



Fuel Their Minds

Ideas for Better Eating and Active Play with Children



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Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act

Have you noticed a change in your school menu? School meals are a constant battle ground for debate about whether the food provided to our children during lunch and breakfast is nutritious. Rest assured, the meals provided by your school cafeteria are. In part due to a recent legislative act adopted in 2010 known as the *Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act*. The focal point of this legislative act was the call for improvement of child nutrition. Sadly, too many children and adolescents in our nation are overweight. It is evident that additional steps need to be taken to ensure the health of our children. Providing our children with adequate nutrition throughout the school day not only gives them with the vital nutrients they need for growth, but also the energy to be active learners in the classroom.

The *Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act* authorized funding to provide a set of policies that would reform the United States Department of Agriculture's child nutrition programs. This marks the first set of meal guidelines in over 15 years. This act not only provides nutritional standards for school meals that are aligned with the recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans, but provides a path to decreasing the prevalence of childhood obesity within our school community. As First Lady, Michelle Obama states, "When we send our kids to school, we expect that they won't be eating the kinds of fatty, salty, sugary foods that we [parents] try to keep them from eating at home. We want foods they get at school to be the same kind of foods we would serve at our own kitchen tables."

The primary programs affected by this act are the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program. The new set of policies ensure more wholesome and nutritious foods are incorporated in menus. In order to accommodate school meal regulations, breakfast and lunch menus for children in grades K-5th, 6th-8th and 9th-12th are carefully planned by your local foodservice director.

With nearly 32 million children nationwide participating in school meal programs, many changes across school cafeteria lines have improved since its enactment. Though federal government has released three phases of change,

each phase allows food service departments to transition to the elimination and/or inclusion of food components.

Meals offered in school cafeterias will now reflect:

- ✓ **Additional servings of fruits and vegetables**
- ✓ **Plain milk offered either fat-free or 1% low-fat**
- ✓ **Fat-free sweetened flavored milk**
- ✓ **All grains must be whole grains**
- ✓ **Eliminating foods with added trans-fats**
- ✓ **Capping sodium levels across grade levels**
- ✓ **Requiring minimum and maximum caloric needs for all grade levels**

The revamping of the meal program is already being praised by nutrition experts and members of the food industry who support the shift to healthy, nutritious food. While it may be difficult to wean children off of the fast-food like items, research has shown that there has been acceptance of the new food changes by most students, parents and staff.



Breakfast In the Classroom?



Breakfast is the most important meal of the day and it is extremely important that children get the most nutritious foods in this first meal. Throughout the night while children sleep, their bodies slowly digest all the food in their stomach. If dinner portions are appropriate, children are very hungry when they wake up. Eating a balanced breakfast, consisting of two or three food items from different food groups, will help children sustain their energy. In addition, studies have shown that children who eat a nutritious breakfast every morning pay closer attention in class, have fewer behavioral problems, and are more academically sound than their peers.

There are more than 49.5 million children enrolled in our nations public K-12th schools, many of whom come to school hungry. Have you notice your students are sleepy and tired when they arrive? Ever wonder why students are not participating fully in their schoolwork? First, ask yourself if your student is eating a well-balanced breakfast every day. Are they taking advantage of the breakfast program offered at your school, which is free to many qualifying students? Schools, much like your own, offer breakfast in their school cafeterias. However, children have to show up before school starts in order to participate in this program. This can be difficult for time strapped families. Others children do not participate because they are embarrassed to accept the free meal.

So what about breakfast in the classroom? Educators say that when breakfast is served in the classroom there is less stigma attached to it. This means that many more children will accept it and fewer children are left with empty stomachs and an inability to focus. Many schools across the nation have adopted this method of allowing children to participate in the free and reduced breakfast meal program through on-the-go à la cart menu items located outside the classroom. Even children who do not qualify financially to participate in the meal program for free are encouraged to eat their on-the-go breakfast or purchase foods offered from the à la cart menu. Children are allowed to eat breakfast during the first few minutes of class while their teacher takes attendance, collects homework and prepares for content lesson discussions. While it may appear to eat up some of your valuable class time, the gains in attention, focus and behavior outweigh the few minutes.

If your school does not currently offer the breakfast in the classroom program, contact your school principal and food service director about how to start it.

For more information on breakfast in the classroom visit:

<http://www.breakfastintheclassroom.org/> or <http://frac.org/federal-foodnutrition-programs/school-breakfast-program/breakfast-in-the-classroom/>

Marble Relay

This relay is a great game that encourages cooperative learning while engaging in team building. Use it for your next rainy day in-class recess.

