

Healthy Snacking 101

Healthy snacks fuel your children's brains and bodies between meals. Use these ideas to make snack time simpler and more nutritious for everyone in your household!

Everyday tips

Puzzled about how to come up with healthy snacks for your youngsters? Try these ideas:

- Keep a variety of fruit in the house. Go for kid favorites like bananas, apples, and oranges, but also encourage your children to sample less-familiar produce, perhaps mangoes, kiwis, papayas, or blackberries. *Tip:* Look for fruit that's in season or on sale to keep costs down.
- Raw vegetables make great snacks. Offer green beans or baby carrots with a dip of low-fat ranch dressing or guacamole.
- Together, read food labels when you're grocery shopping. Make a game of picking out nutritious snacks and drinks. *Example:* See who can find the granola bars with the least sugar or the salsa with the lowest sodium.
- Look for healthier versions of snacks your youngsters like. For instance, get baked crackers, whole-wheat pretzels, and low-fat string cheese.
- Store healthy snacks in your pantry or refrigerator at your children's eye level. Your kids will see them first and be more apt to reach for them.



Fruit surprises

Your children will be delighted by the treat in the middle of these fruit pops.

Pour 100% juice (grape, orange, apple) into paper cups. Stand the cups upright in the freezer. Then, put a strawberry or pineapple chunk on the end of an ice cream stick. When the juice cups are partially frozen, insert the sticks, burying the fruit inside the juice. When they're completely frozen, peel off the paper cup for a surprise snack!



■ Put together snacks that combine two major nutrients. Serving a protein and a carbohydrate together—a turkey and cheese sandwich, for instance—will fill your kids up and give them energy. Add a drink (water, fat-free milk) to keep them hydrated.

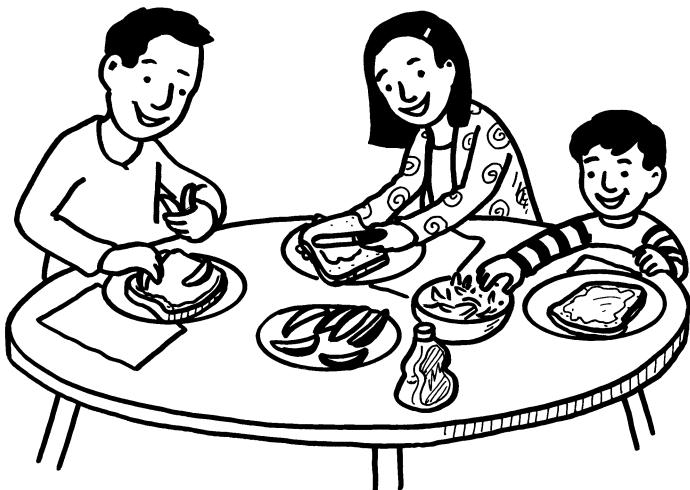
■ Buy snacks like whole-grain cereal, nuts, and dried fruits in bulk to cut costs, and then package them in individual servings in zipper bags. *Note:* Show your children how to check the nutrition label to find the size of one serving. It's often not the whole bag or box!

■ Take along healthy snacks when you go out. You'll avoid stopping for fast food or buying junk food from snack bars or vending machines when your youngsters are hungry.

■ Let your children pitch in and help prepare their own snacks. Steer them toward healthier choices, and watch as they happily eat what they've made!

continued

Nutrition Nuggets™



At home

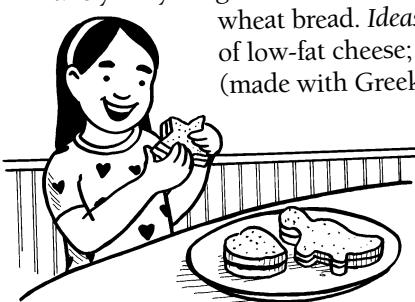
Vary snacks to keep youngsters interested, and spend time as a family coming up with new creations. These suggestions will get you started:

- Make yogurt parfaits. In a clear cup, layer low-fat plain Greek yogurt, blueberries, crushed graham crackers, and a drizzle of honey. Repeat the layers.
- Spread honey mustard on two slices of whole-wheat bread. Layer sliced apples and low-fat cheddar cheese inside. Wrap the sandwich in foil, and bake for 10 minutes at 350°.
- Use corn tortillas, pita rounds, or English muffin halves to make mini-pizzas. Top with low-sodium tomato sauce, grated skim mozzarella cheese, and vegetables (sliced mushrooms, broccoli pieces). Sprinkle on oregano. Broil 3–5 minutes, until the cheese bubbles.

Cookie-cutter sandwiches

Snack-size sandwiches are more fun to eat when they're shaped like dinosaurs, stars, or hearts.

Make your youngsters' favorite sandwiches with whole-wheat bread. Ideas: lean ham and a slice of low-fat cheese; tuna or chicken salad (made with Greek yogurt); grape jelly (reduced sugar). Then, use cookie cutters to make them into shapes (the extra pieces make good finger foods, too).



■ Slice a cucumber in half horizontally, and hollow out the insides. Fill the cucumber cups with a "light" egg salad (mash 2 hard-boiled eggs with 1 tsp. reduced-fat mayonnaise).

■ For an easy dip, drain and rinse a 14-oz. can of beans (kidney, cannellini), and put them in a blender or food processor with 1 tbsp. apple cider vinegar, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. chili powder, and a pinch of cumin. Blend until smooth. Serve with baked tortilla chips.

On the go

Keep these healthy snacks on hand for your children to take wherever they go:

■ Let them design their own trail mix. Set out bowls of cereal, different kinds of unsalted nuts, golden raisins, and sunflower seeds. They can measure, mix, and match ingredients in zipper bags, then label their bags with names they invent ("Bradley's Blend," "Energy to Go").



■ Buy individual cups of applesauce, fat-free pudding, or fruit packed in its own juice (mandarin oranges, peaches, fruit cocktail). Or package single servings in small, reusable plastic containers.

■ Bake your own pita chips. Slice whole-grain pita bread into chip-size triangles. Put the pieces on a baking sheet, and brush lightly with olive oil. Bake at 350° until crisp, about 10 minutes.

■ Fresh fruit is portable and always healthy. Your youngsters can take a piece of whole fruit (peach, plum, pear) on the way out the door. Or freeze a bunch of grapes for a frosty fruit treat.

Editor's Note: Nutrition Nuggets™ is reviewed by a registered dietitian. Consult a physician before beginning any major change in diet or exercise.

Nutrition Nuggets™

Nutrition Nuggets™

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

December 2019



BEST BITES

Bulk shopping = savings

Shopping from bulk bins almost always saves money. Let your child help you fill bags with foods like rice, beans, pasta, and nuts. Idea: Tell him how much you need (say, 2 lbs.), then have him estimate that amount and weigh it to check.

DID YOU KNOW?

Physical activity is good for your youngster's brain. It can improve her memory, mood, and ability to focus. Help her get at least 60 minutes of exercise each day, keeping in mind that it doesn't have to be all at once. She might walk to school, run around the playground at recess, and play catch with you after school.

Fruit with a message

Send your child off to school or sports practice with a snack that's healthy *and* inspiring. Use a marker or pen to write an encouraging message on a fruit he will peel, like

a clementine or banana.

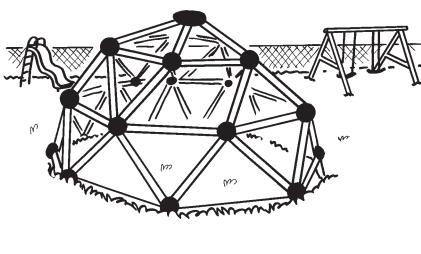
Example: "I hope your day is a-peeling!"



Just for fun

Q: Where does Tarzan work out?

A: In the jungle gym!



