

# Nutrition Nuggets

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

January 2017

Palmyra-Eagle Area School District



## BEST BITES

### School meals rock

Would your youngster enjoy X-ray Vision Carrots, Rainbow Risotto, or Squish Squash Lasagna? Today's school lunches feature plenty of good-for-you foods, often with cool names. Interest your child in eating her school's meals by reviewing the weekly menus together and helping her make choices. Each evening, let her describe the tastes to you.

### Push it

Push-ups are a terrific strength-training exercise. They're also convenient—they can be done anywhere. When



your youngster does them, have him keep his body "flat like a table" from the top of his head down to his heels. How many can he do? Even better: Do push-ups alongside him, and challenge each other to do one more!

### DID YOU KNOW?

Dish sponges are frequently teeming with bacteria. Regularly sanitizing yours will help keep your family healthy. Run it through a dishwasher on the "heated dry" setting, or soak it for 5 minutes in a solution of 2 tbsp. bleach to 3 cups water. Sponges without any metal may be soaked in water and microwaved on high for 1 minute.

### Just for fun

**Q:** Why do fish live in salt water?

**A:** Because pepper makes them sneeze.



## Kids + cooking = fun!

Encourage your child to eat healthier foods by getting her involved "behind the scenes" in meal preparation. Here are some motivating and inviting strategies.

### Focus on shapes

Foods come in many different shapes. To highlight circles, your youngster might toss together a salad of cooked wagon wheel pasta, cherry tomatoes, and round yellow bell pepper slices. Or help her make "veggie cubes" by cutting sweet potatoes and parsnips into square shapes, mixing with a little olive oil, and roasting at 400° for 20 minutes or until tender.

### Explore textures

Show your child how the texture of food can change. Shred a bunch of fresh kale, and have her taste it raw. Then, ask her to stir the rest with Italian dressing and let it sit for 30 minutes. How does the texture feel when she tastes it again? You could explain that the vinegar (which

contains acetic acid) in the dressing softens the kale.

### Dinner and a movie

Make a meal with your youngster based on a favorite movie—and then watch the movie after you eat. Spaghetti and meatballs are perfect for *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs*. Roasted salmon with potatoes is a popular Norwegian dish and pairs well with *Frozen*. 🍷



### Borderline overweight: Catch it early

Today, many children are on the verge of being overweight. If your youngster is showing signs of becoming too heavy, try these tips at the table:

- Children don't need the same-size portions as adults. Start your youngster's meal with servings that are  $\frac{1}{3}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  the size of yours. He may ask for more if he's still hungry.
- During family meals, stop "speed eating" by suggesting that everyone sip water between bites. Slowing down the pace will give your child more time to feel satisfied, making it less likely he'll overeat.
- Serve fresh fruit for dessert. It's delicious on its own, paired with plain yogurt, or blended into a smoothie. 🍷

