





What a Good Eater! Playbook
Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Troubleshooting Picky Eating	3
Strategies to Raise a Good Eater	4
Herbs and Spices: A Shortlist to Get Started	5
FREE Recipe: No-Cook Baby Gazpacho	8
FREE Recipe: The Iron Chicken Dance	9
Thank you	10



What a Good Eater! Playbook Introduction

"Food is our greatest medicine, and herbs and spices are food. They provide the body with micronutrients needed to fuel the activity of every cell in our body, antioxidants to protect each cell and organ that make us healthy and strong, along with many other, previously unnamed compounds being 'discovered' daily that help our organs to function healthfully. I think they also help introduce our children to what real, earth-given food tastes like and help to bring delicious flavor to our food, encouraging healthy eating of whole, unprocessed foods. Generally speaking, food that is healthy and safe for an adult is healthy and safe for a baby, in small amounts." Naturopathic Doctor Stephanie Mottola for What a Good Eater!

First, thank you for signing up for our mailing list. We are simply two moms with a simple idea, which was to feed our families healthy, flavorful foods from the start. We wondered: how can we safely feed our babies natural, healthy foods from the beginning that actually have flavor? Can't we offer our babies first foods that aren't processed/bland/stripped of nutrients? Is there a way to introduce them to the flavors of the world, with confidence – and without having to cook separate meals for the entire family? We were so excited to discover that yes, we could in fact do that and more, and it didn't have to be complicated. That the more we became comfortable and confident using herbs and spices, the more we were bettering the health of our babies – and our entire families. We feel as though we stumbled into a secret garden that we'd now like to share with the world, which is exactly why we've created our book...





We think it's pretty simple: herbs and spices add flavor, broaden our palates, and provide micronutrients that help our bodies become – and stay – healthy. We've discovered that incorporating them into our babies' foods early on is not only safe, but can be very beneficial to them, and is an excellent way to introduce flavors and prime their palates from the beginning.

As you know, our book is now available for pre-order (you can pre-order a copy here: <http://amzn.to/28ZI9U6>). And as a thank you to you for joining our list, we'd like to give you our FREE playbook containing recipes, great information, and a sampling of herbs and spices we feature in our book along with their health benefits and ideas for how to use them in your kitchen every day. We hope you find this information useful.

Thank you, from the bottom of our hearts and the backs of our spice cabinets, for being a part of our project!

Sincerely,
Alessandra Macaluso and Amy Godiwalla
Co-Authors of the *What a Good Eater! Cookbook*
www.whatagoodeater.com



“Picky eating” is a common issue among babies and toddlers. It is important to realize that phases of picky eating are almost a certainty, but there are strategies to minimize it, making it more of a phase that children go in and out of versus something more permanent.

Since every child is different (so different!), we consulted Registered Dietitian Lindsey McKeon to provide us with her favorite tips and tricks to minimize picky eating as much as possible. Here is what she recommends:

- 1) **Be patient with new foods.** Young children must touch, smell, and explore new foods. In order for your child to feel comfortable eating something, the child has to become familiar with the food.
- 2) **Encourage your child to explore the food.** Let her squeeze it between her fingers and play with it (let go of wanting to clean her up so quickly, it really helps her learn).
- 3) **Offer small amounts when introducing a new food.** You do not want the child to feel overwhelmed.
- 4) **Try, try again!** Repeat exposure to a new food. Some research has even stated that a child must be presented with a new food 20 times before showing any interest to taste a food.
- 5) **Lead by example.** Let your child see what you are eating, and let him see you enjoying the food. This is actually a better tip than telling your child, “Eat your (fill in the blank) so you’ll get strong!”
- 6) **Get kids involved.** If they are old enough, let them help you measure out the ingredients or stir the mixture. Plant a garden, let them see how food grows, water the plants with them, and pick the herbs, fruit, or vegetables that have grown. Take them to the grocery store and let them help you pick out foods.
- 7) **Cut foods into cool shapes.** You can use molds or cookie cutters when trying new foods. Also, there are numerous cool, fun, interactive plates and silverware.
- 8) **Don’t be a short-order cook.** Many kids will hold out because they know you will eventually give in and prepare the food they want.
- 9) **Respect tiny tummies.** Offer a nibble plate of each food—do not force-feed.
- 10) **Minimize distractions.** Sit down to eat, and have conversation or play soft music. Turning out the lights or dimming the lights can provide a calm environment. We are too anxious that our children will starve, so this can be a helpful reminder for parents to remember to remain calm.



Use the three choices rule: Provide a three-sectioned plate consisting of three foods in small quantities to start. Make sure at least one food is something that you *know* your toddler will eat and enjoy. For example, if you know your toddler *loves* strawberries, place a few bite-size pieces of strawberries in one section on the plate and two other options, such as chicken and broccoli, in the other compartments. Your toddler may dive in and go straight for the strawberries, and that's OK! If she asks for more strawberries without touching the other two foods, encourage her to at least try the chicken and broccoli first. Celebrate with her if she does. Even one bite is a win!

