

Researchers have discovered a surprisingly simple way to get kids to eat more veggies

October 02, 2015

The Washington Post:

It seems like an age-old problem — kids not eating their vegetables — and it is. Little ones, more interested in macaroni and cheese than sautéed spinach, are still leaving the latter largely untouched. The proof is both anecdotal — what parent hasn't tussled with this? — and borne out in data. Nine out of 10 children, after all, still don't eat enough vegetables, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

...

Researchers at Texas A&M University, looking for patterns in food consumption among elementary school children, found an interesting quirk about when and why kids choose to eat their vegetables. After analyzing plate waste data from nearly 8,500 students, it seems there's at least one variable that tends to affect whether kids eat their broccoli, spinach or green beans more than anything: what else is on the plate.

...

The notion that food pairings can significantly affect the attractiveness of certain foods isn't new. Traci Mann, who teaches psychology at the University of Minnesota and has been studying eating habits, self-control and dieting for more than 20 years, believes that it can, in fact, be crucial. One of the simplest ways to eat better is to make it easier to eat better. That involves a strategy Mann calls "get alone with a vegetable," which is similar in that it shows how important context can be.

Read the whole story: [The Washington Post](#)