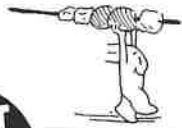


# Nutrition Nuggets

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

January 2019

Coal City Community Unit School District  
Food Service Department



## BEST BITES

### Popcorn party

National Popcorn Day is January 19! You and your youngster can enjoy this treat with a healthy twist. Instead of topping your popcorn with butter, sprinkle it with chili powder or cinnamon. Or drizzle with melted dark chocolate and add coconut flakes. *Tip:* Choose air-popped or plain microwave popcorn to avoid oil and salt.



### Spring activity sign-up

Get a head start on spring by signing your child up for sports and activities now. Talk to her about sports she's interested in, and then check registration dates. You might look into T-ball, soccer, roller hockey, and lacrosse leagues. Or she may want to take tennis lessons, join a running club, or try cheerleading.

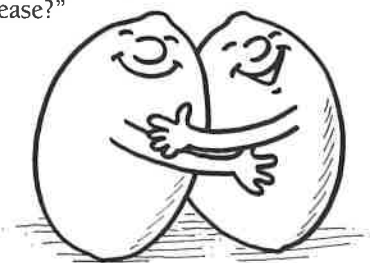
### DID YOU KNOW?

Your youngster's stomach is roughly the size of his two fists. That image can give him (and you) an idea of how much food it takes to fill him up. Help him control portion sizes by serving smaller meals and snacks that will satisfy his hunger but curb overeating.

### Just for fun

**Q:** How does a lemon ask for a hug?

**A:** "Can you give me a squeeze, please?"



## Healthy winter traditions

Start 2019 off with new and fun family traditions that will motivate your child to eat healthy foods. Try these ideas.

### Cold-weather cookouts

On a clear day, fire up the backyard barbecue or head to a park that has grills. Take along lean burger patties, whole-wheat buns, and fixings like lettuce and tomato. Also, fill a thermos with hot apple cider, and pack nutritious side dishes like mashed sweet potatoes or steamed green beans in insulated containers.

### Cozy "summer" picnics

Add variety to winter meals with indoor picnics. Spread out a blanket on the living room floor, and enjoy summer favorites from the frozen food aisle. *Examples:* corn on the cob, strawberries, sliced zucchini. Frozen fruits and vegetables are

just as nutritious as fresh, and they're available year-round.

### Themed potlucks

Take turns hosting healthy potlucks with relatives or friends. The host gets to pick the theme! Maybe all foods must begin with C, such as carrots and celery sticks, vegetable chili, and cornbread. Or choose an ingredient (say, oranges) that every dish must include (orange-glazed chicken, spinach salad with mandarin orange slices).



### Five-minute circuit

In just five minutes, your youngster can complete his own "fitness circuit" and build endurance and strength. Have him post instructions around the house and do his circuit a few times a day. Here are suggestions.



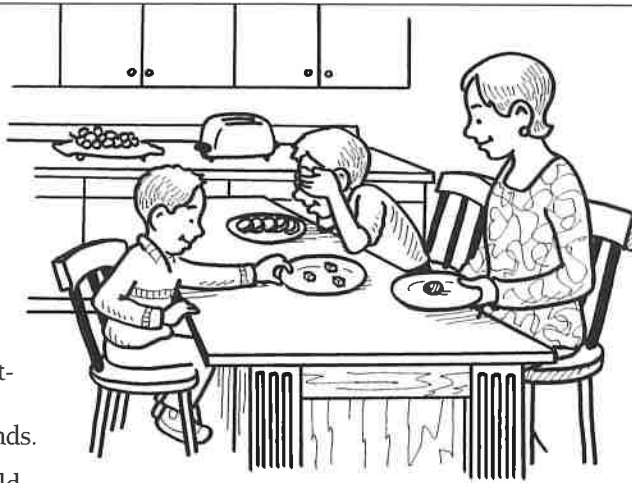
- 1. Basement:** Jump rope while singing your favorite song.
- 2. Foyer:** Throw a ball straight up, clap three times, and catch the ball.
- 3. Living room:** Pretend you're a soldier going under a fence. Lay on the ground, and use your elbows to "army crawl" under a table.
- 4. Kitchen:** Line up chairs, and skip around them.
- 5. Laundry room:** Jump back and forth over an upside-down laundry basket.