Kaye Lynch, MBA

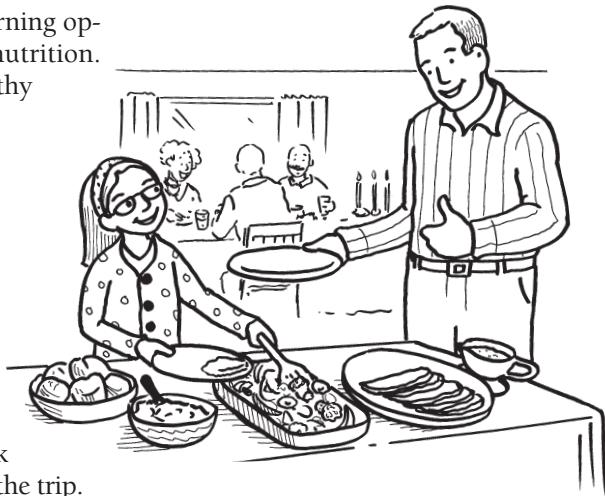
Director of Child Nutrition Program

A healthier winter break

Special occasions can be learning opportunities when it comes to nutrition. Show your youngster that healthy choices are an important—and fun—part of any celebration with this advice.

Eat normally

Make sure your child has a healthy breakfast and lunch rather than "leaving room" for a big meal. She won't be starving by dinnertime, so she'll be less likely to overeat. If you're traveling, help her pack nutritious snacks to eat during the trip.



Add more nutrients

Look for ways to get more whole grains and vegetables into favorite dishes. Make macaroni and cheese with whole-wheat noodles, and stir in thinly sliced brussels sprouts or cubed sweet potatoes. For stuffing, use whole-grain bread, and add fruits and vegetables (chopped apples, diced onion, spinach).

Fill up on the good stuff

Encourage your youngster to put healthier options like turkey breast and salad greens on her plate first. Then, she could take small portions of richer foods like gravy or creamy casseroles. She'll learn to make good choices—and enjoy treats in moderation. ●

M-O-V-E your body

Scientist Isaac Newton was right: A body in motion tends to stay in motion! Set your child up for a lifetime of being active with these tips.

Multitask wisely. Your youngster could balance on an exercise ball at homework time. Or while folding laundry, he might shoot balled-up socks into drawers to score "baskets."



Opt for activity. Walk to the store or playground instead of driving. When you do take the car, park as far from the door as possible.

Vary the exercise. If your child plays baseball, he could swim or bike on other days. Or a gymnast might play badminton with friends on weekends.

Enjoy yourself. Your youngster is more likely to stay active if he's having fun. Instead of telling him to "exercise," suggest some "fun" like riding his scooter. ●

Kids in the kitchen

Cooking with your youngster will teach him valuable kitchen skills—and help him practice reading and math. Try these suggestions.

Read recipes. Ask your child to read a recipe aloud. Then, have him gather the ingredients and tools you'll need. Can he find dried oregano and a whisk? Next, follow the steps together. *Idea:* Build his vocabulary by explaining unfamiliar cooking words. ("Zest means to scrape off tiny bits of the lemon peel.")



PARENT TO PARENT

"I'm just not good at sports"

My son Andy plays soccer on a neighborhood team, but he often said he wasn't "good" at it. I wasn't sure how to handle this, so I talked to his PE teacher about ways to build his confidence.



She said that pointing out what Andy does well could help him feel better about playing soccer. For instance, I mentioned how he runs fast on the field and is always encouraging his teammates. The PE teacher also suggested that we focus on how much fun soccer is rather than on whether he scores a goal.

I've been using the coach's advice, and Andy seems really proud of his speed. In fact, he recently told me that running is his favorite thing about soccer. ♡

OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ways to promote healthy nutrition and physical activity for their children.

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Use math. Put your youngster in charge of kitchen math. He can find the correct measuring spoons and cups, measure wet and dry ingredients, and read a food thermometer. He'll also learn about conversions—for example, that 4 tbsp. = $\frac{1}{4}$ cup.

Tip: Get your child in the habit of putting dishes in the dishwasher as he works. That way, there won't be a big sticky mess to clean up at the end. ♡



ACTIVITY CORNER

Active indoor fun

When it's raining or snowing too hard to play outside and your child is full of energy, what can you do? These ideas will keep her active and entertained indoors.



1. Fitness stations. Let your youngster write 10 activities on separate sticky notes.

Example: "Hold a bridge pose for 30 seconds." She can stick the notes around the house, then go to each station and follow the instructions.

2. Board game fitness. Play a board game where fitness has a starring role. Have your child make a key that lists a movement for each number rolled or color space landed on ("Green = Leap like a lizard").

3. Tic-tac-toe. Your youngster could draw a grid and write an activity in each square. ("Do 10 jumping jacks.") Players complete three in a row to win! ♡

IN THE KITCHEN

Seasonal snacks

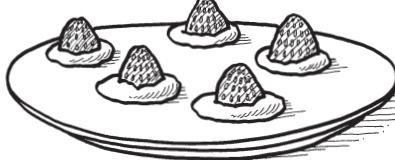
Put a wintry twist on healthy snacks. Here are a few your youngster can make herself.

Veggie scene

Arrange broccoli florets in a large tree shape on a plate. Use a celery stalk for a trunk, and spread low-fat ranch dressing under the tree for snow. Your youngster could add carrot sticks as sleds in her scene.

Snowman on a stick

Cut a banana into thirds and push them onto a skewer to make a snowman's



body and head. Your child might use raisins for the nose and eyes, and pretzel sticks for hands. **Tip:** Use sunflower seed butter to make everything stick.

Winter hats

Mix $\frac{1}{2}$ cup low-fat cream cheese with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup nonfat Greek yogurt until smooth. Place spoonfuls of the mixture onto a plate to create hat brims.

Complete the hats by putting a strawberry (green removed) upside down on each brim. ♡

Nutrition Nuggets™

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

November 2019



Taco-in-a-mug

Here's an easy way for your child to make her own "taco-in-a-mug." Let her put cooked shredded chicken in the bottom, then layer taco ingredients. She might add low-fat pepper jack cheese, salsa, and lettuce. She can sprinkle on crumbled baked tortilla chips and eat right out of the cup!



Playing together

What's one of the best ways to get your youngster moving and having fun? Join him! Suggest that the two of you throw a football together, or ask him to teach you how to skateboard. You'll set a good example, get some exercise, and enjoy time together.

DID YOU KNOW?

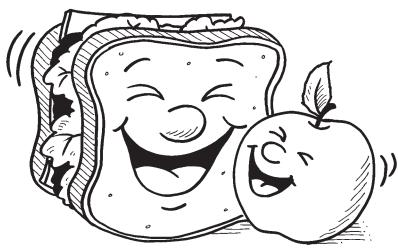
Introduce your child to healthy foods at the grocery store—for free.

Stores often let shoppers sample new items, such as edamame or tri-color quinoa. Say "yes" to anything nutritious that's offered and encourage her to try it. Then, add the products you both like to your shopping cart.

Just for fun

Q: What did the apple say to the sandwich?

A: Nothing. Apples can't talk!



Kaye Lynch, MBA

Director of Child Nutrition Program

Give peas (and carrots) a chance

Can vegetables be your child's new favorite foods? Yes! Try these ideas, and watch as veggies become something he looks forward to every day.

Featured vegetable

Think like an advertiser, and "sell" nutritious food choices to your youngster. You could post a menu with a featured vegetable. Give it a name that will make your child laugh. Maybe "Tina Turnip" will be the roasted root vegetable you'll serve with pot roast and brown rice pilaf. Tomorrow, ask him to sell you on the starring vegetable!

Vary the prep

Does your youngster prefer that vegetables have a certain texture or temperature? You might steam, roast, saute, puree, or blanch carrots or zucchini—which way does he like best? Or if you



always make cooked peas, offer cold pea salad or raw snap peas instead.

Add extras

Switch up your veggies with flavors your child likes—or may like once he tries them! Add cinnamon to butternut squash or sliced almonds to string beans. Or before cooking veggies, drizzle them with olive oil, then sprinkle on cayenne pepper or chili powder (for heat) or oregano, rosemary, and basil (for an Italian flair). 🍅

Make an activity spinner

Turn a spinner from an old board game into a fitness tool. Here's how.

1. Your child can cover each wedge of the spinner with a strip of masking tape. On each strip, have her write a fun way to move. Examples: "Hop like a frog." "Twirl like a ballet dancer." "Fly like an airplane."

