a food, like a food ad on TV or the ice cream truck coming through our neighborhood), if we keep **thinking** about a food we might decide to eat it, and of course, if we like how a food **tastes** or **feels** in our mouth, then we will probably enjoy eating it.”*
- d. Food Preferences
  - i. *“Now we all have different ideas and preferences about food – that means we each like and dislike different things. Can you think of a food that **looks** good to you?”* (Allow children to respond.) *“How about one that maybe doesn’t look so good to you?”* (Allow children to respond.)
  - ii. *“Can you think of a food that **smells** good to you?”* (Allow children to



- respond.) *“How about one that maybe doesn’t smell so good to you?”* (Allow children to respond.)
- iii. *“Can you think of a **sound** that you like that has to do with a food?”* (Allow children to respond.) *“How about a food sound that maybe doesn’t sound so good to you?”* (Allow children to respond.)
  - iv. *“Is there a food that you **think** about?”* (Allow children to respond.)
  - v. *“What food do you especially like to **taste** or **feel**?”* (Allow children to respond.)
  - vi. *“Wow. Thanks for sharing your ideas with me. It is fun to learn about people’s food preferences. The great thing about food likes and dislikes is that they **change**. If you don’t like something today, you might like it another day. (Move to “Try Something New!” slide) That’s why it is always a good idea to try new things – our tongues and minds change sometimes! One day you might give a food a “THUMBS DOWN” or an “Okay,” and another day you might give it a “THUMBS UP!” Has anyone experienced that?”* (Let kids share. Share a personal example if you have one.)
- e. Eating Because Our Bodies Need Food
- i. *“Now with all of these reasons to eat. Do you think we should **always** eat whenever one of these reasons comes up?”* (No. Let children respond.)
  - ii. *“Good thinking. We don’t always actually **need** to eat every time we see a food that looks good, or we think about a food we like. Our bodies only need a certain amount of food, and as we all know, our bodies should mostly have healthy ALWAYS foods to eat.”*
  - iii. *“So, when do we know that it really is a good idea to eat?”*
  - iv. *“First, it’s a good idea to eat when our stomachs are telling us we are hungry. (Move to “Eat Because Your Body Tells You To”) That means our bodies need some energy, or some building blocks to help us grow. Do you remember some healthy ALWAYS foods that can give us energy and help us grow?”* (Fruits, grains, nuts/seeds, milk/yogurt, lean protein, vegetables, etc.)
  - v. *“The other reasons we might eat, like if we are bored or see an ad on TV, or because we feel angry, are not always actually healthy reasons to eat. If our bodies do not actually need food, but we eat anyway, it can hurt our bodies. That’s called MINDLESS EATING (Show “Mindless Eating” slide). It’s like trying to fill up a car gas tank that is already full – not a good idea...(Move to “Think Twice About Eating If...” slide) So, the next time you find yourself wanting to eat something because you feel bored or see it on TV, ask yourself if your stomach is really hungry, or if you are just wanting the food because of the ad or your emotions.”*

- vi. *“So, let’s practice. (Move to “What If..” slide) Let’s imagine you are sitting at home, feeling a little bored. You just had a healthy snack and your stomach feels comfortable after eating. You start to get a little bored. “Hmmm,” you wonder, “What can I do?” Then you start thinking about a SOMETIMES food. Now, is it really time to eat a sometimes food?” (No. You just had a healthy snack.) “It’s okay to think about that sometimes food for a minute, but then it’s a good idea to remind yourself that you just had a snack and that maybe you are thinking about the sometimes food because you are bored.”*
- vii. *“Now. When you are bored, what other things could you do besides eat?” (Move to “If You Are Bored Try...” slide; Allow children to share ideas: draw, read, play outside, play a game, play with a pet, etc.)*
- viii. *“Great thinking. And, if you want to eat a food just because you see it, smell it, or hear it, does that mean your body needs it?” (No.) “That’s right. We want to check in with our stomachs and our bodies to make sure we are really hungry before we eat, especially if we are wanting to eat a SOMETIMES food. Thinking twice before we eat helps us take care of our bodies.”*

f. Fullness Cues

- i. *“Now. Let’s pretend that you are enjoying a healthy lunch of your favorite ALWAYS foods. How do you know when to stop eating?” (Allow children to respond.)*
- ii. *“Good ideas. (Move to “Eat Just Enough” slide) If our stomachs start to feel a little full (not stuffed), or we just feel like we’ve had enough and don’t need anymore, it’s a good time to stop. . It can take up to 20 minutes for our stomachs to tell us we have had enough to eat. So, it’s best not to gobble up our food or eat in a rush. We don’t always need to finish everything on our plates or in our lunch boxes. It’s okay to save some food for later. If we can’t finish our meal all at once, the best thing to do is to eat our leftovers as a snack or meal at another time. (Move to “No Need to Eat It All” slide) If we keep eating even when we are full we might get a stomach ache, or feel uncomfortable. Has that ever happened to you?” (Allow students to respond.)*
- iii. *“Remember, some days our bodies need more food and some days they need less food. (Move to “Respect Your Body” slide) It’s important that we listen to the hunger and fullness signals our bodies and stomachs send to us so that we can stay healthy and grow. Eat when you are hungry. Stop eating when you’ve had just enough. And, make sure you are eating because your body needs energy, not just because you are bored, or you see something that*

*looks good.”*

g. Fully Enjoying our Food

- i. *“Well, the last thing we are going to talk about today is ENJOYING our food. Being MINDFUL eaters. Does anyone say “MMMM!” or “Yummm!” when you are eating your favorite food? If so, you are practicing ENJOYING your food! You are being more MINDFUL!”* (Share a personal example, or allow kids to explain if time.)
- ii. *“It’s a great idea to enjoy our food because it makes us feel happy and it helps us eat the amount of food our bodies need.”*
- iii. *“So, here are some tips to help us enjoy our food* (Show “Enjoy Your Food” slide):
  1. *Take a Look at It Before You Eat It! Notice the shapes, colors, sizes.*
  2. *Think about it – where did it come from? Who made it?*
  3. *Be Grateful – be glad you get to have the food to help your body grow and have energy. Be thankful!*
  4. *Slow down a little when you eat – taste your food! If we rush, we might not really taste what we eat. And, we might eat too much.*
  5. *Turn off the TV or other screens when you eat – focus on the meal and the others around you. That way you can really taste the food!*
  6. *Does anyone else have any ideas about enjoying your food?”* (Allow kids to share; share any ideas you have.)
- iv. Closing
  1. *“Great job today! We learned all about why we eat. There are a lot of reasons we might want to eat – not all of them mean we really need to eat. It’s best to be sure we really are hungry before we eat. And, it’s okay to stop eating when we feel just a little full. No need to keep eating until we’re stuffed. And, when we do eat, let’s take the time to ENJOY our food!”*

XIII. **Treat:** (Honey Sticks) – You can use the “Mindful Eating Exercise” guidelines for this “Honey Tasting”

- i. *“Now we are going to enjoy one of nature’s sweet treats: honey! Do you remember how honey is made? Has anyone tasted honey before? Each of us gets one half of a honey stick. Let’s savor the flavor slowly, MINDFULLY!”*
- ii. Distribute snack (1/2 honey stick per child)
- iii. Enjoy honey, talk about flavor, practice tasting new things, etc. Remind kids to rinse their teeth with water after eating the honey.

- b. Optional Activities (if time/interest)
  - i. “My Fun Things to Do Menu”
  - ii. “Who is Enjoying His Food?”
  - iii. “Sonia’s Food Messages”