# A sensory feast

Your child can explore his senses while he eats. The following activities will encourage him to pay attention to the tastes, scents, and textures of food.

**Sweet and salty sort.** Give your youngster a serving of trail mix, and ask him which items taste sweet (raisins, dried cranberries) and which taste salty (pretzels, peanuts). He could sort the ingredients into piles according to taste and graph his finds.

**Scent guessing game.** Encourage your child to identify familiar foods by their scents. On separate plates, serve items like cheese cubes,



banana slices, and olives. Have him close his eyes, smell them one at a time, and tell you what's on each plate. How many can he guess correctly?

**Texture combo.**

Together, make sandwiches or salads that incorporate as many textures as possible. Then, talk about the textures as you eat. For

a sandwich, you might use *soft* bread, *tender* turkey, *crunchy* sprouts, and *smooth* avocado slices. Or toss salads with *crisp* lettuce, *firm* radish slices, *crumbly* feta, and *creamy* dressing. ♡



**PARENT TO PARENT**

## Recipe suggestion box

Pizza, tacos, chicken nuggets...our family tended to eat the same things, and I couldn't find the time to search for new, healthy recipes everyone would like. When I mentioned this to my sister, she showed me her "recipe suggestion box." I loved the idea, so we created one for our kitchen.

I asked my family to collect interesting or unusual recipes. We snipped some from newspapers and food packages, copied



recipes from cookbooks, and printed some from our favorite websites. We even clipped recipes from our *Nutrition Nuggets* newsletters!

My son Tyler decorated a box to store our clippings. Now before we go to the grocery store, we pluck out a couple and buy any ingredients we need. On the menu this week: portobello mushroom shepherd's pie and chickpea gyros! ♡

**ACTIVITY CORNER**

## Music and movement

Music is a great motivator when it comes to physical activity. Use these tips to encourage your child to be active and build large motor skills.

• **Songs with a twist.** Let your youngster create her own versions of familiar songs. For "The Hokey Pokey," instead of "turn yourself around," she might sing, "Do a forward roll" or "Run up and down the stairs." Or sing "If You're Happy and You Know It," and change the actions to "hop on one foot" or "touch your toes."



• **Make up dances.** Together, choreograph a dance routine using different combinations of moves. Each person could pick a dance step (leap, twirl, jump). Then, have your child use the steps to create a pattern. *Example:* Jump, twirl, twirl, leap, jump, twirl, twirl, leap. Put on music, and let her lead you in performing the routine. ♡

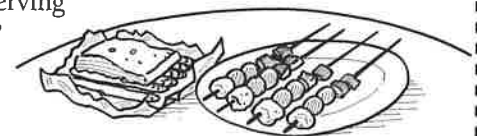
**IN THE KITCHEN**

## Kid-friendly fish dishes

Hook your youngster on healthy fish with these flavorful recipes.

### Tilapia foil packets

Your child can wrap these servings up like presents. Set out 4 foil squares. On each square, have her line up 6 asparagus stalks and top with a 4-oz. tilapia fillet. Let her sprinkle each fillet with 1 tsp. lemon juice and add 1 lemon slice. Now she should fold the foil tightly around each serving and place on a baking sheet. Bake at 400° until the fish flakes and the asparagus is tender, about 15–20 minutes.