2. To play, one person spins the spinner, reads the action, and calls out something in the yard to tag (perhaps a bush).

3. Everyone follows the direction (hop, twirl) on the way to the bush and back to the spinner. The first person back spins next. 🌸



Our family cookbook

This keepsake will teach your child about nutritious foods—and help you add more options to your family's meals.

Collect. Have your youngster ask relatives for recipes they'd like to share. Look them over together, and pick out the healthier ones. For instance, your child might choose a casserole with tomato sauce rather than one with heavy cream.



Compile. Your youngster can glue each recipe onto a piece of notebook paper and illustrate it. Then, let her sort the recipes into categories, such as pasta, casseroles, and soups, and put them in a binder.

Use. Ask your child to pick out recipes and help you cook them. She could take a photograph of herself with each dish and mail it in a thank-you card to the relative who gave her the recipe.

Idea: Invite your youngster to share her cookbook with relatives at Thanksgiving. ♡

ACTIVITY CORNER

Pumpkin games

Anytime is the perfect time to play outdoors, and November is no exception. Try these games that use a pumpkin instead of a ball!



Roll it. Create start and finish lines. Players stand at the start line with a pumpkin at each person's feet. At "Go," racers roll the pumpkin along the ground with their hands. The first person to cross the finish line with his pumpkin wins.

Pass it. Everyone stands in a circle, arm's length apart, with the "starter" holding a pumpkin. Turn on music, signaling the starter to pass the pumpkin to his left. When the music stops, whoever is holding the pumpkin stands still while everyone else runs around the outside of the circle once and stops in any available spot. Turn the music back on, and play again. ♡

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Q&A Nutrition for vegetarians

Q: My daughter has decided to become a vegetarian. How can I help her get the nutrients she needs?

A: Good news: A vegetarian diet can give your daughter all the nutrients her growing body needs. Talk to the school nurse, the cafeteria manager, or her doctor for advice. They may recommend protein sources like tofu, beans, and nuts. For iron, they're likely to mention leafy green vegetables, dried fruits, and whole grains. Dairy products are good for protein and calcium, and eggs also do double-duty—they contain iron and protein.

Of course, your daughter's choice means changes for you, too. Try to show support by how you prepare dinner. On spaghetti night, you might serve meatballs on the side. Or make vegetarian versions of favorite recipes, like spinach and mushroom enchiladas instead of chicken, or black bean burgers rather than beef. ♡



IN THE KITCHEN

Sheet-pan chicken dinners

Cooking an entire dinner for four on one sheet pan means quicker cleanup. Use 1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breasts for each of these recipes.

Cheesy potatoes and broccoli

Drizzle the juice of one lemon on the chicken. In a large bowl, mix $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. cubed red potatoes and 1 broccoli head cut into florets with 1 tbsp. olive oil and 2–3 crushed garlic cloves.

Add to pan and lightly season with salt, pepper, and Parmesan cheese.



Bake at 400° for 35–40 minutes, until chicken is cooked through.

Fruit and veggie fajitas

Cut chicken into 1-inch strips, and place on cooking sheet. Add 1 sliced bell pepper, 1 sliced onion, and 1 16-oz. can pineapple chunks (in their own juice). In a small bowl, stir together 1 tbsp. each olive oil and lime juice, and 1 tsp. each honey, chili powder, and cumin. Drizzle over chicken mixture. Bake at 350° for 20 minutes.

When cooked through, serve in warmed whole-grain tortillas. ♡

Nutrition Nuggets™

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

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Kaye Lynch, MBA

Director of Child Nutrition Program

BEST BITES

Meal prep + math

Make busy school nights easier—and give your child math practice—with this idea. On weekends, ask him to double recipes for whatever you plan to cook, such as the baked beans for Saturday's picnic or egg casserole for Sunday's breakfast. Then, freeze half to save for a weeknight.

Heart-healthy exercise

Getting vigorous physical activity every day is good for your youngster's heart and overall health. Right after she's active (runs around outside, walks home from school, plays hockey), have her do a quick check of her body. Is she sweating? Is her heart beating fast? If the answer is yes, then she has exercised vigorously.

DID YOU KNOW?

Dark leafy greens have more nutrients than iceberg lettuce. For your child's next salad, choose spinach, baby kale, arugula, or romaine lettuce. If he'll only eat iceberg, introduce other greens by gradually adding more of them to each salad he eats.

Just for fun

Q: What has a big mouth but never speaks?

A: A jar.



Fall for healthy outings

With cooler temperatures and a bounty of fruits and vegetables, fall is a great season for healthy family outings. Here are a few to try.

Go apple picking

Pick ripe, juicy apples at an orchard or the grocery store. Your child can choose different varieties, such as Red Delicious, Granny Smith, and Macintosh. Afterward, hold a tasting party to see which kind everyone likes best. Then, incorporate the apples into meals. For instance, add thin slices to turkey sandwiches or dice into oatmeal.



taste and texture. Then, serve your healthy "purchases" for dinner.

Visit a market

Stop by a farmers' market or produce stand, and let your youngster pick out colorful fall vegetables. Depending on where you live, she might find acorn squash, parsnips, broccoli, pumpkins, or cabbage. At home, she can play farm stand with your veggies. Pretend to be her customer, and talk about each food's

Take a "bingo" hike

Go for a hike to get some exercise and appreciate fall scenery. First, have your child make a bingo card filled with things you normally see in your area this time of year. Examples: red leaf, acorn, squirrel, pinecone, flock of geese. Family members can check off each item as they spot it. Get five in a row and call out "Bingo!"

Build character with sports

Playing a sport not only helps your youngster stay fit and learn new skills—it can also be a great character builder. Help him succeed physically and mentally with these three tips.



1. Praise him for effort, a positive attitude, and good sportsmanship, rather than focusing on winning.

2. Encourage responsibility. Have him keep track of his equipment and wash his own uniform and practice clothes.

3. Set a good example by being respectful of players, coaches, and referees.

Tip: Make sure your youngster carries healthy snacks and a water bottle in his gym bag.

Microwave "magic"

Give the microwave a starring role in your kitchen, and you and your child can prepare healthy foods in almost no time! Consider these ideas.

Potatoes. Pierce two russet or sweet potatoes several times with a fork to let steam escape (and avoid exploding spuds). Then, microwave 7–10 minutes.

Bread. Freshen up bagels and bread. Wrap in a dry paper towel, and zap 10–15 seconds until soft.

Veggies. Steam fresh or frozen vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower, and green beans. Put in a covered microwave-safe



bowl with 1 tbsp. water per cup of veggies. Heat on high 3 minutes, until tender-crisp.

Corn. Microwave corn on the cob in the husks! Cook two ears 4–5 minutes, and easily slide off the husks and silk.

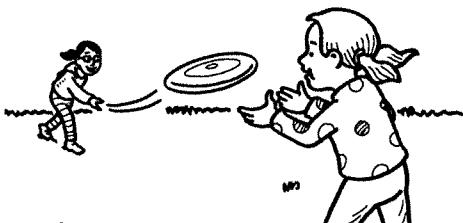
Bananas. Ripen a banana quickly. Leave the peel on, and poke holes all the way through with a fork. Heat 30–90 seconds, until slightly softened.

Citrus fruits. Get more juice out of your lemons or limes. Place a whole fruit in the microwave, and heat 20 seconds. When it cools, slice in half and squeeze. ♡

ACTIVITY CORNER

Frisbee toss

Playing with a Frisbee boosts your youngster's hand-eye coordination and keeps her active. Mix things up with these challenges:



- Stand a few feet apart, and throw the Frisbee to each other. Every time it is caught, you each take one step back. See how far apart you can get before a miss. Then, move back to the starting positions and play again.

- Hang a hula hoop from a tree. Players stand on opposite sides of the hoop and toss the Frisbee back and forth through the hoop. Count how many catches you make without missing.

- Who can throw the Frisbee the farthest? Take turns tossing it, and use a rock to mark the spot where it lands. ♡

PARENT TO PARENT

Cooking with a friend

My son Garrett loves to cook, so I wasn't surprised when he wanted to invite a friend over to cook together. We looked online for healthy, kid-friendly recipes and came up with a great idea: ice cube-tray "sushi."

