

FORWARD DuPage CORNER

July is National Culinary Arts Month

National Culinary Arts Month recognizes the professional cooks and chefs who bring innovative cuisine from their kitchens to our tables every day. Around the country, culinary schools, restaurants, and kitchens will be honoring chefs for their inventive recipes and creative dishes. Beyond celebrating professions chefs and cooks, FORWARD would like to suggest that early childhood providers and families focus this month in two areas: One, how to make healthier selections when dining out and two, how to engage children in centers and home in planning, creating and serving healthy meals and snacks.

Experts in nutrition and weight management tag eating out as one of the drivers of obesity. Portion size, limited fruits and vegetables and a tendency to add fat, sodium and sugar to make everything taste good is an issue in many restaurants, making eating healthy when eating out a challenge. When you know you'll be eating out, plan your day, accordingly, eating a lighter breakfast and lunch or getting in more family activity. And then try these best practices:

- Keep portion size reasonable by asking for a “take home” container at the start of the meal and set aside the take home portion
- Skip the breadbasket or limit yourself to just one piece
- Ask for water, the preferred beverage. If you want a drink or a special treat, refuse the refill.
- Choose foods that are steamed, broiled, baked, roasted, poached, or lightly sautéed or stir-fried.

For more tips on making healthier food choices, check out these resources:

- Making healthier food choices tip sheet click [here](#).
- Making healthier food choices tip sheet (Spanish version) click [here](#).

For information on healthy eating and active living initiatives in DuPage county, check out www.forwarddupage.org. For more early childhood healthy resources for families click [here](#).

JOIN THE HEALTHY MOVEMENT TODAY!

Families: Get started now! For the month of July, make a commitment to add one of the best practices (from the list above) to your dining out selection and experience. If cooking at home, check out this online recipe book [here](#).

Early Childhood Providers: Check out the Cooking Matters website [here](#) for tips, ideas, recipes and best practices for cooking in the classroom (and at home).