

Reading Matters

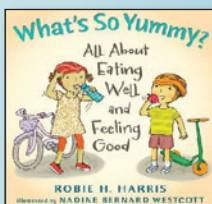
“As Tall as the Sky”: Celebrating Books about Being Healthy by Jean Dugan

Our granddaughter Caroline has grown to be an adventurous eater. To our delight, now at 12 years old, she enjoys the seafood she samples when she visits us in Gloucester, as well as the vegetables she helps to harvest from our garden. We share a fondness for chocolate, but the lunches she packs for herself now are full of fruits, vegetables, and yogurt. Caroline’s time outside of school is spent on the field hockey and lacrosse fields, on the basketball court, and on her bike, and she knows that being active and eating healthy foods keep her going. She tells me that good food is yummy (most of the time!) and that kids who eat well can be strong, powerful, and tall as the sky! Here are some new books for children about staying healthy.



Jean Dugan, a long-time friend of *Exchange*, has been connecting kids with books for over 40 years. She helped establish a library program in the elementary schools of Gloucester, Massachusetts, and later brought her love of children’s literature to the public library there. This is one more opportunity for her to share the best new books with children and those who care about them.

What’s So Yummy? follows the same young family we met previously in **Who has What?** and **Who’s in My Family?** Here they ride bikes and scooters to the farmer’s market to buy food for a picnic, enjoy a snack of fruit and water, and finally plop down together on their picnic blanket after some running around in the park — all the time discussing the benefits of the good things they are eating and the exercise each of them is getting, in conversations that very young children can understand.



What’s So Yummy?: All about Eating Well and Feeling Good by Robie H. Harris, illustrated by Nadine Bernard Westcott (Candlewick Press, 2014) Ages 3–8.

Healthy Kids is full of gorgeous photos of children in a world where everyone appears to have access to health care, good food, adequate housing, and safe water. In her introduction, Melinda Gates acknowledges that not all children are so fortunate, and that we have an obligation to work for a better life for all kids — an epilogue offers some suggestions. In between, we see pictures of kids from many cultures playing outdoors, visiting doctors and dentists, getting their water from a variety of sources, and probably the most fascinating to the intended audience, making use of assorted types of bathroom facilities.



Healthy Kids by Maya Ajmera, Victoria Dunning, and Cynthia Pon, with a forward by Melinda French Gates (A Global Fund for Children Book, Charlesbridge, 2013) Ages 2–7.

Felipe and his friends wear flip flops to school in Brazil, so they have no need for socks, and no money for a soccer ball. However, socks come in handy when it’s time for a game with his buddies, before school, at recess, and after school. Inventive Felipe has learned to make a ball by stuffing socks with newspaper, and he “borrows” all the socks he finds on his way to school, always leaving a delicious mango in their place, and always returning them to their owners when his day is done.

The Sock Thief by Ana Crespo, illustrated by Nana Gonzalez (Albert Whitman and Company, 2015) Ages 3–7.

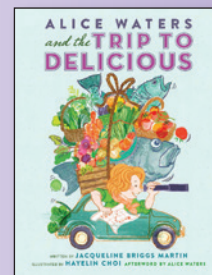


Garden to Table by Katherine Hengel is a beautifully designed children’s guide to planting, growing, and preparing food. Hengel considers six very different vegetables, each with its own chapter: basil, carrots, green beans, lettuce, potatoes, and tomatoes — all of them already in the food vocabulary of most children. She follows each from the how, when, and where to plant seeds, to harvest and beyond, and ends each chapter with some delicious sounding and kid-friendly recipes and interesting facts. It’s a practical book, well indexed and with illustrated cooking terms, ingredients, and tools for beginning cooks.



Garden to Table: A Kid’s Guide to Planting, Growing and Preparing Food by Katherine Hengel (Scarletta, 2014) Ages 5–10.

Before Alice Waters established Chez Panisse, or planted the Edible Schoolyard, she was a little girl who loved her veggies. She has devoted her life to searching for Delicious — the best, freshest, tastiest food anywhere. Thanks to Alice, thousands of school children have participated in gardening projects at their schools, and enjoyed freshly harvested vegetables at lunchtime — at the same time learning that good food can change the world. **Alice Waters and the Trip to Delicious** is a cheerfully illustrated biography of sorts that ends with a list of “what I have learned” from Alice herself.



Alice Waters and the Trip to Delicious by Jacqueline Briggs Martin, illustrated by Hayelin Choi, afterword by Alice Waters (Readers to Eaters, 2014) Ages 5–8.