When Garrett's friend arrived, they began by making the rice. (I had them use short-grain rice because it's sticky.) I let them measure and pour, and I handled the stove. While the rice cooked, they microwaved asparagus, green beans, and baby carrots to use for toppings. I chopped the vegetables and helped the boys make scrambled eggs.

After everything cooled, the kids sprayed an ice cube tray with nonstick cooking spray, put veggies and egg in each section, and packed rice over them. They refrigerated the tray for five minutes, then popped out their sushi and ate. Garrett's friend had so much fun that he has already invited my son to cook at his house! ♡



IN THE KITCHEN

Dip it in yogurt

Yogurt makes a nutritious breakfast—and it's also great for dipping as a snack or side dish. Using 1 cup plain nonfat Greek yogurt, your child can whip up these quick recipes for a tasty treat.

Dill dipper

Stir $\frac{1}{2}$ tbsp. each fresh (or $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. dried) dill and chives into yogurt. Serve with whole-wheat crackers or baked pita chips.



Cinnamon twist

Mix $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. cinnamon and $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp. each nutmeg and vanilla extract into yogurt. Dunk whole-grain pretzel sticks or fresh strawberries into the dip for a cool after-school snack.

Maple almond

Add 1 tsp. maple syrup and $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. almond extract to yogurt. Mix in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup slivered almonds. This is perfect for eating with fruit or low-fat graham crackers. ♡

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BEST BITES

Foods to sing about

Get your youngster excited about eating new foods by encouraging her to make up songs about them. She could pick a familiar tune (say, "Mary Had a Little Lamb") and change the words to describe the food's taste, color, texture, or scent. *Idea:* "Mary had a roasted yam. It tasted sweet like jam."

Recess games

Head outside with your child, and teach him playground games you enjoyed at his age, such as freeze tag or capture the flag. He'll discover new ways to be active at recess—and learn games to share with his classmates. *Idea:*

Ask him to show you a recess game that you've never played.

DID YOU KNOW?

Nearly one in five children in the U.S. is obese. Since September is National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month, consider making a family pledge that will help everyone maintain a healthy weight. For instance, maybe you'll agree to take walks after dinner and drink only water and fat-free milk.

Just for fun

Q: What food has no beginning and no end?

A: A bagel.

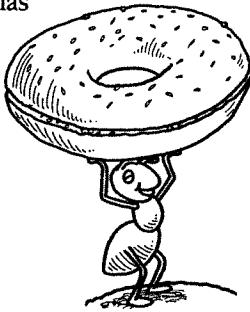


Table time

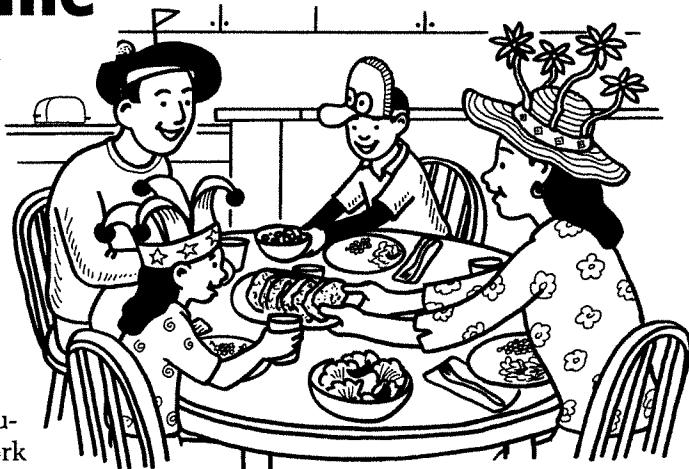
Eating together can build family bonds and inspire your youngster to eat healthier foods. Use these ideas to plan regular meals that he will look forward to.

Make it a habit

Sharing meals as often as possible will get everyone in the routine. Set times that work for your family. That may mean you have a late dinner after soccer practice one evening and an early breakfast before work and school on another morning.

Involve your child

Your youngster will be more interested in eating the meal if he helps to prepare it. He might make a healthy dish like fruit salad. He could also set the table and fill water glasses. *Idea:* Let him create place mats by cutting pictures of



nutritious foods from old magazines and gluing them on construction paper.

Add excitement

Turn the table into a playful place with special-event meals. You might have a "silly hat dinner" (everyone wears a hat that they made or decorated). Use the hats to spark conversation. ("What a great hat. How did you think of it?") Or have each person pick a storybook character and pretend to be that character throughout the meal. ♦

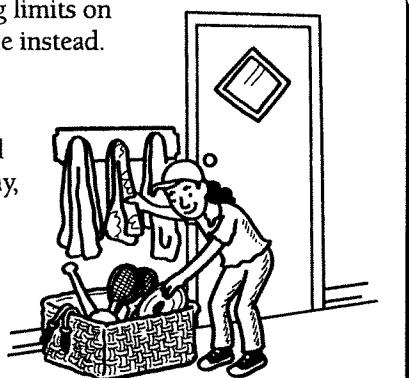
Turn off the screens, turn on the fun

Boost your child's physical activity by setting limits on screen time and encouraging her to play outside instead. Try these strategies.

● **Establish rules.** Tell her when she can and can't have screen time. For example, on school days, you might allow it only after outdoor play, homework, and dinner.

● **Provide inspiration.** Have your youngster fill a basket with active toys like a jump rope, balls, a bat, and a Frisbee. Then, place the basket near the door so it's easy to grab equipment on her way outside.

● **Plan ahead.** Let her make outdoor plans with friends. She could organize a weekly game of kickball or hide-and-seek, for instance. ♦



Waste not, want not

Did you know that nearly one-third of the world's food ends up in the trash? Your family can avoid wasting perfectly good food—plus save money and help the environment—with these tips.



Stick to a list. Reducing food waste starts with buying only what you need. Ask your child to help you plan a week's

Q&A

Handling food allergies at school

Q: My daughter is allergic to eggs, and she's starting school this year. What steps should I take to help her stay safe?

A: Begin by talking to your daughter's teacher, the cafeteria manager, and the school nurse. They'll explain the policies for protecting students with allergies, such as how your child can choose safe foods in the cafeteria.



At the same time, help your daughter learn to take responsibility for managing her allergy. For example, she should only eat her own food and not accept food from other students. Explain that she can't eat homemade goods, such as birthday cupcakes, since there's no way to be certain they're egg-free.

Finally, make sure she knows the symptoms of a reaction, and tell her to get adult help immediately if she notices any or if she thinks she was exposed to eggs.

OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ways to promote healthy nutrition and physical activity for their children.

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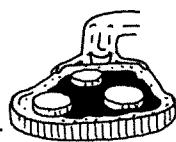
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worth of healthy meals and make a grocery list. Go shopping together, and get only what's on the list.

Take what you'll eat. Encourage your youngster to put on her plate only what she'll eat. Here's a good strategy: She should serve herself less than she thinks she wants—then she could get seconds if she's still hungry.

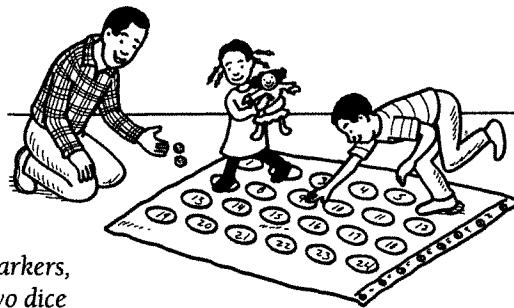
Store leftovers wisely. Have your child label containers of leftovers with dates and contents. Keep fresh foods with older dates in the front of the refrigerator so you won't forget about them. If you won't use leftovers quickly, move them to the freezer. ●



ACTIVITY CORNER

Math-ercise

With this home-made "twist" on Twister, your youngster will improve his balance and flexibility while he practices math facts.



Materials: washable or dry-erase markers, soup can, old shower curtain (plain), two dice

1. Let your child turn the shower curtain into a Twister board. He should trace around the soup can to make 4 rows of 6 circles, then number the circles 1–24.
2. One person is the caller. On each player's turn, the caller rolls the dice, uses the numbers to make a math problem, and says which hand or foot the person must put on the circle containing the answer. So if he chose left foot and rolls 2 and 3, he could say, "Left foot on 2×3 ." The first player would place his left foot on 6 and keep it there until his next turn.
3. Continue until all but one person has fallen out of position—that player wins.