Players: 4+

Materials Needed: Cardboard tubes (such as paper towel or wrapping paper tubes), scissors and marbles

Getting Started:

1. Cut the cardboard tubes in half lengthwise into equal-length, one for each player (approximately 1 foot long).
2. Have players line up 2 to 3 feet apart.



Game from Spoonful.com

Playing the Game:

1. The first person in line sets the marble on one end of the tube, then, without touching the marble, rolls it the length of his tube and into the next player's (it's okay if tubes touch). That player passes the marble to the next, and so on.
2. As each player passes the marble, he/she moves to the end of the line, eventually catching the marble again and passing it on.
3. If someone drops the marble, they're out and the marble goes back to the beginning of the line. Keep playing until only one player remains. If you want to keep everyone playing, do this as a timed activity, and encourage the group to beat their record.

Extension:

For larger groups, divide the players into 2 teams. Give each team a marble and have them race to pass it around the group 3 times. If a team drops their marble, they must start all over again.

Persimmon Bread

Persimmons are a great seasonal fruit rich in iron, fiber and vitamins A & B. Hachiya persimmons are good fruits to substitute for apples, cranberries and raisins in your next holiday baked treat. The Hachiya variety is softer than other varieties and it is commonly used in baking as it adds moisture and a mild honey like flavor.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup persimmon pulp (1-2 large, soft Hachiya)
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 cup whole wheat flour (pasty style makes it lighter)
- 1 cup white flour
- 1 cup brown or white sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg (optional)
- 1/3 cup milk
- 1/3 cup canola, corn or vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup chopped nuts and /or raisins if you like them
- 2 eggs
- Cooking spray

Instructions:

1. Cut ripe fruit in half, scoop out pulp. Discard seeds and stem (If you have a blender, you can puree the fruit in a blender).
2. Mix baking soda with persimmon pulp. Set aside for 5 minutes.
3. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
4. Grease a 9 X 5 loaf pan or muffin tins.
5. In a large bowl, combine flours, sugar, baking powder, salt, and spices.
6. In another large bowl, beat together: sugar, eggs, oil, milk and persimmon mixture.
7. Add flour mixture to persimmon mixture.
8. Bake for 50-60 minutes if using loaf pans. Bake 20-22 minutes if using a muffin tin.



Recipe Ideas for Persimmons



If you have extra persimmon pulp after making the bread, try freezing it in an airtight container or zip top plastic bag for use in one of these foods later.

- * Smoothies-try adding pulp to your favorite blend of fruits or veggies.
- * Pancake and waffle mix-pulp adds a festive color to your batter.
- * Any baked goods-breads, muffins and cookies- add/substitute with pulp for a holiday twist on the traditional classic.
- * Pudding-use pulp as your pudding base instead of the classic vanilla and chocolate flavors.

Activity Kits Free From the University of California

The University of California has prepared activity kits to help you teach nutrition and physical activity concepts to your children, while integrating math, language and science. **These lessons come “ready-made”** with all of the materials you need to teach a fun and interactive lesson with your students. The curriculum was developed by the University of California or Scholastic, Inc.

We will bring the materials to your site, free of charge, and we can even provide your staff with trainings and additional resources to increase their confidence in these topics. We can also plan classroom, food-themed parties, special events, and other fun sessions.

If you are interested in signing up to receive these materials, please contact us.

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The Calcium Connection

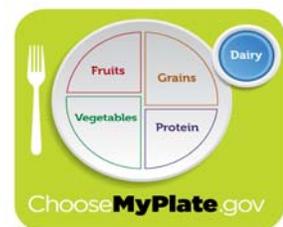
Calcium in milk helps our bodies build strong bones and teeth. Children and teens may be falling short of their daily calcium requirement because juice and other sugary drinks are easy to drink and could replace milk or other dairy products. Lack of calcium may lead to weak bones. Weak bones may break more easily. Milk is also a great source of vitamin D. Choose 1% or fat free milk for children older than 2. Children under age 2 need whole milk. If your family is having a hard time drinking lower fat milk, slowly switch from whole milk to reduced fat milk (2%). Then mix 2% reduced fat milk and 1% and so on. By switching to a lower fat milk you reduce the calories and fat but still keep all of the calcium and vitamin D. If you or your family members cannot drink milk, not to worry, many foods provide calcium.



