

Nutrition Nuggets

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

September 2018



BEST BITES

Wash your hands

Want to lower the chance of your child getting sick or spreading germs? Make it a family habit to wash hands regularly—and always before preparing food or eating. Scrub with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds, about the time it takes to sing the alphabet song.

Balance like a squirrel

Fun fact: Squirrels use their tails for balance as they scurry across branches. For a playful way to work on balance, have your child pretend she's a squirrel. Let her use chalk to draw a line on the sidewalk. She can run along the line, one foot in front of the other. Ask how *she* balances (perhaps with her arms out at her sides).



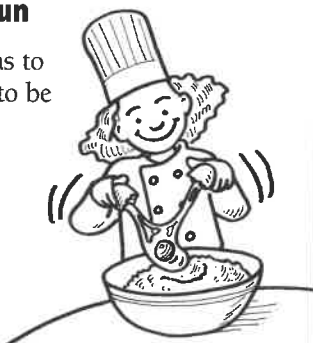
DID YOU KNOW?

Your youngster could eat a different kind of apple every day for 20 years! That's because apples come in more than 7,500 varieties. Challenge him to count the types at your grocery store or farmers' market. He could keep a list of ones he tries, perhaps putting a star beside his favorites. *Bonus:* They're *all* excellent sources of fiber and good sources of vitamin C.

Just for fun

Q: What has to be broken to be used?

A: An egg.



Washington County Virginia Public Schools
Ms. Francine Ivery, Manager School Nutrition

Routines for healthy eating

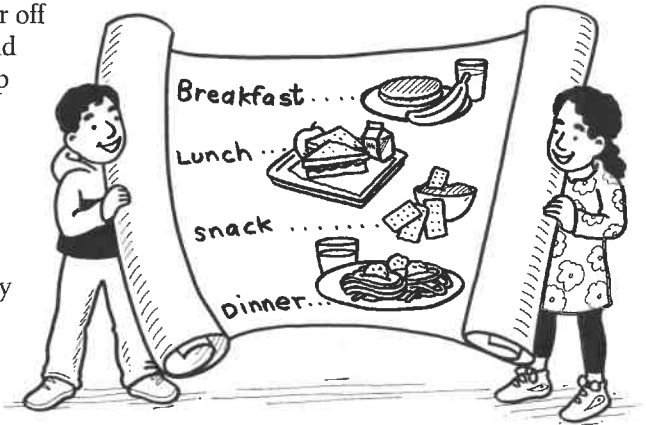
Starting a new school year off right includes setting up solid routines for eating well. Help your youngster map out a good strategy for each part of her day.

Jump-start the morning

A healthy breakfast prepares your child for a full day of learning. Consider letting her eat breakfast in the school cafeteria. She'll save time and get a balanced meal with whole grains, protein, low-fat dairy, and fruit. *Idea:* Have her make a "breakfast tracker" chart. Every day, she could draw a different-colored star for each food group she ate from.

Boost afternoon energy

Your youngster will want a snack to tide her over until dinnertime—make sure it's a nutritious one! She might pack whole-wheat crackers, hummus, and grapes to munch on at after-school care. Or if she comes right home after school,



she could eat half of a turkey and tomato sandwich with a glass of milk before she tackles homework.

Fuel up at dinner

Try to eat dinner together, even on busy evenings. Fitting dinner prep into your morning routine is one way to make this happen. For example, put chili ingredients into a slow cooker. Another idea is to prepare the night before, perhaps marinating chicken and cutting up vegetables. ●

"Fall" for physical activity

The longer, warmer days of summer are winding down. Use these ideas to keep up your child's physical activity when fall arrives.

● **Be active in school:** Encourage your youngster to wear sneakers every day so he's comfortable playing at recess. He might also join an after-school activity like a running club or a kickball team.

● **Take advantage of daylight:** Let your child play outside right after school or child care. Consider saving chores for after dinner.

