

A Rainbow of Real Foods: The Choosy Rainbow Salad

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There is a popular candy with the slogan "Taste the rainbow." Let's try to get kids excited about the rainbow of REAL foods. Just for a moment, think about how food looks and presents itself. Many popular snack foods are really bland or neutral colored. Potato chips, crackers, pretzels are not really eye-catching or colorful. Now think about strolling through the produce section at the market. Wow! Color everywhere. There is a healthy, nourishing rainbow in the produce section of your grocery store. Let's "taste the real rainbow."

Remember ROY G BIV? That guy who helped you recall the colors in the light spectrum. Let's think of his name when we try to prepare the Choosy Rainbow Salad.

Red- little tomatoes or cherries or strawberries

Orange- orange peppers, carrot sticks, or an orange (little ones are popular now)

Yellow- yellow peppers, apples, tomatoes, or corn

Green- lettuce, broccoli, snap peas, green beans or any other greens are great

Blue- how about blueberries?

Indigo and Purple- grapes, blackberries, purple cabbage

Make it a game in the store and if there is something you haven't tried before, show your family what Choosy would do: Try it!

Now put it all together. Remember that just a little is all you need for each salad or make a bigger one for the family to share--that could save you time. Look at the picture to get an idea for assembling this or create your own way. You can cut the pieces up and everyone makes their own. Food art is fun, creative, and can include the whole family. Use a small amount of whatever dressing you like or try it dressing-free. It's your choice.

Encourage children to create their yummy, colorful snacks using the cut up veggie rainbow pieces you provide. Children are more likely to eat food they prepare. Not interested a rainbow salad? How about just adding a little of the rainbow to each meal? Fruit for breakfast. Fruit and veggie for lunch, and fruit and veggie or salad and veggie for dinner. That gets you to 5 in a day!

And remember, when you use some fruit or veggies to have colorful snacks, instead of bland junk food snacks, you are well on your way to giving yourself and your kids the vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and fiber they were meant to have as fuel. Real kids, real food!