Note: If a player needs a circle that's already covered, the caller gives a new problem. ●

IN THE KITCHEN

Turn toast into art

Let your child "paint" a slice of whole-wheat toast with mashed black beans and decorate it with avocado slices, corn kernels, and chunky salsa. That's just one fun way to create an edible work of art! Here are more.

Parfait

Paint: Fat-free cream cheese
Decorations: Blueberries, sliced strawberries, sprinkle of cinnamon

Mediterranean

Paint: Hummus
Decorations: Cucumber rounds, cherry tomato halves



Rain forest

Paint: Nut or seed butter
Decorations: Banana slices, shaved coconut

Pizza

Paint: Tomato sauce
Decorations: Low-fat shredded mozzarella cheese, spinach leaves, sliced mushrooms

Garden

Paint: Mashed cooked peas
Decorations: Radish slices, crumbled feta cheese ●

Nutrition Nuggets™

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

May 2019



BEST BITES

Salad + whole grains

Here's an easy idea for getting more whole grains into your youngster's diet. Toss cooked grains like brown rice or whole-wheat pasta into salads. He will probably enjoy the contrast of the warm grains and cool greens. *Tip:* Keep things interesting by swapping in different grains like barley or farro.

Active musical chairs

Put a twist on musical chairs the next time your child has friends over. For each round, call out a movement to do when the music stops and before players sit down. *Example:* "Jump up high to touch the sky." If a player forgets, or doesn't get a chair, she's out. The last person left wins the round and calls the next movement.

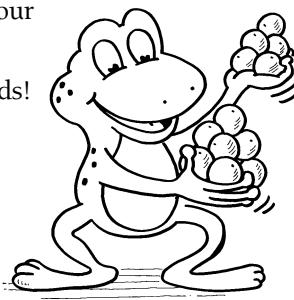
DID YOU KNOW?

If your child gets free or reduced-price meals at school, he can continue getting free meals through the summer under the Summer Food Service Program. Ask the school counselor about sites in your community. These may include schools, parks, or rec centers, and transportation may be provided.

Just for fun

Q: What do you have when there are five oranges in your left hand and seven in your right?

A: Big hands!



Kaye Lynch, MBA
Director of Child Nutrition Program

Smart summer snacking

Without the routine of school days to structure your youngster's eating, she may need a little extra guidance to make good choices. Consider these tips for healthy summer snacking.

Stock up

Let your youngster choose nutritious snacks at the grocery store and keep them in convenient spots at home. Maybe she'll put string cheese, carrot sticks, and grapes in a refrigerator drawer. Or she might place whole-wheat crackers, plain popcorn, and unsalted nuts in a basket in the pantry. *Idea:* Stick notes on the snacks with messages like "Pick me! I'm good for you!"

Make a menu

Does your child need snacks for day care or camp? Let her post a weekly snack menu, just like her school lunch menu. She'll have a say in what she eats, and she'll know what to take each morning. You might help her roll up apple slices and cheese in a whole-wheat tortilla or



leftover chicken and vegetables in a lettuce wrap, for instance.

Go on a snack-nic

Combine snacking with physical activity. Together, pack healthy snacks like hummus and celery sticks or bananas and peanut butter. Then, take along a ball, and walk or bike to a playground for a "snack-nic." Spread out a blanket on the grass or eat at a picnic table. Afterward, play a game of catch. ●

Fun under the stars

Playing outside on a warm summer night can create wonderful memories for your child. Get inspired with these active ideas.

● **Follow the stars.** Point out constellations, such as the Big Dipper. Your youngster can copy the "star picture" in the grass by laying small toys in the same pattern. Have him walk or jump along the starry path. *Tip:* Use a library book or smartphone app to identify constellations.



● **Flashlight tag.** In this version of tag, "It" tags other players with a beam of light. If the flashlight shines on a player, he's caught. Continue until only one player is left. That person becomes "It." ●

Know the right portion size

Keeping portion sizes reasonable will help your child maintain a healthy weight. Guide her with these tips.

Look at your hand. Your child can use her hand to estimate healthy portions. Her palm is about the portion size for lean meat like chicken or fish. A serving of whole grains (rice, pasta) is roughly equal to the size of her fist. Whatever fits in her cupped hand is a good rule of thumb for snacks.



ACTIVITY CORNER

Garden-themed yoga

Use nature to inspire your youngster's fitness with a "garden yoga" session that boosts his strength and flexibility. Try these poses together.

1. Seedling: Curl up, and pretend to be a freshly planted seed. Sit on your heels, and bring your forehead toward the floor. Reach back, resting the tops of your hands on the floor beside your feet.

2. Flower: Stand straight and tall. Bend your left knee, putting the bottom of your foot on the inside of your right leg, just below or just above your knee. Reach toward the sky with your arms. Switch legs, and repeat.



3. Butterfly: Sit up straight, placing the soles of your feet together. Pretend your legs are butterfly wings, and flap them slowly up and down. ♡

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Downsize. Eat on salad plates, and serve soup in a teacup. Your youngster will naturally take smaller portions. Or consider making sliders rather than full-size burgers and choosing taco-size tortillas (not those labeled "burrito" or "fajita").

Listen to body cues. Talk to your youngster about what it feels like to be hungry, full, or too full. If she

hasn't eaten in a while, her stomach might growl and she could get cranky. When she's comfortably full, she'll be satisfied but not stuffed. And if she eats too much, she may feel bloated or get a tummy ache. She'll learn to read her body's cues and be more likely to watch portion sizes. ♡



Q&A

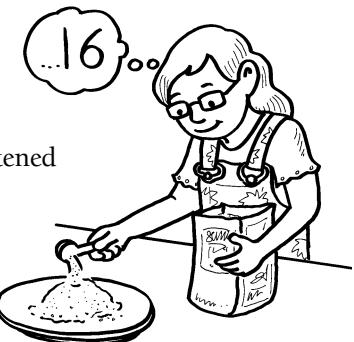
How much sugar is in that?

Q: I'd like to cut down on the sugar my daughter consumes. Where should I start?

A: Limiting sugar is a good idea, since it's full of empty calories and leads to cavities. You can help by encouraging your child to avoid soda and other sweetened drinks and also by shopping carefully.

Your daughter might not know how much sugar is in soda—most people don't! Here's a great way to show her: Ask her to scoop 16 tsp. of sugar onto a plate. That's the amount in a 20-oz. soda—more than 5 times the 3-tsp. daily limit for kids.

Also, sugar is added to many foods that you or your child may not think of as sweet, like pasta sauce and salad dressing. Choose varieties labeled "no added sugar," or better yet, whip up your own. You'll find that basic recipes often take less time than running to the store. ♡



IN THE KITCHEN

Celebrate grilled cheese

April 12 is National Grilled Cheese Sandwich Day. You can enjoy healthy versions of this classic comfort food all month—and year—long. Here are combinations for your child to try on whole-grain bread.

• **Breakfast melt.** Cheddar cheese, scrambled eggs, fresh spinach.

• **Cheesy chicken.** Provolone cheese, cooked chicken, zucchini rounds.

• **Greek griller.** Feta cheese, halved black olives, roasted red peppers.

• **Cordon bleu.** Swiss cheese, lean ham, arugula.

• **Apple pie.** Brie, thin apple slices, a sprinkle of cinnamon.

To grill, place sandwiches (lightly buttered on the outsides) in a skillet over medium heat. Cook, pressing down on the sandwich with a spatula, until the bottom is golden brown. Flip, and cook until the cheese melts. ♡

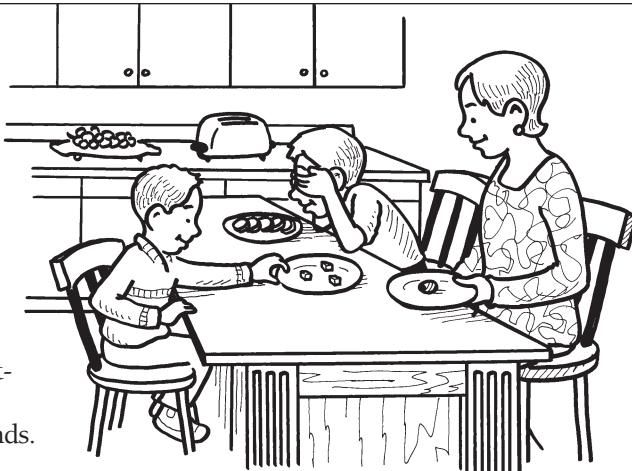


A sensory feast

Your child can explore his senses while he eats. The following activities will encourage him to pay attention to the tastes, scents, and textures of food.

