

Nutrition Nuggets™

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

September 2017

Palmyra-Eagle Area School District

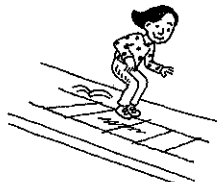


BEST BITES

Chalk up fitness

Boost your youngster's activity by having her draw a sidewalk-chalk fitness course. On

a sidewalk or blacktop, she can create "obstacles," such as a ladder to "climb" or a river to jump over. Then, she could write words like *cartwheel* or *crawl* beside her pictures to guide her and her friends along the course.



Pasta—or squash?

If your child likes playing with his food, he'll enjoy this low-carb and low-calorie pasta alternative. Cut a spaghetti squash in half, put it on a baking sheet (cut sides up), and bake 30 minutes at 400°. Cool slightly. Let your youngster use a fork to scrape the flesh and pull out spaghetti-like strands! Top with your favorite sauce.

DID YOU KNOW?

Calcium plays a key role in strengthening your child's bones and teeth—and it's not just found in dairy products. Dark leafy greens also count toward the 1,000 mg of calcium your child needs each day. And look for the phrase "calcium-fortified" on orange juice, cereals, English muffins, and non-dairy "milk" (almond, soy, coconut).

Just for fun

Q: If I cut an apple into fourths and a pear into eighths, what will I get?

A: Fruit salad!

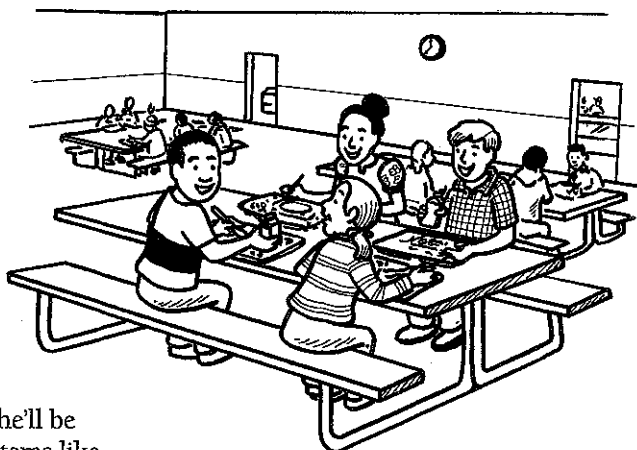


Dine out in the cafeteria

Does your child love to eat out? Do you want him to eat healthy foods during the school day? Encourage him to dine in the cafeteria!

Eat breakfast at school

Suggest that your youngster start a "breakfast club." He could meet friends in the cafeteria for a nutritious meal before school. It's easy and convenient—you won't need to make breakfast, and he'll be able to choose from healthy items like eggs, cereal, fruit, and milk.



Sample new fruits and veggies

What does kiwi taste like? How about radishes? The cafeteria is a great place to try different fruits and vegetables. Read the school menu together each week, and let your child circle foods to "taste test." After school, play a guessing game: He gives clues about items he sampled, and you identify them. *Example:* "White and crunchy," "tastes kind of like an apple" (jicama).

Serve "cafeteria foods"

Try making cafeteria foods at home to help your youngster get used to new flavors. For instance, coat skinless chicken pieces with whole-grain breading for healthier chicken nuggets. He'll be more likely to enjoy the flavor of whole grains if he also eats them outside of school.

Note: Your family might qualify for free or reduced-price school meals. Look for a form in your child's backpack or on the school website. ●

Stretch those muscles

March like a toy soldier, then tuck in like a turtle! Stretching improves your youngster's flexibility, and you can make it interesting with these playful stretches:

- Together, imagine that you're toy soldiers. Stand tall, and kick one leg high, trying to touch your toes with the opposite hand. Repeat with the other leg and arm, and alternate until you've crossed the room.
- Pretend to be turtles in their shells. Kneel with feet together, and sit back on your heels. Then bend over, touching your forehead to the floor with your arms along your sides. Hold for 15–30 seconds.

Note: To prevent injury, your child should warm up before stretching with five minutes of light aerobic exercise (dancing, walking). ●

