

Nutrition Nuggets™

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

March 2017

Palmyra-Eagle Area School District



BEST BITES

I'm full

Help your child avoid overeating by taking time to talk about the color, texture, or taste of his food. If you say, "I love the color of carrots," he may respond, "I like how crunchy they are." By stopping to think, he'll slow down his eating pace, giving him time to feel full.

Building strength

Let your youngster create her own weights using two empty quart-sized milk jugs. Help her fill them a quarter-full with sand or dry rice and screw on the cap. Suggest that she hold one in each hand as she squats, lunges, or does bicep curls. As she gets stronger, she could add sand or rice to make her weights heavier.



DID YOU KNOW?

Most children consume too much sodium. Lower your child's salt intake by offering a variety of spices and fresh herbs instead. Let him smell the basil, oregano, or ginger and sprinkle it in while you're cooking. *Idea:* Read spice jar labels together for ideas of where to use the spices. He'll learn about different flavors—and forget about the salt shaker!

Just for fun

Q: How do you fix a torn pizza?

A: With tomato paste.



Go for whole grains

Get your youngster used to eating whole grains while she's young, and you'll help her build a healthy habit for a lifetime. Try these strategies.

Give details

Begin by explaining why whole grains are good for her. You can tell her that these grains are still "wearing their coats"—they contain the entire grain kernel with all its fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Processed grains like white bread have the outer layer removed, so they've "lost their jackets"—where the important nutrients are.



Make it gradual

Help your youngster adjust to whole grains by working them in gradually. For instance, make both white and brown rice, and mix them together. Or prepare regular and whole-grain pasta, and toss them in a bowl with sauce. As she becomes accustomed to the taste, build up to three-quarters whole grains and then eventually to all whole grains.

Use daily

Try adding whole grains to foods your child regularly eats. You can stir oats into lean ground beef when you're fixing hamburgers. Or put barley or bulgur wheat in soups and casseroles. When shopping, go for the whole-grain varieties of bagels and tortillas.

Note: Many chronic conditions that develop later in life might be avoided by eating more whole grains. The fiber and other natural compounds may reduce the risk of diabetes, heart disease, and some cancers. ♥

Get your winter wiggles out

Winter's chill might still be lingering, but your youngster can burn off pent-up energy—and get physical activity—with these indoor ideas.

● **"Drive" around the house.** Let your child use a kitchen pot lid as a pretend steering wheel. He could pick up speed by marching down the hallway or slow down as he maneuvers around furniture.

● **Follow the path.** Have your youngster make a color trail with different-colored socks (or pieces of construction paper). Then, take turns saying a color, and everyone has to walk down the path, stepping only on that color. *Variation:* Step on any color except the one called out. ♥