Here is a quick guide of some calcium rich foods to add to your family's meals or snacks:

- Dark green vegetables like broccoli, spinach, mustard, or collard greens, (add to soups or casseroles)
- Calcium fortified cereal
- Calcium fortified bread
- Calcium fortified orange juice
- Canned fish like anchovies, sardines, or salmon
- 1% or non fat milk, yogurt, or pudding
- Almonds (whole only for children 4 and older) or almond butter for those over 2
- Soybeans (edamame) or tofu with calcium
- Blackstrap molasses (add to muffins, cookies, or quick breads)
- Calcium fortified rice, almond, or soy milk

Don't forget to get outside and exercise! Sunshine and exercise helps our bodies build and keep strong bones. Sunshine provides our bodies with Vitamin D, which helps bind the calcium we eat. Just ten minutes of sunshine without sunscreen is enough time for our bodies to make Vitamin D. Exercise helps strengthen our bones; so walk, run, dance, or play Frisbee as a family to build and keep strong bones. For more information on how to include dairy foods into your meals or if you need exercise tips visit choosemyplate.gov.



Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 Container (8 oz.)	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 127	Calories from Fat 4
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat <1g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Cholesterol 5mg	2%
Sodium 175mg	8%
Total Carb 17g	6%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 17g	
Protein 13g	
Vitamin A 0%	Vitamin C 4%
Calcium 45%	Iron 2%
*Percent Daily Values (DV) are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.	



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La Conexión a Calcio

Calcio en la leche ayuda a nuestro cuerpo a construir huesos y dientes fuertes. Los niños y adolescentes pueden bajar debajo de sus requerimientos diarios de calcio, porque jugo y otras bebidas azucaradas son fáciles de beber y podrían sustituir leche o otros productos lácteos. Falta de calcio puede dejar los huesos débiles. Huesos débiles pueden quebrarse más fácilmente. La leche también es una gran fuente de vitamina D. Elija leche sin grasa o de 1% para los niños mayores de 2. Los niños menores de 2 años necesitan leche entera. Si su familia tiene dificultad bebiendo leche baja en grasa, trate de cambiar lentamente de la leche entera a leche de grasa reducida (2%). Luego, mezcla leche reducida de 2% a 1% hasta reducir a leche descremada. Por cambiando a una leche de grasa reducida, reduzca las calorías y grasa pero, todavía mantiene todo el calcio y vitamina D. Si usted o sus familiares no pueden tomar leche, no hay que preocuparse, muchos alimentos proporcionan calcio.



Aquí está una guía de algunos alimentos que contienen mucho calcio para agregar a las comidas o bocadillos que le ofrece a su familia:

- Verduras verdes en color oscuro como brócoli, espinacas, acelga o hojas de berza, (añadir a las sopas o guisados)
- Cereales fortificado con calcio
- Pan fortificado con calcio
- Jugo de naranja fortificado con calcio
- Pescado enlatado como salmón, sardinas o anchoas
- Leche de 1% o sin grasa, yogur o pudín
- Almendras (enteras sólo para niños de 4 años o mayores) o crema de almendras para los niños mayores de 2 años
- Soja (edamame) o tofu con calcio
- Melaza de Blackstrap (añadir a panecillos, galletas o panes rápidos)
- Arroz, almendra o leche de soya fortificado con calcio

No olvides salir y hacer ejercicio! El sol y ejercicio ayuda a nuestro cuerpo a construir y mantener huesos fuertes. El sol proporciona nuestros cuerpos con vitamina D, que ayuda a enlazar el calcio que comemos. Sólo diez minutos de sol sin protección solar es suficiente para que nuestros cuerpos hagan vitamina D. Ejercicio ayuda a fortalecer los huesos, así como caminar, correr, bailar o jugar Frisbee como una familia para construir y mantener huesos fuertes. Para obtener más información sobre cómo incluir los productos lácteos en sus comidas o si usted necesita consejos de ejercicio, visite choosemyplate.gov.



Artículo adaptado por el Institute of Medicine, Dairy Council of California, y el National Institutes of Health

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 Container (8 oz.)	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 127	Calories from Fat 4
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat <1g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Cholesterol 5mg	2%
Sodium 175mg	8%
Total Carb 17g	6%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 17g	
Protein 13g	
Vitamin A 0%	Vitamin C 4%
Calcium 45%	Iron 2%

*Percent Daily Values (DV) are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.