### Salmon and veggie kebabs

Invite your youngster to put together these colorful kebabs. In a bowl, gently toss 1 lb. of salmon chunks with 18 cherry tomatoes, 1 cup cubed red onion, 2 tbsp. olive oil, 1 tbsp. lime juice, 1½ tsp. thyme, and 1 tsp. minced garlic. On separate skewers, your child can thread 1 salmon piece, 2 tomatoes, and 2 onion cubes. Bake at 350° for 15–20 minutes until the fish is cooked through. ♡

**OUR PURPOSE**  
 To provide busy parents with practical ways to promote healthy nutrition and physical activity for their children.  
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 www.rfeonline.com  
 Nutrition Nuggets™ is reviewed by a registered dietitian. Consult a physician before beginning any major change in diet or exercise.  
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# Teen Food & Fitness

Healthy Ideas for Middle and High School Students

January 2019

Coal City Community Unit School District  
Food Service Department



## FAST TAKES

### Breakfast for dinner

Switch things up on busy school nights with a family “brinner,” or breakfast for dinner. Try whole-grain waffles topped with scrambled eggs and diced tomatoes for a filling main dish. Complete the meal with sauteed apple slices sprinkled with cinnamon.

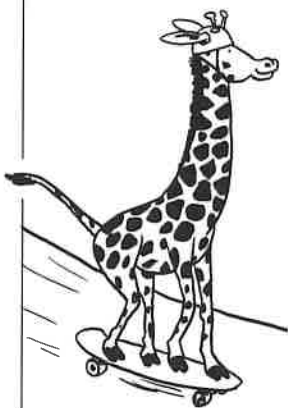
### Did You Know?

Washing your hands is one of the best strategies for staying healthy. Remind your tween that it's especially important to wash up before eating or cooking and after going to the bathroom. He should use hot water and scrub with plenty of soap.



### PE every semester

Is your teen looking for a convenient way to fit in more exercise? Encourage her to sign up for PE when she picks classes for next year—and every year. Working out with classmates can be a fun part of her day. Plus, she'll discover new activities to pursue outside of class.



### Just for fun

**Q:** What has four legs, four wheels, a long neck, and spots?

**A:** A giraffe on a skateboard.

## Make healthy habits stick!

The beginning of a new year is a great time to make healthy changes. Help your tween or teen resolve to eat better—and stick with it—using these ideas.

### Start small

Suggest that your child tweak one aspect of her eating at a time. For example, she might decide to focus first on adding more vegetables, then on swapping in whole grains, and next on choosing more nutritious snacks.



### Get specific

Rather than saying “I will eat more vegetables” or “I’ll switch to whole grains,” your tween could plan specific actions. Maybe she will eat one serving of vegetables at every meal or replace white bread with whole wheat for her sandwiches.

### Be consistent

Help your teen make her resolutions part of her regular routine. If she wants to add more fruit to her diet, keep fruits

like clementines and pears on hand. Or if she resolves to drink water instead of soda, give her a cute reusable water bottle to stash in her backpack.

### Set up reminders

To keep the healthy habits on her mind, your tween could post reminders on the refrigerator (“Did you eat your veggies today?”) or set phone alerts (“Grab fruit on your way out the door!”). *Tip:* Suggest that she team up with a friend. They can remind each other to stick to their resolutions. ♥

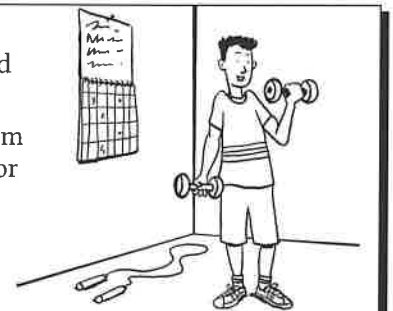
## Mark your calendar

A personal fitness calendar can motivate your teen to stay active. Here's how he could set up and use one.

**Design it.** Start by printing out a free calendar from the internet, or look for one at the dollar store. For each day he's active, he can mark the date (blue sticker for push-ups, a heart symbol for jogging).