Expose your kids to different foods: Try less common vegetables, fruits, etc. like papaya, mango, kiwi, beets, turnips, etc. Don't be afraid if it's something new – you will find many surprisingly easy to prepare!

Expose your kids to different flavors early on: Use herbs and spices to add flavor and broaden your baby's palate. (Safe for 8 months plus, watch for allergies, as you would with any new food.) Start slow by adding herbs/spices to favorite foods: a little cinnamon to mashed banana, some minced sage with sweet potato, a sprinkle of ginger to butternut squash, etc.

Try, try again! Kids like food they are familiar with, so it's up to us as parents to make them familiar! Repeat exposure to a new food. Some research has even stated that a child must be presented with a new food 20 times before showing any interest to taste a food. If they don't like broccoli today, try again tomorrow, next week, or a month from now. Multiple exposures are key.



HERBS AND SPICES: A SHORTLIST TO GET STARTED

Basil: Basil is believed to be a powerful antioxidant with antibacterial properties. It offers a healthy dose of vitamin A, vitamin K (one teaspoon of basil supplies 85 percent of your daily vitamin K intake!), manganese, and magnesium and is a rich source of calcium, potassium, and iron. It's no wonder it's known as "the king of herbs"!



How to use it: For the little babies, start simple. Take two fresh basil leaves and finely mince them, then stir them into a favorite puree such as butternut squash, sweet potato, or cauliflower, and serve. (You can also add them directly to the blender as you blend your baby's puree.)

For toddlers and adults, tear up fresh basil leaves and sprinkle them over pasta, mix them into sauce, roll them up into your veggie wraps, or add them to chopped mozzarella and tomato to make a caprese salad. You can also toss them into a blender with pine nuts, olive oil, garlic, and grated cheese to make pesto sauce, which you can spread on sandwiches, mix into pasta dishes – even freeze in jars for later.

Cinnamon: Cinnamon is a good source of vitamin K and iron. It can help reduce inflammation, has antioxidant and antiseptic properties, and can help fight bacteria. It is also a known astringent (can help decrease diarrhea), can help reduce gas, and can lower blood sugar.

We love cinnamon because it adds a bit of sweetness to foods without adding the harmful surge of sugar in the bloodstream.



How to use it: If this is the first time you are introducing cinnamon to your baby, simply stir in a very small amount (1/8 teaspoon) into a favorite puree, such as mashed banana, or pear. For toddlers, older children, and adults, you can use cinnamon in a variety of ways: sprinkled on top of fruit, added to a smoothie, as a topping for oatmeal, even – as we use it in our book – stirred into a batch of marinara sauce!

Parsley: Parsley may stimulate the appetite and improve digestion. It provides vitamin A carotenoids, which protect eye health, and vitamin K. It may also help ease constipation and intestinal gas. We love it because it helps to add flavor to dishes *without* adding sodium.



How to use it: If you are introducing fresh parsley to your infant, you may add ¼ teaspoon of finely minced parsley to their



favorite puree, such as beets, carrots, or avocado. For toddlers and adults, you may use parsley in a variety of ways: sprinkle minced parsley into a pot of lentils or soup, add it to your juicer (the combination of parsley, apple, carrot, lemon and ginger is a favorite of ours!), mix some minced parsley in with olive oil and sprinkle it on fresh grilled veggies, or blend it in with fresh ricotta and spread it on a slice of toast.

Cardamom: Cardamom may help ease stomach and intestinal gas and help increase the movement of food through the intestine. It is also a good source of calcium, magnesium, potassium, zinc, and vitamin C and a very good source of iron and manganese.



How to use it: For infants, add 1/8 teaspoon fresh ground cardamom to a favorite food such as oatmeal, mashed banana, or squash puree. Toddlers and adults can reap the benefits of cardamom in a number of ways: add ¼ teaspoon to a smoothie, stir it into yogurt, sprinkle it atop French toast or roasted pear for a sweet treat. Parents: for added flavor without the sweeteners, you can also stir some cardamom into your morning coffee!



SAMPLE RECIPES (EXCERPTS FROM OUR BOOK)

We hope you enjoy trying out our recipes. As with many of our recipes in our book, these meals are meant to be eaten by the entire family, and are age-appropriate for the babies in your family. We've chosen to share with you two colorful, flavorful recipes that we love – one of which requires no cooking!

These are straight from our book, so you're getting a sneak-peak at the inside pages of our cookbook. Here we go!

(Scroll to the next page – we've laid them out portrait-style so you can read them and print them better...)

10 mo+

BABY GAZPACHO



AGE 10 months plus

YIELD approximately 2½ cups

FOOD STORAGE refrigerator friendly, freezer friendly

PREP TIME approximately 6 minutes

COOK TIME no cook!

