

Parent Communications— Super Snacks

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Snacking the Healthy Way!

For children, snack time is not only enjoyable, but necessary. It is important for kids to eat snacks during the day so they don't get hungry or low on energy. It is also important to make sure that snack foods are not just fun and tasty, but nutritious too! This can be tricky when children ask for foods that are tasty to eat but low on nutrition. What makes a healthy snack? Instead of the chips, soda, and cookies that food companies advertise as snack foods, serve fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and protein. Here are some ideas for putting together a healthy snack!

- ▶ **Include a fruit or vegetable.** Serve a fruit or vegetable AND a protein or whole grain at every snack. For example: apples and peanut butter, or whole-wheat crackers and cheese.
- ▶ **Limit sugar.** Read food labels and choose foods and drinks without sugar as one of the first three ingredients. Sugar comes in different forms: corn syrup, glucose, sucrose, and fructose are a few examples. They are all just sugar!
- ▶ **Avoid foods with trans fat.** Trans fats are often in packaged foods (like cookies, cakes, muffins, and crackers) and fast foods. Only serve foods with 0g of trans fat on the nutrition label. Read the ingredient list and don't buy foods with "partially hydrogenated oils".
- ▶ **Serve water as a drink.** Water is the best drink to serve with a snack—it is calorie-free and low-cost from your nearest tap! Encourage them to try it with lemon slices, cucumber slices, or other natural flavors!

Optional sidebar:

Try These Super Snack Ideas!

- ▶ Celery, peanut butter, and raisins
- ▶ Cucumber slices and cheese
- ▶ Applesauce and whole-wheat crackers
- ▶ Hard boiled eggs and whole-wheat bread
- ▶ Guacamole and corn tortillas
- ▶ Baby carrots and hummus

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Optional e-mail message: Use this sample message to communicate with parents by e-mail (if available).

Subject Line: Healthy Habits Power Tips—Super Snacks

Dear (your school name and grade) Parents,

This week the *Eat Well & Keep Moving* program (your school and grade) will focus on super snacks. Our key message is to choose healthy snacks that are low in sugar, unhealthy fat, and salt.

We'll talk about what makes a snack healthy and how to read the Nutrition Facts food label to identify healthy options. You can and should limit serving snack foods and drinks with little nutrition like soda, candy, cookies, and chips. It's easier to do if you don't keep those foods in the house! To boost the nutrition in your children's snacks, follow these Healthy Habits Power Tips:

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