Sweet and salty sort. Give your youngster a serving of trail mix, and ask him which items taste sweet (raisins, dried cranberries) and which taste salty (pretzels, peanuts). He could sort the ingredients into piles according to taste and graph his finds.

Scent guessing game. Encourage your child to identify familiar foods by their scents. On separate plates, serve items like cheese cubes,



a sandwich, you might use soft bread, tender turkey, crunchy sprouts, and smooth avocado slices. Or toss salads with crisp lettuce, firm radish slices, crumbly feta, and creamy dressing. ♡

PARENT TO PARENT

Recipe suggestion box

Pizza, tacos, chicken nuggets...our family tended to eat the same things, and I couldn't find the time to search for new, healthy recipes everyone would like. When I mentioned this to my sister, she showed me her "recipe suggestion box." I loved the idea, so we created one for our kitchen.

I asked my family to collect interesting or unusual recipes. We snipped some from newspapers and food packages, copied recipes from cookbooks, and printed some from our favorite websites. We even clipped recipes from our Nutrition Nuggets newsletters!



My son Tyler decorated a box to store our clippings. Now before we go to the grocery store, we pluck out a couple and buy any ingredients we need. On the menu this week: portobello mushroom shepherd's pie and chickpea gyros! ♡

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banana slices, and olives. Have him close his eyes, smell them one at a time, and tell you what's on each plate. How many can he guess correctly?

Texture combo.

Together, make sandwiches or salads that incorporate as many textures as possible. Then, talk about the textures as you eat. For

Music and movement

ACTIVITY CORNER

Music is a great motivator when it comes to physical activity. Use these tips to encourage your child to be active and build large motor skills.



● **Songs with a twist.** Let your youngster create her own versions of familiar songs. For "The Hokey Pokey," instead of "turn yourself around," she might sing, "Do a forward roll" or "Run up and down the stairs." Or sing "If You're Happy and You Know It," and change the actions to "hop on one foot" or "touch your toes."

● **Make up dances.** Together, choreograph a dance routine using different combinations of moves. Each person could pick a dance step (leap, twirl, jump). Then, have your child use the steps to create a pattern. *Example:* Jump, twirl, twirl, leap, jump, twirl, twirl, leap. Put on music, and let her lead you in performing the routine. ♡

IN THE KITCHEN

Kid-friendly fish dishes

Hook your youngster on healthy fish with these flavorful recipes.



Tilapia foil packets

Your child can wrap these servings up like presents. Set out 4 foil squares. On each square, have her line up 6 asparagus stalks and top with a 4-oz. tilapia fillet. Let her sprinkle each fillet with 1 tsp. lemon juice and add 1 lemon slice. Now she should fold the foil tightly around each serving and place on a baking sheet. Bake at 400° until the fish flakes and the asparagus is tender, about 15–20 minutes.



Salmon and veggie kebabs

Invite your youngster to put together these colorful kebabs. In a bowl, gently toss 1 lb. of salmon chunks with 18 cherry tomatoes, 1 cup cubed red onion, 2 tbsp. olive oil, 1 tbsp. lime juice, 1½ tsp. thyme, and 1 tsp. minced garlic. On separate skewers, your child can thread 1 salmon piece, 2 tomatoes, and 2 onion cubes. Bake at 350° for 15–20 minutes until the fish is cooked through. ♡

Nutrition Nuggets™

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

April 2019



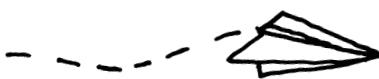
BEST BITES

Healthy fats

What do avocados have in common with tuna? Both contain healthy fats that your child's body needs. These unsaturated fats, also found in olive oil, walnuts, and sunflower seeds, give her energy and help her absorb vitamins A, D, E, and K. Plus, they keep her full longer, which may prevent overeating.

Paper airplane contest

Throwing paper airplanes—and running to retrieve them—will get your family's hearts pumping. Let each

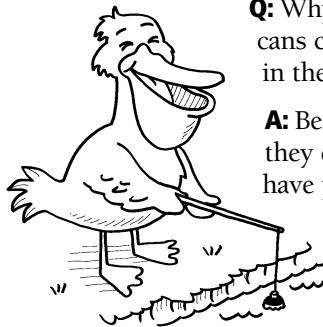


person fold sheets of paper into planes, then go outside and see whose flies the farthest. Your youngster can run to the spot where his plane lands and throw again from there.

DID YOU KNOW?

Gluten can hide in foods like rice mixes, canned soups, soy sauce, and salad dressings. If your child's doctor recommends a gluten-free diet, read food labels so your youngster learns what to avoid. Idea: Together, make a list of words to look for, like *wheat, barley, durum, semolina*, and *rye*.

Just for fun



Q: Why do pelicans carry fish in their beaks?

A: Because they don't have pockets!

Kaye Lynch, MBA

Director of Child Nutrition Program

From apricots to zucchini

Do fruits and vegetables come in every color? Does the name of any produce start with Q? Motivate your youngster to learn about fruits and veggies—and eat more of them—with these fun activities.

Rainbow book

Different colors mean different nutrients—that's why it's important to eat a "rainbow." Have your child make a book of the produce he eats. Help him staple together red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple construction paper. Each time he eats a fruit or veggie, he can draw or glue a picture on the page matching its color. After a week, he'll have a record of the rainbow he ate!

Produce trading cards

Encourage your youngster to experiment with produce prepared in different ways by making trading cards. A sweet potato card might say, "Delicious with: Baked apples and cinnamon. Also seen: Standing in for french fries." Let him



help you plan meals by drawing a card and deciding how tonight's vegetable should be cooked.

Memory game

This game introduces new produce for your child to try. One player says, "I'm going to the store for *apricots*" (or any fruit or vegetable starting with A). The next person adds a B food: "I'm going to the store for *apricots* and *broccoli*." Continue until you get to Z. (Look online if you get stuck.) Now, put a few new items on your grocery list. ●

March to the beat

Let your child invite her friends over to play marching band. They can whip up homemade instruments and set a workout to music with these ideas.

Instruments

- Trumpet:**

Blow through an empty paper towel tube.



- Drum:**

Turn a metal pot upside down, and bang on it with a wooden spoon.



- Tambourine:** Fill a paper plate with dry beans. Staple a second plate on top, and shake.

Marches

- Shapes:** Spread out to form a large triangle, and march toward the center to create a small one. Repeat with squares and circles.

- Flock:** March in a "V" formation—like a flock of birds.

- Single file:** Have the drummer lead the way. Trade instruments (and leaders). ●

Nutrition Nuggets™

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

March 2019



BEST BITES

Colorful stir-fries

Add variety to your youngster's diet by using different combinations of vegetables in stir-fries. Try bok choy with red cabbage and carrots, or zucchini with green beans and red bell pepper. He might discover new veggies he enjoys. Note: For children who don't like their food "mixed up," you could stir-fry each vegetable separately.



Let's walk to the barbershop

To increase your child's daily steps, walk together wherever possible. Bring her along when you get a haircut, shop at the corner store, or go to the bank. Also, take the stairs rather than the elevator or escalator. *Tip:* When you do drive, park far from the entrance for a longer walk.

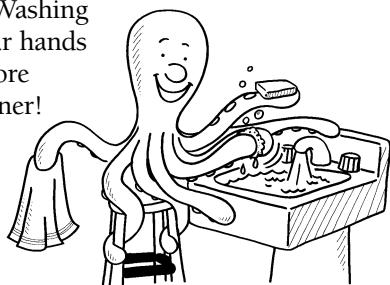
DID YOU KNOW?

