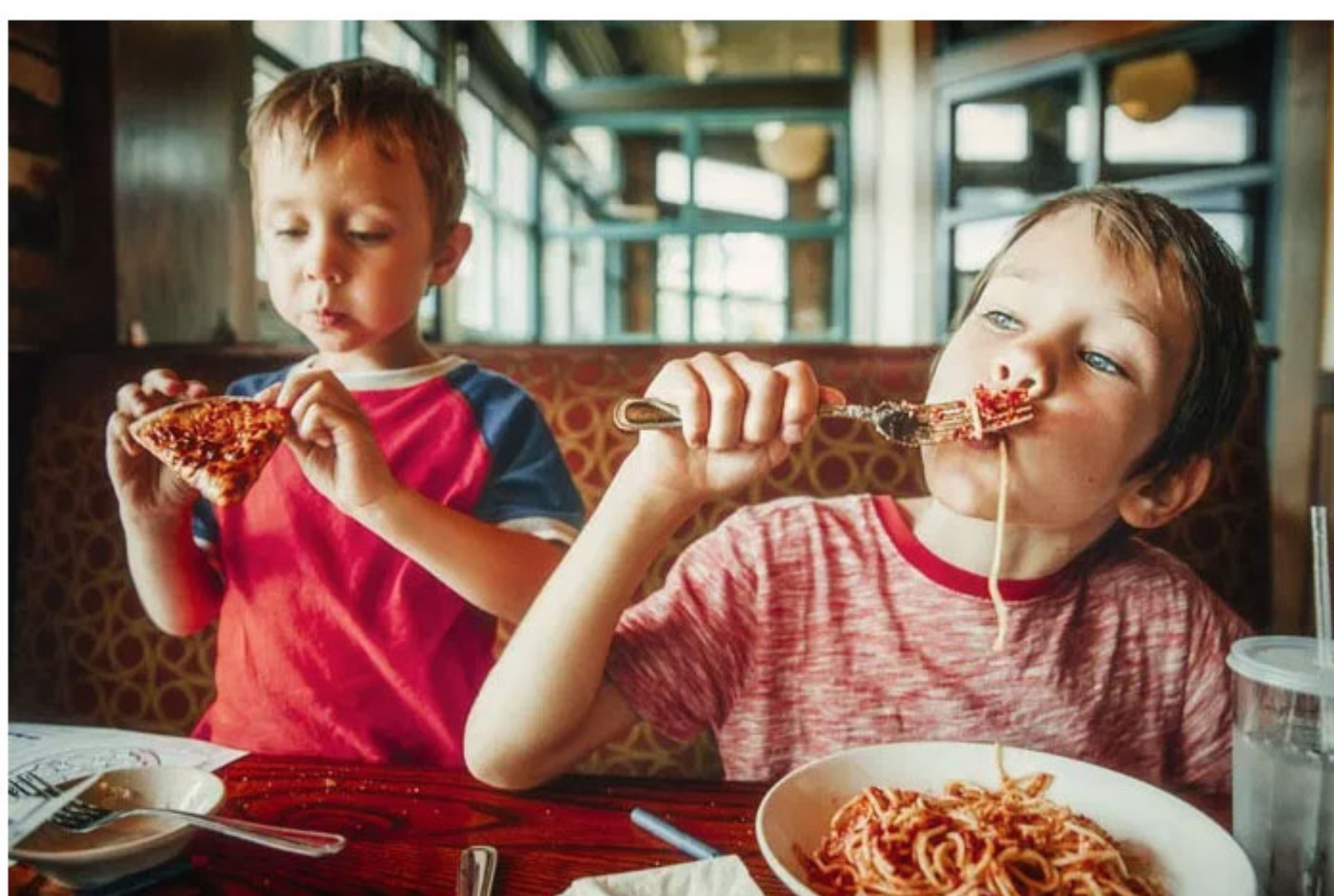


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Restaurants Winning with Families

By **Total Food Service** - November 24, 2020



Article contributed by Jennifer Loper, President, **C3**

Families are big business for restaurants. 26% of restaurant traffic comes from families with children 12 and under—and when kids under 12 are present, the average restaurant check goes up 82% (NPD/CREST 2019). Bottom line? Winning with families is just good business.

But what does it take? It's simple: the quickest way to a family's heart is through the kids! When you make your youngest guests feel welcome, you can't help but win over the whole family.

As a kids & family activation agency, C3 specializes in bringing restaurant brands to life for families with children through entertainment, experience and more. We know how important it is for restaurants to be kid-friendly in order to attract families and keep them coming back. In fact, we recently conducted a study with parents to uncover exactly what it means for restaurants to be "kid-friendly."

74% of the parents surveyed agree that it's very important that the restaurants that they take their kids to be kid-friendly. Two priorities rose quickly to the top of the list of what parents are looking for in kid-friendly restaurants: **food + fun**.

Without question, the most important thing for kid-friendly restaurants is the food: parents are looking for restaurants that offer kids' meals and food their kids love. But the next most important way for restaurants to be seen as kid-friendly is to provide kids with items and experiences that are fun and entertaining.

When asked about quick service restaurants, 8 in 10 parents said they expect toys to be a part of the kids' meal. Parents say these are fun for kids, they give kids an exciting surprise, and they make kids look forward to going to that restaurant. It's no surprise that 85% of parents feel positively towards QSRs that give kids toys—they like to see their kids happy!


Similarly, when asked about casual dining restaurants, 8 in 10 parents said they expect activity menus and crayons to be provided to their kids. This makes sense, too: activity menus and coloring play an important role as "wait-busters" when families dine out, keeping kids busy and entertained while the food is prepared. Not only do parents appreciate the fun-factor, but they also say activity menus encourage creativity and even give kids something to look forward to at sit-down restaurants.

What other kid-friendly must-haves did parents mention? Kids' cups and kids' packaging are the big ones. Especially in casual dining restaurants, parents expect kids' drinks to come in kid-sized (not too big!) cups with lids—preferably spill-proof—and kid-friendly designs. Meanwhile, at QSRs, parents expect to see distinctive packaging for kids' meals, so kids know they're getting a special meal that's meant just for them.

These kinds of kid entertainment items and kid-branded packaging are so meaningful for families because they show kids and their parents that your restaurant is not just a place they can grab a bite, but an environment where they're welcome to spend time together ... and a business that genuinely wants them to come back.

It's no secret that kids have a strong voice when it comes to picking a restaurant. 93% of parents say their kids influence the restaurant brands they choose (YouthBeat 2020), so it's only natural that kids' entertainment & branding should be not only thoughtful extensions of your brand, but integral parts of your overall brand strategy.





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