

What really matters to moms

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Parenting

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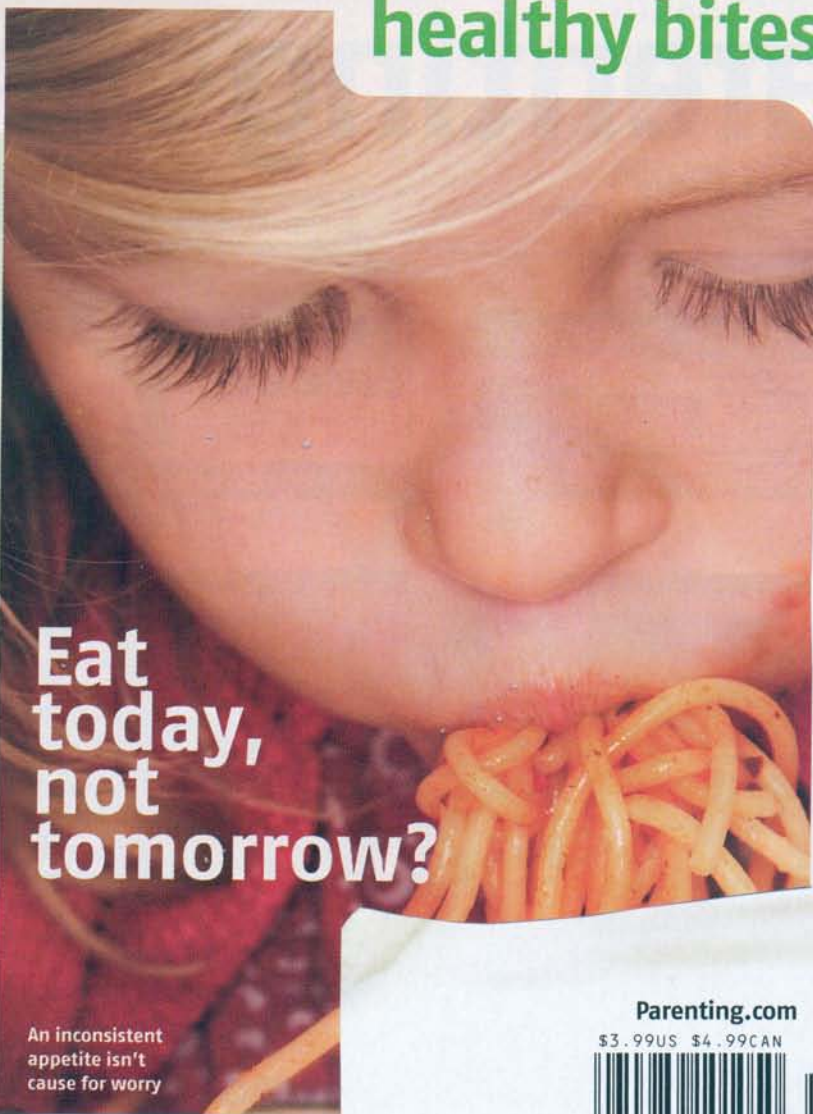
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healthy bites

One day your child touches not even a thimbleful of food, the next she eats like it's going out of style. You may think such erratic eating isn't healthy, but it's fine, says Donna Fish, author of *Take the Fight Out of Food*. Kids generally play catch-up, so that over the course of a few days their total calorie intake averages out to a nourishing number.

Still concerned? Consider your child's age. It's natural for kids' appetites to shrink between ages 1 and 2, which is a period of slower growth as well as increased motor development. Your child may want to move around and explore, rather than sit down and eat. You might also try writing down everything she eats for a week or two, and you'll probably find that she's eating more than you think. But even if she's not, resist the urge to push food on her. You don't want to pressure her into the habit of eating to please you instead of when she's truly hungry.

—DARYN ELLER



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