Many supermarket chains now have mobile apps that can help you save money on groceries. Find out which stores in your area offer this, and consider downloading an app. You may find coupons and discounts in addition to advertised sales.

Just for fun

Q: What's the worst thing about being an octopus?

A: Washing your hands before dinner!



Cooking: Mash, pour, measure, and more

Invite your children into the kitchen to help you cook. They'll learn about healthy eating, cooking techniques, and meal planning.

Experiment away

Fish-shaped crackers instead of croutons in salad? A mashed-potato-and-pea parfait? Why not! Provide healthy ingredients, then step back and let your youngsters be creative. They'll become comfortable in the kitchen, and they'll be more likely to eat food they make themselves. *Idea:* Suggest that they write and illustrate their recipes on index cards.

Put on a show

Pretend you're a famous chef on a cooking show and your children are the audience. Demonstrate how to use a salad spinner or a whisk. ("I'm putting the lid on this spinner. Now I'm rotating the handle, and voila! It spins the water out of the lettuce.") Then, let your youngsters take



turns being the celebrity chef and explaining techniques.

Use teamwork

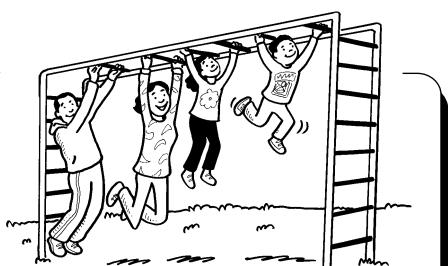
Have each person pick a food group (vegetables, fruits, grains, protein, dairy) and choose an ingredient from that group. Then, work together to make a meal that incorporates everything. Say you pick sweet potato, apple, whole-wheat tortillas, black beans, and cheese. Perhaps you'll make sweet potato-bean-cheese enchiladas with a side of apple slices. ❤

March: Lion or lamb?

As the saying goes, "March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb." Stay active regardless of the weather with these suggestions.

On a windy day...

Blow up a balloon, and go outdoors for a game of "windball." Set the balloon in the middle of the yard, and chase it around as the wind blows it. After someone catches it, he bats it away with his hand to start the game again. The first player to catch the balloon five times wins.



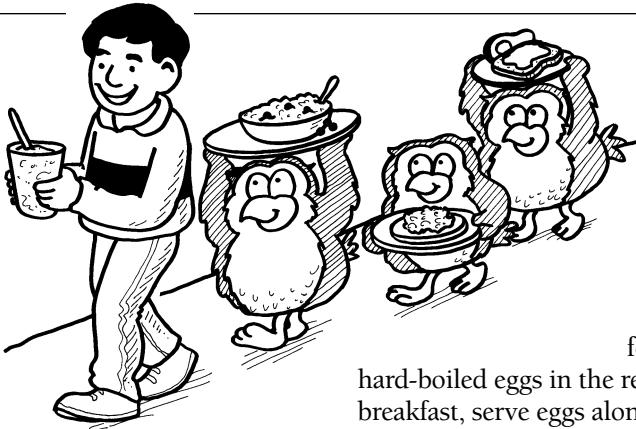
On a calm day...

Head to a playground for a game of follow the leader—just like little lambs. Your child might have your family tiptoe on a balance beam, swing across the monkey bars, climb a ladder, and go down a twisty slide. ❤

Breakfasts that boost brainpower

A healthy breakfast fuels your child's brain on test day—and every day. Here are four simple ways to provide the carbohydrate-fat-protein combo that promotes concentration, memory, and thinking.

1. Leafy greens. Toss a few leaves of spinach, kale, or chard into the blender when you make your youngster a fruit smoothie. Serve alongside a whole-wheat bagel or English muffin topped with fat-free cream cheese.



PARENT TO PARENT Cut back on processed foods

I know that many packaged snacks and frozen dinners have too much sugar, salt, and fat, but they're so convenient! I mentioned this to the cafeteria manager at my son Isaiah's school, and she had good advice.

She suggested we look for foods that are close to what you'd find in nature. Now Isaiah and I use her "test" at the store. I'll ask, "Do apple chips grow on trees?" and he'll say, "No, but apples do!"



Also, we try to buy foods with fewer ingredients, since the cafeteria manager said those tend to be less processed. For example, we've started making "real" versions of frozen entrees. This week, we passed up microwave fettuccine alfredo and bought frozen plain broccoli, whole-grain pasta, olive oil, and Parmesan cheese. Dinner took a little longer, but it tasted better, and it was more nutritious. ♡

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2. Berries. Let your child stir blueberries, raspberries, or strawberries into his oatmeal or Greek yogurt for a smart start.

3. Eggs. Top a whole-grain waffle with scrambled eggs, and have your youngster fold it like a taco. Or keep hard-boiled eggs in the refrigerator. For a complete breakfast, serve eggs alongside cereal and a banana.

4. Avocados. The good fat in avocados promotes healthy brain development. Your child can mash half of an avocado, spread it on whole-wheat toast, and sprinkle on red pepper flakes if he likes "heat." ♡

ACTIVITY CORNER

I'm a runner!

Running is a great whole-body workout for your youngster. Lace up your sneakers, and try these running games.

Run, walk, run

Help your child gradually work up to running longer distances. Take turns choosing a spot (a tree, a building). Run to it, walk for 30 seconds, and pick the next destination. At first, aim for something nearby, like the stop sign at the end of the block. Soon maybe you'll run all the way to her school.



Find the "treasure"

Build speed with this game. Let your child collect 20 small objects (Rubik's Cube, paperweight, tennis ball) in a basket. Head to a nearby field, and scatter the items around, leaving plenty of space to run between them. Now have everyone run to gather the objects, one at a time, and return each to the basket. ♡

IN THE KITCHEN

Shake-a-salad

Fill, shake, and eat.

That's the winning formula behind fun-for-you and good-for-you salad shake-ups.

To assemble: Give your child an empty container. Have her fill it with any of these combinations, put the lid on, and shake, shake, shake.

Deli delight. Chunks of leftover deli meat (lean ham, turkey, or roast beef), shredded skim mozzarella cheese, chopped lettuce, grape tomatoes, and low-fat ranch dressing.



Southwest slam. Cooked lean ground beef, chopped lettuce, shredded low-fat cheddar cheese, diced tomatoes, and a sprinkling of low-sodium taco seasoning.

Pasta mix-up. Cooked macaroni, black olives, chopped red pepper, grated Parmesan cheese, and Italian dressing.

Tip: Add something that makes a "shake sound," such as nuts or baked pita chips, to put even more fun in the shaking. ♡

Nutrition Nuggets™

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

February 2019



BEST BITES

Give this a whirl!

Bring out the gymnast in your children with this colorful idea. Help them knot different-colored ribbons securely to yardsticks or wooden dowels. They'll build coordination as they spin or dance around and wave their arms to create figure 8s, circles, and ripples with the ribbons.

Turn to turnips

Loaded with fiber, potassium, vitamin C, and protein, turnips deserve a spot on your child's plate. Peel a raw turnip, and grate it over his salad. Cut it into matchsticks and serve with hummus. Or dice turnips and add to soups, stews, and casseroles. Note: Try other root vegetables like rutabaga and parsnips, they contain similar health benefits.

DID YOU KNOW?

Vitamin K helps blood clot and keeps bones healthy. To be sure your youngster gets the recommended amount, try adding spinach, kale, lettuce, and other leafy greens to her diet. More good sources of vitamin K include brussels sprouts, blueberries, broccoli, and figs.

Just for fun

Q: What can you catch in the winter with your eyes closed?

A: A cold.



