

Extension

February 2014 Newsletter

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You Have the Power!

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You influence what your kids eat more than you think. The foods that are available for snacking and served at meals makes a big difference in what kids eat every day.

What foods are available in your home?

What foods do you offer for snacks and meals?

If you want kids to reach for a healthy snack make fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy products available for everyone.

Children should not be pressured to eat foods they do not like or encouraged to eat more than they are hungry for. What they choose to snack on should be determined by what the parent provides. Offer children two or three healthy choices and allow them to decide what to eat. Kids are more likely to enjoy a food when eating it is their choice.

Tips:

Make fruits and veggies easy to see:

- Keep a bowl of rinsed fresh fruits on the kitchen table.
- Put rinsed and cut fruits and vegetables on a shelf in your refrigerator. Make sure they are at eye level for your child/children.
- Make ahead fruit and veggie snacks from the fridge:
- Toss chopped fresh veggies and low-fat cheese cubes with cooked pasta and low-fat Italian dressing.
- Kids love to dip fresh veggies in low-fat ranch dressing. Cut and peel veggies (carrots, celery, peppers, cherry tomatoes, mushrooms, broccoli, pea pods, jicama, etc.) and store them in serving size bags or small containers in the fridge, with the dip nearby.
- Kids also like to dip fresh fruit like berries, bananas and apple slices, etc. in low-fat fruit yogurt or peanut butter spread. Dip cut apples and bananas in pineapple or orange juice to keep them from turning brown. Store cut fruit in serving size plastic bags or covered bowls in the fridge.
- Tortilla roll-ups are a fun way to offer shredded veggies and low-fat cheese. Spread a whole grain tortilla with a thin layer of low-fat dressing or sour cream then sprinkle with shredded carrots, cabbage, or zucchini, etc. and cheese. Roll up tight. Cover and store in the fridge. When roll is firm cut into one inch circles and serve.



Let's Talk

Let's face it, if you're hungry and someone offered you either an ice cream cone, bowl of potato chips, a chocolate frosted donut or an apple; which would you choose? So don't expect your children to make

the correct choice either. Offer children choices from two or more healthy options, like an apple, banana or carrot sticks and dip. The occasional cookies and milk is not a problem as a treat. But as a daily choice, it becomes a habit that is hard to break. Your words and actions influence the family's attitudes and feelings about food. Young children learn to eat from you. Eat and enjoy fruits and vegetables and your kids will too.

Recipe for Health:

The following dip recipes are great served with a variety of thoroughly rinsed and cut up raw vegetables, like carrots, celery, peppers, broccoli, cauliflower, or cherry tomatoes, etc.

Honey-mustard Dipping Sauce

Ingredients:

- ¼ cup fat free plain yogurt
- ¼ cup low-fat sour cream
- 2 teaspoons honey
- 2 teaspoons spicy brown mustard

Directions:

Mix all ingredients together. Store in a covered container in the refrigerator. Makes 4 servings.

Curry Dip

Ingredients:

- 1 cup low-fat sour cream
- 1 cup fat free plain yogurt
- 1 tablespoon curry powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

Directions:

Mix all ingredients together. Store in a covered container in the refrigerator. Makes 16 servings.

Creamy Avocado Dip

Ingredients:

- 2 medium sized, ripe avocados
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon low-fat mayonnaise
- ¼ cup salsa
- 1/8 teaspoon salt

Directions:

Rinse, peel and chop avocados. Toss avocado with lemon juice, add salsa, mayonnaise and salt. Mash with a fork, until creamy. Cover and store in the refrigerator. Makes 10-12 servings.

Recipes adapted from: Maximizing the Message: Helping Moms and Kids Make Healthier Food Choices, USDA, FNS.