**Review it.** Encourage your teenager to glance back at his calendar after each week and month.

Has he been as active as he'd hoped? What activities did he do most often? He'll see what he likes best and how far he's come—and this will help him set goals. ♥



# How to limit added sugars

Some foods, such as fruit, are naturally sweet *and* healthy. But when sugar is added to a food, it adds calories without any nutritional benefits. Share these tips with your tween for reading food packaging and avoiding unnecessary sweeteners.

● **Know synonyms.** “Added sugar” won’t appear in a list of ingredients. Teach your child to spot synonyms, such as *molasses*, *syrop*, *nectar*, and words ending in *ose* (*sucrose*, *fructose*, *dextrose*). These are all forms of sugar.



● **Look for amounts.** Some labels tell your tween how much added sugar is in one serving, while others list the total amount of sugar—natural *and* added—in the serving. Your child should have fewer than 25 grams (6 tsp.) of added sugar per day.

*Note:* Explain to your tween that it’s important to check foods he doesn’t think of as sweet. For example, many bottled salad dressings

and jarred pasta sauces contain added sugar. Encourage him to choose the variety with the least amount. ●



## ACTIVITY CORNER Fitness-ball moves

A playground-style rubber ball is an inexpensive fitness tool. Have your teenager find one about the size of a basketball, and she can try these two exercises.

**1. Twist and touch.** Sit on the floor with your knees bent and heels on the ground, and lean backward slightly. With your arms straight, hold the ball above your knees and twist from side to side, touching the ball to the floor next to your knees each time. Work up to 3 sets of 10 repetitions each.

**2. Leg lifts.** On a kitchen chair, sit with your feet flat on the ground. Put the ball between your calves, and hold onto the seat. Raise and straighten your legs so they’re parallel to the floor. Squeeze for 5 seconds, holding the ball in place, and lower your feet to the floor. Do 3 sets of 10 reps. ●



## Q & A

### Work toward a healthy weight

**Q:** My son wants to lose a few pounds. How can I help him?

**A:** First, talk to your son’s pediatrician about whether he actually needs to lose weight. If he does, rather than focusing on dieting, help your child eat healthy meals and snacks in moderation.

Encourage him to eat breakfast every day. A morning meal will fill him up and make him less likely to overeat later. Also, have him eat at home as often as possible, since restaurants often serve large portions that are high in fat and calories. And avoid keeping junk food like soda and chips in the house.

Finally, consider joining him on his quest to eat better, regardless of whether you need to lose weight. Making it a family affair will motivate your son—and help everyone be healthier. ●



## In the Kitchen Recipes in a mug

Your teen can make these hot and tasty mug recipes in mere minutes!

### Cup o’ lasagna

Break 2 uncooked lasagna noodles to fit into a mug. Add  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup water, and microwave 3–4 minutes. Drain, and remove pasta. Put 1 tbsp. marinara sauce in the mug. Layer pasta pieces with 2 tbsp. marinara, 2 tbsp. ricotta cheese, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup fresh spinach. Repeat. Finish with 1 tbsp. each marinara sauce and shredded mozzarella. Microwave 2–2 $\frac{1}{2}$  minutes.

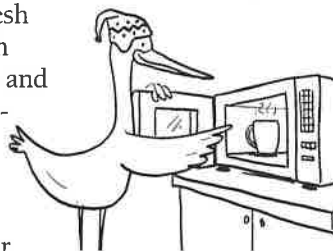
### Chicken “pot pie”

Melt  $\frac{1}{2}$  tbsp. butter in a mug, and stir in 1 tbsp. flour.

Add  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup frozen mixed vegetables,  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup chopped cooked chicken,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup skim milk,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup low-sodium chicken broth, and salt and pepper to taste. Microwave 2 minutes, stirring every 30 seconds until thickened.

### Cheesy omelet

Lightly spray a mug with nonstick cooking spray. Crack 2 eggs into the mug, and whisk with 1 tbsp. nonfat milk. Stir in 1 tbsp. shredded cheese, and 2 tbsp. chopped bell pepper. Microwave 1–1 $\frac{1}{2}$  minutes, until set. ●



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