Kaye Lynch, MBA

Director of Child Nutrition Program

Raise an adventurous eater

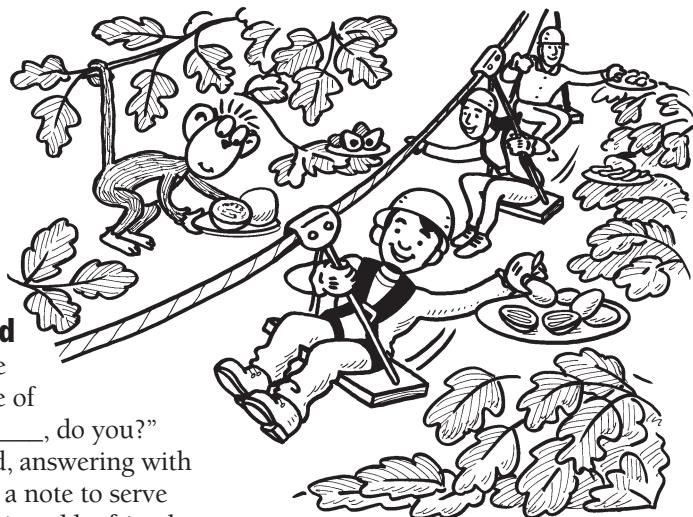
You want your child to eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, lean protein, and whole grains. He wants macaroni and cheese. Always. Try these strategies to break through his picky-eater pattern.

Get friends involved

The next time you're carpooling, lead a game of "I like to eat healthy _____, do you?" The kids can go around, answering with foods they enjoy. Make a note to serve some of the foods mentioned by friends. Your youngster just may be willing to try ones that his peers like!

Guess the mystery ingredient

Add an unfamiliar food to a dish that includes a few of your child's favorite ingredients. For example, toss kiwi into a fruit salad. Or put lima beans in mixed vegetables. Have him close his eyes and take a few bites. Let him name the familiar foods and guess the new one.



Explore as a dinner guest

When your youngster eats at someone else's house, encourage him to sample a little of whatever is served. He could add a spoonful of beets to his plate, for example, or take a small piece of salmon. When he gets home, ask what he tried. Can he describe its taste? Then, consider making it at home—he might be willing to eat a dish "like the one at Joey's house." ●

Fitness coding

When does ABC mean hop, crawl, and skip? When kids combine coding with fitness in this game! Here's how.

1. Have your youngster write the alphabet down the left side of a sheet of paper and fill in a movement beside each letter. For example, A = hop on one foot for 10 seconds, B = crawl like a crab, C = skip to the tree and back.



2. Now take turns secretly choosing a word and doing the movements for each letter. Other players consult the list and write the "code" by figuring out which letter matches each movement. So if the code is s-n-o-w, the secret word is snow. The first person to say the word picks the next one. ●

Bullying and food allergies

Nearly a third of youngsters with food allergies report being bullied about not being able to eat certain foods. If your child has a food allergy or is friends with someone who does, she can use this advice.

Recognize bullying. If a classmate knows that someone is allergic to a food and waves it in her face, pressures her to eat it, or puts it on her



cafeteria tray, that's bullying. It's also dangerous and could make the child sick or possibly lead to death. Your child needs to let an adult know right away if this happens.

Keep food safe. If your youngster has food allergies, help her protect herself from bullies. For example, tell her to only accept food from a trusted adult who is aware of her allergy. Also, she shouldn't leave her food unattended. She could ask a friend to help her keep an eye on her cafeteria tray, or she can offer to look out for a friend who is allergic.

Note: Make sure your child knows which foods she is allergic to and is familiar with the symptoms of a reaction. ♦

ACTIVITY CORNER

Indoor scavenger hunts

Amp up the indoor fun this winter with a scavenger hunt for your child and his friends.

• Color hunt. Assign each child a different color, then hide a dozen Legos or blocks of each color. Players race to find all the blocks of their color.



• Puzzle hunt. Break out a 25-piece jigsaw puzzle and hide the pieces around the house. When the youngsters have all 25 pieces, they can put the puzzle together.

• Shape hunt. Ask the children to list all the shapes they can think of. They can run around and each try to find one item of every shape. Maybe the remote control is a rectangular prism, a soccer ball is a sphere, and a paper towel is a square. ♦

OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ways to promote healthy nutrition and physical activity for their children.

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Q&A Organized sports: Finding the best fit

Q: My daughter wants to join a sports team, but I don't know where to start. Any suggestions?

A: Taking part in an organized sport is a terrific way for your child to stay active. Plus, it can boost her self-esteem and social skills. Start by talking with your daughter about her interests. Which sports does she enjoy playing during PE or on the playground?

Then, see what's available in your area. Your youngster's school and the parks and recreation department are good places to start. Look into the time commitment and costs involved in various sports.

To learn more, you could also talk to other parents whose children have participated.

Finally, consider having her try a few sports, perhaps one each season, to find her favorites. ♦



IN THE KITCHEN

Stay warm with chili

Try these big-batch spins on family favorites.

Slow-cooker chicken chili

In a slow cooker, combine the following:

- 2 lbs. boneless chicken breasts (cubed)
- 2 15-oz. cans pinto beans (drained, rinsed)
- 1 14.5-oz. can diced tomatoes
- 1 15-oz. can tomato sauce
- 1½ cups frozen corn
- 1 tbsp. chili powder
- 1 tsp. each cumin, dried oregano, and minced garlic
- Cook on high for 1 hour, then on low for 3–4 hours.



Lentil vegetarian chili

In a large pot, stir together:

- 4 14.5-oz. cans diced tomatoes
- 2 15-oz. cans kidney beans (drained, rinsed)
- 3 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- 2 cups uncooked green lentils
- 1½ cups each diced onion and bell pepper
- 3 tbsp. chili powder
- 2 tbsp. garlic powder

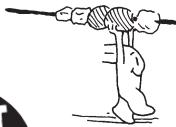
Boil, then cover and simmer 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in:

- 1 8-oz. can tomato sauce
- 1 6-oz. can tomato paste
- Heat 5 minutes more. ♦

Nutrition Nuggets™

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

January 2019



BEST BITES

Popcorn party

National Popcorn Day is January 19! You and your youngster can enjoy this treat with a healthy twist. Instead of topping your popcorn with butter, sprinkle it with chili powder or cinnamon. Or drizzle with melted dark chocolate and add coconut flakes. *Tip:* Choose air-popped or plain microwave popcorn to avoid oil and salt.



Spring activity sign-up

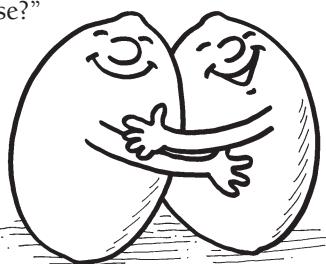
Get a head start on spring by signing your child up for sports and activities now. Talk to her about sports she's interested in, and then check registration dates. You might look into T-ball, soccer, roller hockey, and lacrosse leagues. Or she may want to take tennis lessons, join a running club, or try cheerleading.

DID YOU KNOW? Your youngster's stomach is roughly the size of his two fists. That image can give him (and you) an idea of how much food it takes to fill him up. Help him control portion sizes by serving smaller meals and snacks that will satisfy his hunger but curb overeating.

Just for fun

Q: How does a lemon ask for a hug?

A: "Can you give me a squeeze, please?"



Healthy winter traditions

Start 2019 off with new and fun family traditions that will motivate your child to eat healthy foods. Try these ideas.

Cold-weather cookouts

On a clear day, fire up the backyard barbecue or head to a park that has grills. Take along lean burger patties, whole-wheat buns, and fixings like lettuce and tomato. Also, fill a thermos with hot apple cider, and pack nutritious side dishes like mashed sweet potatoes or steamed green beans in insulated containers.



just as nutritious as fresh, and they're available year-round.

Themed potlucks

Take turns hosting healthy potlucks with relatives or friends. The host gets to pick the theme! Maybe all foods must begin with C, such as carrots and celery sticks, vegetable chili, and cornbread. Or choose an ingredient (say, oranges) that every dish must include (orange-glazed chicken, spinach salad with mandarin orange slices). ●

Five-minute circuit

In just five minutes, your youngster can complete his own "fitness circuit" and build endurance and strength. Have him post instructions around the house and do his circuit a few times a day. Here are suggestions.



1. Basement: Jump rope while singing your favorite song.

2. Foyer: Throw a ball straight up, clap three times, and catch the ball.

3. Living room: Pretend you're a soldier going under a fence. Lay on the ground, and use your elbows to "army crawl" under a table.

4. Kitchen: Line up chairs, and skip around them.

5. Laundry room: Jump back and forth over an upside-down laundry basket. ●