



## The Dessert Desert

Cake, cookies, ice cream ... we all love it, especially little ones. We often save dessert for the end of a meal or after dinner. Sometimes we view this type of food as a reward, both for kids and adults. Changing our mindset to think of dessert as part of a balanced eating pattern can help build a better relationship with food.

By putting food on a pedestal, we create a mindset that foods are good or bad. They're not bad unless you don't like the taste! Many times, we label foods as good or bad based on what we see in the media. Allowing yourself and children to enjoy these once "off-limit" foods in moderation can help to break down this wall of morality with foods.

Using food as a reward can make their body crave sweet things when they are not hungry. Additionally, rewarding with a dessert makes it seem superior and special, giving it more value than other foods. Having dessert more often in a casual manner can lessen the value given to the food. It also removes the power from this food.

Dessert can mean sweet treats like mentioned above, but there are other sweet nutritious options we can add into the rotation. Try berries and whipped topping for dessert. Or include a handful of nuts on that next ice cream scoop. Including a small portion on a dinner plate can help young children understand that dessert is just another food and not something you get after doing something else.

Desserts are delicious, and you deserve to enjoy them. They can include carbohydrates, protein, and fat. You can enjoy dessert as a part of a balanced diet. Removing the stigma associated with these foods can lead to a healthier relationship with food. So, yes, let them eat cake!

## References

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**Source:** Anna McDonald, Senior Extension Associate, and Courtney Luecking, Extension Specialist for Nutrition and Health

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