



Healthy School Snacks

Written by: Phyllis Reid-Jarvis, Dietitian, Certified Life Coach and Breakfast for Learning Board Member

Deciding what to make for lunch is a big challenge for many parents, not to mention the added pressure of deciding on a healthy lunch option. If you are like most parents, you want to make sure your children are frequently eating foods that are wholesome and nutritious. This means those packaged and processed 'snacks' are not an option.

Here are some ideas and tips for getting your children involved in preparing healthy snacks:

- ***Fruit and Vegetables*** - Fruit and vegetables have been long known to be the best snack foods available. Make sure you include these foods as part of the lunch meal at least 3 days per week. Children can help prepare these foods very easily by washing, dicing, and slicing (with supervision of course!).
- ***Pair Foods*** - Try to pair fruit and vegetables with different cheeses. Children can slice the cheese or cube and put the cheese on toothpicks to make it more interesting. Use hard cheeses not processed slices.
- ***Say Cheese*** - Introduce children to different flavours of cheese such as smoked, jalapeno, and peppercorn. These options can add more variety and spark more interest in snacks.
- ***Trail Mix*** - Ask children to help you make nut-free trail mixes by using sunflower and pumpkin seeds as protein sources. Combine them with dried fruits such as apricot, apple, and pear.
- ***Dips*** - Involve children in preparing a batch of dip such as hummus, avocado dip, black bean dip and tzatziki. These dips go well with snacks like vegetables, mini bagels, bagel chips, and crackers.
- ***Granola*** - Nut-free homemade granola gets the whole family involved. Kids love to make these fun and healthy foods, and parents are happy knowing they get eaten!
- ***Smoothies*** - Fruit and vegetable smoothies are fast, nutritious and easy to make. Children can assist in assembling and pushing the button on the food processor.

For more healthy snack ideas visit:

www.eatrightontario.ca/en/Articles/Cooking/Food-Preparation/Quick-and-Easy-Snack-Ideas

About Breakfast for Learning

Breakfast for Learning is committed to ensuring students attend school well nourished and ready to learn. During the 2014/15 school year, Breakfast for Learning invested in 2,174 breakfast, lunch and snack programs, serving 271,663 children and youth and providing over 44 million nourishing meals and snacks. Since 1992, Breakfast for Learning has helped 3.6 million children and youth across Canada enjoy over 554 million healthy meals and snacks. For more information, visit breakfastforlearning.ca.