● **Dress appropriately:** It's great to play outside year round. In cooler weather, layers are ideal because your youngster can shed them as exercise warms him up. ●



Books that inspire good nutrition

Picture books offer a fun way to drive home messages about healthy eating. They can also encourage picky eaters to be more adventurous. Here are topics, books, and activities for getting started—ask your child’s school librarian for more book recommendations.



Topic: Fruits and vegetables

Book picks: *Blueberries for Sal* (Robert McCloskey), *Creepy Carrots!* (Aaron Reynolds)

Activity: Talk about how the characters prepared their fruits and veggies, and brainstorm different ways to serve them in your home. You could make blueberry and cottage cheese “pizzas” on English muffins or put together a carrot-and-raisin salad.

Topic: Picky eaters

Book picks: *Gregory, the Terrible Eater* (Mitchell Sharmat), *The Seven Silly Eaters* (Mary Ann Hoberman)

Activity: Ask your youngster to draw a picture of foods that both he and the characters like to eat. Now have him draw a food that they might all want to try! 🍌

Topic: Cooking

Book picks: *Growing Vegetable Soup* (Lois Ehlert), *Good Enough to Eat* (Lizzy Rockwell)

Activity: Follow a recipe from the book together, but let your child put his own twist on it. Maybe he’ll add mini whole-wheat pasta shells to soup or make yogurt pops with his own combinations of fruit.

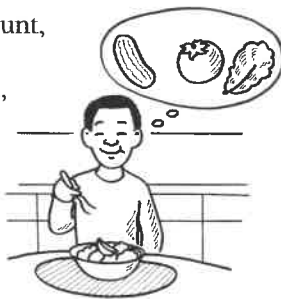


PARENT TO PARENT

Mindful eating

I recently read that “mindless eating” can lead to overeating and weight gain. I recognized my son in this article—sometimes I feel like he inhales his food without even tasting it!

I asked my aunt, who works in a school cafeteria, for advice. She suggested that we make it a habit at meal-time to slow down and talk about what we’re



eating. She said a good trick is to close your eyes while chewing so you can concentrate on the textures and flavors.

My aunt also said we should turn off the TV so we focus on our food rather than on a show. I’m hoping that eating “mindfully” will slow my son down—and help him realize when he’s full so that he doesn’t overeat. 🍌

ACTIVITY CORNER

Take a hike, family-style!

Hiking is a heart-healthy activity that also strengthens your youngster’s (and your) muscles. Try these tips for a successful family adventure:

- Stop by the visitor center or ranger station at a state or national park, or search online for “family-friendly hikes” in your area. Choose a trail that’s suited to your child’s stamina and ability by considering the distance and the terrain (hilly or flat, rocky or smooth).
- Build in stops to share a healthy snack, rest, and appreciate nature. Together, make a list of things to spot (moss growing on a rock, a red bird, a furry animal, a yellow flower). Let your youngster bring a magnifying glass for a close-up look at bugs and plants. Or have her pack a sketchpad and crayons so she can create crayon rubbings of tree bark or draw the view from scenic overlooks. 🍌



IN THE KITCHEN

Stuffed veggies

With these nutritious recipes, your youngster can have her “bowl” and eat it, too.

Chicken-salad tomatoes

Combine 3 cups cooked, shredded chicken with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped celery and 3 tbsp. light mayonnaise. Cut 3 large tomatoes in half, and remove the insides. Divide the chicken salad into the tomato halves.

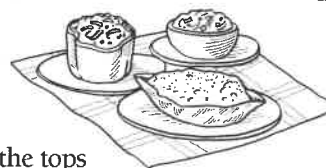
Cheeseburger peppers

Cook 1 lb. lean ground turkey. Drain fat, and stir in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup diced onions. Slice off the tops of 3 bell peppers, and remove the seeds.

Fill with the turkey mixture, and top each pepper with 2 tbsp. shredded cheddar. Bake at 350° for 25 minutes.

