Nutrition Nuggets™

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

October 2017

Sauk Centre Elementary School



BEST BITES

Mason jar omelet

Here's a fun breakfast to make with your youngster. Crack 2 eggs into a Mason jar. Add chopped veggies like bell pepper and tomatoes, plus 1 tsp. shredded cheese. Screw the lid on tightly, and let him shake it well. Remove the lid. Microwave 2–3 minutes until eggs are set. Cool, and enjoy. *Note:* You can also make this in a mug. Whisk the mixture instead of shaking.

Burpees for kids

Show your child how to do burpees, a great cardio exercise with a silly name.



Stand up straight, then squat down and place your hands palms-down in front of your feet. Kick back and do a push-up. Jump your feet back toward your hands and leap up. How many burpees can she do?

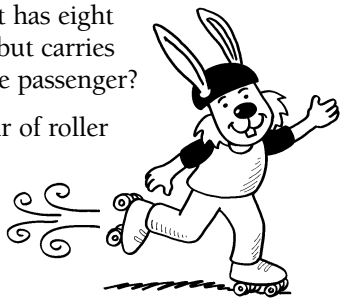
DID YOU KNOW?

Quinoa (pronounced "keen-wah") is prepared like a grain, but it's actually a seed from the same plant family as spinach and beets. It packs a whopping 8 grams of protein and 5 grams of fiber in each 1 cup serving! Consider tossing cooked quinoa into your youngster's favorite soup, casserole, or salad for a healthy (and tasty) twist.

Just for fun

Q: What has eight wheels but carries only one passenger?

A: A pair of roller skates.



Encourage active time



Want to get your child away from video games, television, or computers? Try these tips for helping her spend less time in front of screens and more time being active.

Involve everyone

At breakfast, have family members talk about how they'll get exercise that day. You might mention a lunchtime walk you've planned with coworkers, and your youngster could explain a game she's going to play at recess. *Tip:* Let your child *see* you being active. When you put away your laptop and announce you're going for a run, you're setting a great example.

Set ground rules

Come up with rules that encourage physical activity and limit electronics. For example, you might require your youngster to do at least 60 minutes of physical activity before playing video games—and limit video game time to 30 minutes a day. Your child could write the rules on signs to post around the house, perhaps on the front door or by the TV. Encourage her to use clever wording ("Turn me off. I need a break!") and illustrations (a drawing of a tired TV).

Screen-free alternatives

Let your youngster plan activities that don't involve sitting in front of a screen. She might:

- create a workout routine that you can record for your family to follow along with later.
- map out new routes through your neighborhood for family bike rides.
- organize a neighborhood kickball or softball game.

A puzzle full of nutrition



Help your youngster "puzzle" out what a balanced meal looks like with this food-group activity.

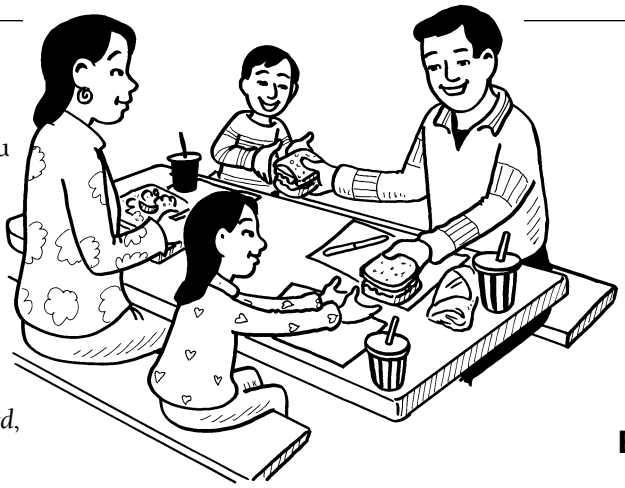
First, talk about what makes up a healthy meal. *Tip:* Show him the MyPlate guide at *choosemyplate.gov/myplate*. He'll see that his plate should include about a quarter each of vegetables, fruits, grains, and protein. On a paper plate or a circle cut from construction paper, he could use crayons to draw a balanced meal. Maybe he'll include chicken, brown rice, green beans, and oranges.

Have your child cut the plate into puzzle pieces, and see if you can put his puzzle back together. Then, create more healthy food puzzles for each other to assemble.

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Healthier fast food



When your family's busy schedule leaves you eating on the fly, use these strategies to keep everyone's nutrition on track.

Know the facts

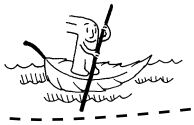
Teach your youngster to spot healthier menu items. Words and phrases to look for include *grilled*, *thin-crust*, *baked*, and *roasted*. On the other hand, he'll want to stay away from anything labeled *fried*, *loaded*, *stuffed*, or *bacon-wrapped*.