Gazpacho is a Spanish soup traditionally enjoyed in Andalusia and Portugal. It's packed with many fresh vegetables, and you don't even have to cook anything! Just toss all the ingredients in a blender and puree. It doesn't get any better than that! Gazpacho soup is traditionally served cold, but your baby may prefer it at room temperature.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tomatoes, quartered
- 1 medium-size cucumber, roughly chopped
- ¼ cup yellow onion, roughly chopped
- ¼ cup green bell pepper, roughly chopped
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 cup low-sodium vegetable juice, such as V8
- 1½ tablespoons distilled white vinegar
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt (optional: we recommend adding salt only for babies 12 months plus)
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon garlic salt

I Add all ingredients to the blender. Puree just until the ingredients are smooth and combined, taking care not to overmix. Serve cold or at room temperature.

Note: Adults looking for additional flavor and heat can add a few drops of Tabasco sauce to the adult portion only. Enjoy this meal with crackers or fresh, hot bread!



Pepper may help fight germs. So, to ease the flow of digestive juices in the stomach.



97



THE IRON CHICKEN DANCE



AGE 8 months plus

YIELD approximately 4-6 chicken thighs

FOOD STORAGE refrigerator friendly, freezer friendly

PREP TIME 8 minutes

COOK TIME 40 minutes

We call this one the Iron Chicken Dance because the chicken thighs are nutrient rich, packing all the iron we know is so important for our babies' little bodies, and the salsa makes it "dance." Don't be intimidated by the term "salsa"—it's super easy to toss together! This recipe makes for an excellent family meal!



INGREDIENTS

- 1½ pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs, preferably organic
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt (optional: we only recommend adding salt for babies 12 months plus)
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- ½ teaspoon dried herb mixture, such as Herbes de Provence or Italian seasoning
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- ½ tablespoon unsalted butter
- 1 (15-ounce) can organic black beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 cups fresh mango, diced into ½-inch-by-½-inch chunks (for time savings, check if your market sells this pre-cut)
- ½ cup fresh cilantro, minced
- Juice from 1 lime, seeds removed

1 Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

2 Season both sides of the chicken with salt (if using), pepper, and dried herbs. Set aside.

3 In a Dutch oven or large oven-safe pot, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add the butter, and allow it to melt. Once the oil and butter are hot, add the chicken to the pot. (The chicken should sizzle when you add it to the pot.) Sear the chicken on both sides until golden brown (about 2-4 minutes per side). Transfer the pot to the oven and bake uncovered for approximately 25-28 minutes or until the thickest part of the chicken reaches 175 degrees. (If you do not have an oven-safe pot, transfer chicken to a baking dish and place in oven.)

4 Remove the pot from the oven and add the black beans. Cover the pot with a lid and let the mixture rest for 5 minutes. Add the mango, cilantro, and lime juice to the pot. Serve, cutting into smaller pieces appropriate for your baby, or puree the baby's portion to desired consistency, adding small amounts of water as needed.

Tip: If your baby seems hesitant or generally has a difficult time eating meats, try mixing in 1 teaspoon of sour cream. If she still seems hesitant, puree a small portion of the dish and spread it on a slice of whole wheat bread, creating a "paleo sandwich." This may help make meats more palatable to babies/toddlers adjusting to the new texture.





THANK YOU

Thank you for joining our list, and for joining on us on this journey of raising healthy goods with natural, nourishing ingredients. We think you'll enjoy our beautiful cookbook (they also make great gifts!) and you can pre-order copies of our book here: <http://amzn.to/28Zl9U6>

Here's a little bit more about what you'll find inside the pages of *What a Good Eater!*:

- 60 recipes with beautiful photographs for every recipe, from first foods to toddlerhood (6 months to 2 years and beyond)
- Sample food menus and feeding schedules by age
- An abundance of family-friendly meals (because who really wants to cook twice?!)
- 70% of recipes ready in about 30 minutes or less
- Parent guide to frequently asked feeding questions and tips to minimize picky eating
- Recipes that yield large quantities, so you can cook once and enjoy repeatedly
- Healthy toddler snack ideas to both eat at home and take to go
- A glossary of herbs and spices and their potential health benefits
- Hearty, flavorful, nutritious meals, such as *Warm Lentils with Cumin and Coriander*, *Coconut Curry Goan Fish*, and *The Iron Chicken Dance*
- Recipes tested by numerous babies, toddlers, and parents around the United States

"A smart, thoughtful cookbook designed to introduce children to real food with age-appropriate textures, soothing herbs and spices, and carefully chosen ingredients that will nourish their growing bodies. Help your child develop healthy eating habits that will last a lifetime!" Elissa Levine, MD (Pediatrician)

"This cookbook/guide is easy to follow and a wonderful addition to your kitchen references! The recipes are nutritionally sound and family friendly. Many of the recipes and suggestions in this text are the same that David and I used to raise our children, who have all grown into healthy young men who enjoy a wide variety of foods. Eating well at family-centered meals will enrich your family for generations to come! Wishing you all good health and joy!" JuliSu DiMucci-Ward, RD, CDE (Registered Dietitian)

PRE-ORDER YOUR COPY TODAY! <http://amzn.to/28Zl9U6>

For more information or to ask any questions, email us at: info@whatagoodeater.com. We wish you good health, happy tummies, and the soundtrack of satisfied baby burps!

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