Apple-cinnamon sweet potatoes

Pierce 4 sweet potatoes a few times with a fork, and bake at 425° for 45 minutes. Cut the potatoes in half. Scoop out the insides, and mash them in a bowl with 1 apple (peeled and chopped), 1 tbsp. butter, 1 tbsp. brown sugar, and $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. cinnamon. Spoon into each potato half. 🍌



OUR PURPOSE

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

Resources for Educators,
a division of CCH Incorporated
128 N. Royal Avenue • Front Royal, VA 22630
800-394-5052 • rfcustomer@wolterskluwer.com
www.rfeonline.com

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

ISSN 1935-4630

Teen Food & Fitness

Healthy Ideas for Middle and High School Students

September 2018

Washington County Virginia Public Schools
Ms. Francine Ivery, Manager School Nutrition



FAST TAKES

Concussions: Know the signs

Tweens and teens who play a contact sport like football, ice hockey, or soccer are at risk for concussions. Symptoms, including headache, nausea, dizziness, and sensitivity to light, don't always show up right away. That means your athlete should tell an adult immediately after any blow to the head so he can be tested for a concussion.

Did You Know?

Just 15 minutes of daily meditation is thought to improve memory and reduce stress. This may lead to better performance



in school and a calmer child at home. Your teen could meditate any-time simply by

sitting silently and focusing on her breathing. Or she might search online for meditation apps.

Easy on the cheese!

As an excellent source of protein and calcium, cheese can be a healthy snack. But it's also high in fat and calories. Keep your tween from overdoing it by having him aim for a 1-oz. serving (about the size of two dice). For shredded cheese, he could use a loosely packed $\frac{1}{4}$ -cup measure—that's about 1 oz.

Just for fun

Q: If you were running a race and just passed the person in second place, what place would you be in?

A: Second place.



The magic of family meals

Celebrate Family Meals Month by making a commitment to eat healthy foods together. You'll help your teen maintain a healthy weight, eat a more nutritious diet, and develop better lifelong food habits. Plus, you'll connect as a family. Consider these strategies.



Involve your child

Get her excited about preparing and eating nutritious meals. You might give her a weekly mission to find a recipe that uses seasonal produce. Or let your teenager plan a theme night like "Food Truck Friday," featuring healthier versions of food truck favorites like street corn (swap yogurt for mayo) or grilled cheese sandwiches (use whole-wheat bread).

Set an example

Mealtime is a chance for parents to demonstrate healthy eating. Studies show that people pick up the eating habits of those they share meals with. That means

seeing you pile vegetables on your plate, take a small portion of meat, and choose fruit instead of cake for dessert can be contagious!

Take time to talk

Discuss nutritious foods to help your tween learn about them. You could challenge everyone to guess the ingredients and describe the flavors in each dish. Try to keep the conversation pleasant by mentioning nice moments from your day and avoiding topics that cause tension. This helps your teen have a good attitude toward family meals. ♥

Make the most of the stairs

Taking the stairs can get your tween's heart rate up, strengthen muscles, and burn double the calories of walking on a flat surface. Use these tips to help him step it up.

Start a habit. When you're out and about, urge the whole family to seek out the stairs. In a tall building, you could walk up as far as possible and ride the elevator the rest of the way. Or take breatherers by stopping on landings.

Use household stairs. Encourage your child to walk up and down the stairs in your house or apartment building when he needs a break from homework or chores.

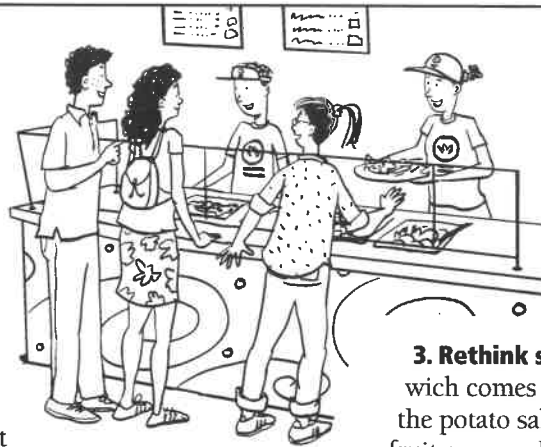
Visit the track. The school bleachers are ready-made for running steps. Have everyone start simply: Run up a set, jog across the top row, then jog down. ♥



Fast, casual, and healthy

Fast casual restaurants tend to offer bigger selections of nutritious ingredients than fast food chains. Here's how your teenager can make the best decisions at these places.