Split it

Your child asks for french fries, but you want him to eat carrot sticks. The solution? Order both! Get a small order of fries for the whole family so everyone gets just a few—and several orders of carrots so everyone fills up on the good stuff. Or share an oversized sandwich. Ask for it with a whole-grain bun (or wrapped in lettuce), mustard instead of mayo, and extra veggies.

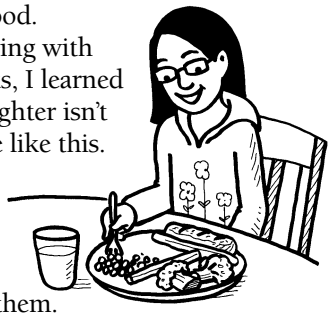
Bring your own

Grab a piece of fruit, string cheese, and a bottle of water for each person before leaving the house. You'll save money, *and* everyone will be guaranteed healthy side items and drinks to pair with your drive-thru order.



PARENT TO PARENT Foods can't touch? No problem!

My daughter doesn't like it when the food on her plate touches—even if she *loves* each food.

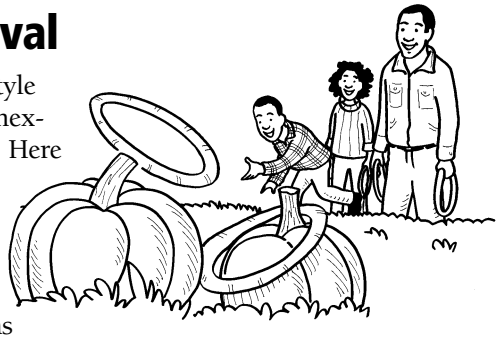


After talking with other parents, I learned that my daughter isn't the only one like this. Now I'm trying strategies that have worked for them.

First, I let her spoon her foods into separate tiny bowls. She enjoyed arranging the bowls on her dinner plate, and she ate all the healthy foods—separately. Another time, she put colorful cupcake liners into a muffin tin and filled each one with a different food. Then, just yesterday, we used a carrot stick and a green bean to keep her food apart. When she finished everything else, she even ate the dividers!

With these simple changes, my daughter now eats without a fuss, making mealtimes happier for everyone.

ACTIVITY CORNER A fitness carnival



Homemade carnival-style games can be a fun and inexpensive way to be active with your child. Here are two ideas to get him started.

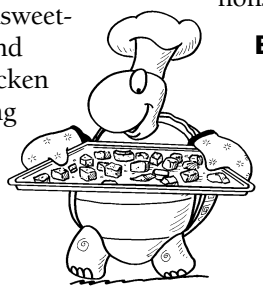
- **Ring toss.** Make rings by cutting the centers from sturdy paper plates. Line up a few pumpkins with good-sized stems. Step back a few feet, and take turns trying to toss a ring onto each pumpkin. *Idea:* For a glowing good time, get glow-in-the-dark necklaces at a dollar store to use as rings, and play after the sun goes down.

- **Cup pyramid.** Help your youngster build a pyramid with 10 plastic cups (four on the bottom row, then three, then two, and finally one cup on the top). On each turn, throw a Wiffle ball toward the pyramid twice, scoring 1 point for each cup knocked down. Restack. The winner is the first player to reach 50 points.

IN THE KITCHEN A harvest feast

Take advantage of fall's harvest with these good-for-you recipes.

Pumpkin apple soup. In a large pot, heat 2 tbsp. olive oil over medium heat. Saute 1 cup diced onion and 2 cups diced apples for 3–5 minutes. Add 3 cans (15 oz. each) unsweetened pumpkin puree and 5 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth. Bring to a boil, then simmer 10 minutes. Leave chunky, or puree in a blender (a few cups at a time).



Pear grilled cheese. Thinly slice 1 pear. On a piece of whole-wheat bread, layer 1 tbsp. shredded cheddar cheese, pear slices, and another 1 tbsp. cheese. Top with a second piece of bread, and brown in a heated skillet (coated with nonstick spray), 2–3 minutes per side.

Baked butternut squash. Peel and cube 1 large squash, or buy it already cubed. Toss in a bowl with 1 tbsp. olive oil, spread on a baking sheet, and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Bake 30–40 minutes at 400°, turning once, until golden brown.

OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ways to promote healthy nutrition and physical activity for their children.

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Nutrition Nuggets™ is reviewed by a registered dietitian. Consult a physician before beginning any major change in diet or exercise.

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