

***Whole Foods Market* Educational Background**

Grocery stores provide us with food options so we can stay healthy. In the *Whole Foods Market* exhibit, children can explore early math concepts by identifying attributes of foods, sorting into groups, and counting how many items they have in their cart. Language skills can develop from describing their “purchases” as well as roleplaying various jobs and tasks at a grocery store.



Language Development – Exploring our themed environment provides opportunities to learn new vocabulary, ask questions, seek information, and engage in conversations about what they observe as they interact with other guests.



Motor Skills – Children practice grasping and holding a variety of shapes and sizes of foods and packaging. They also practice maneuvering themselves and a cart around the grocery store.



Social & Emotional Development – Children practice social relationships, social skills and self-regulation as they engage in dramatic play experiences with others. Children also have the opportunity to build self-confidence by self-selecting which role to emulate.

Try it at Home:

*Except from National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Blog: **Let's Eat (Well)!***

Talk to your child about healthy nutrition. Having a healthy attitude towards food doesn't happen overnight. Here's what you can do to help:

- **Introduce your child to a variety of foods.**
- **Discuss where various foods come from.** Grocery shop together. Visit farms, farmers markets, and orchards, if possible, to speak directly to farmers.
- **Cook together!** Your child can stir, add ingredients and spices, roll dough, etc. Introduce new or "unusual" foods slowly and in different ways (e.g. raw onions in a salad don't taste like caramelized onions in a taco).
- **Show flexibility.** Model trying new things and refrain from acting negatively towards foods you don't prefer.

[The Healthy Children website from the American Academy of Pediatrics](#) offers nutrition advice from medical experts