1. Plan ahead. Ask your child to search for fast casual menus online that include whole grains or focus on vegetable dishes. He might find a burrito joint that has whole-wheat tortillas and brown rice or a place that specializes in salads or stir-fries.



2. Watch out for extras. Even the most nutritious flatbread sandwich or noodle bowl will be high in fat if your tween loads it up with ranch dressing or fried chicken. Encourage him to customize his orders with extra veggies or grilled chicken instead.

3. Rethink sides. If your teen's barbecue sandwich comes with a side dish, he might replace the potato salad or mac 'n' cheese with fresh fruit or a small salad. Or suggest that he top tacos with salsa and a spoonful of guacamole rather than sour cream and queso.

Tip: Restaurant portions can be huge, so your child could eat half and save the rest for the next day. ●

Q & A Positive body image

Q: My son Liam compares himself to taller boys at school and "buff" guys on TV and then complains that he's smaller. How can I help him?

A: First, reassure your son that how he feels is normal. Then, remind him that his body is unique and will change over time. Also, point out that just because a TV star looks muscular doesn't mean he's healthy.



Encourage your child to focus on his strengths (he's a whiz with technology, for example). You might also brainstorm ways to get more exercise. Maybe he can start doing push-ups and squats. Or he could take up an activity like karate or racquetball. Let him know the goal isn't to get "buff," but to be strong and healthy.

Finally, avoid talking negatively or excessively about your size—or other people's—around him. This will help him learn not to focus on appearance. ●

OUR PURPOSE

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

Resources for Educators,
a division of CCH Incorporated
128 N. Royal Avenue • Front Royal, VA 22630
800-394-5052 • rfeustomer@wolterskluwer.com
www.rfeonline.com

Teen Food & Fitness™ is reviewed by a registered dietitian. Consult a physician before beginning any major change in diet or exercise.

ISSN 1935-8865



ACTIVITY CORNER

Getting to 60 minutes

Your teen should get at least an hour of exercise each day to help her stay healthy. But she doesn't have to do it all at once. Share these ideas for breaking up activity into bursts.

10 in 10. Together, create a deck of 10-minute workouts on index cards. Write an exercise on each ("Jump rope," "Do burpees"). Then, pull out a card, and do what it says whenever you have 10 minutes.

15-minute circuit. Visit a baseball diamond, or set up bases in your yard. Starting at home plate, walk or run to first, run backward to second, lunge-walk to third, and hop to home. Then, do a plank (with forearms and toes on the ground and back and legs straight), holding 30–60 seconds. Repeat the circuit for 15 minutes.

30-minute trips. Map out destinations that take 30 minutes by foot or bike. Choose places you enjoy visiting, such as the library or the park, or incorporate errands like a grocery run. ●



In the Kitchen

Bowls: Sweet, savory, or both!

Your tween will be bowled over by these fun recipes.

Sushi roll in a bowl

For each bowl, use $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked brown rice, and drizzle with 1 tsp. rice vinegar. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ of a cucumber (diced), $\frac{1}{3}$ of an avocado (diced), $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cooked tofu (cubed), and 1 tsp. sesame seeds. Top with sriracha and 1 crushed nori (seaweed) snack sheet, if desired.

Pumpkin pie oat bowl

Mix $\frac{1}{4}$ cup canned pumpkin puree into 1 cup cooked oatmeal. Sprinkle with $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. pumpkin pie

spice (or cinnamon), 1 tbsp. raisins, 1 tbsp. pumpkin seeds, and $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. maple syrup.

Pineapple tuna bowl

Combine 1 cup salad greens with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked quinoa, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup canned tuna (packed in water, drained), $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fresh pineapple chunks, and 1 tbsp. chopped red onion. Add a squeeze of fresh lime juice before serving. ●

