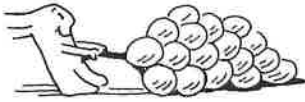


# Nutrition Nuggets™

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

December 2018

Coal City Community Unit School District  
Food Service Department



## BEST BITES

### Edible art

Suggest that your youngster use her plate as a canvas and create a work of art she can eat! Help her select healthy snacks in different shapes and colors. Maybe she'll make a "portrait" with mini turkey-meatball eyes, a cheese-cube nose, a red bell pepper mouth—and a drizzle of marinara hair.



### Active with pets

Need an easy way to encourage your child to move more? Let him help with pet care. He could walk the dog around the block after dinner or throw toys for the cat to chase. *Tip:* If you don't have a pet, he might ask to play with a relative's or a neighbor's pet.

### DID YOU KNOW?

You'll save money *and* boost your youngster's nutrition by using parts of fruits and vegetables that you normally throw away. For example, peel broccoli stems, then cut them into "coins" to add to soups. Also, consider making a pesto out of leafy green carrot tops or grating citrus peel onto steamed veggies.

### Just for fun

**Q:** Why did the golfer have an extra pair of pants?

**A:** In case he got a hole in one!



## Family wellness challenges

How can you motivate your child to live a healthy lifestyle? Turn nutritious eating, exercising, and getting enough sleep into fun family challenges. Use these ideas to get started.

### Challenge #1: Fruit and veggie bingo

Have each person create a bingo card with five rows and five columns. In each square, write or draw produce (*orange, green beans, sweet potato*). Then, swap cards and cross out each one you eat this week (a *strawberry* smoothie counts). Everyone who gets five in a row wins. *Tip:* Involve relatives you'll visit with during the holidays.

### Challenge #2: Fit weekends

Brainstorm fitness-related activities to enjoy together. Some ideas: hold a dance-off, play balloon volleyball, have a snowball fight, visit a recreation center. Ask your youngster to write one on your

calendar every weekend. As you complete each activity, he can color in that day's calendar square.

### Challenge #3: Sleep tracking

Getting enough sleep gives your child energy to run and play. Let him make a "sleep chart" with a column for each family member. For one week, write down the time you turn out the lights and the time you wake up. Draw a star in your column for each night you get the recommended amount of sleep (kids need 9–11 hours, adults need 7–9).



### Save on fitness equipment

Inspire your youngster to stay fit by keeping an assortment of sports and exercise gear handy. Consider these suggestions to help her stock up on a budget:

- Ask family and friends if they have equipment they no longer use. Perhaps your brother can pass along a softball mitt his daughter has outgrown. A friend may offer an old tennis racket.

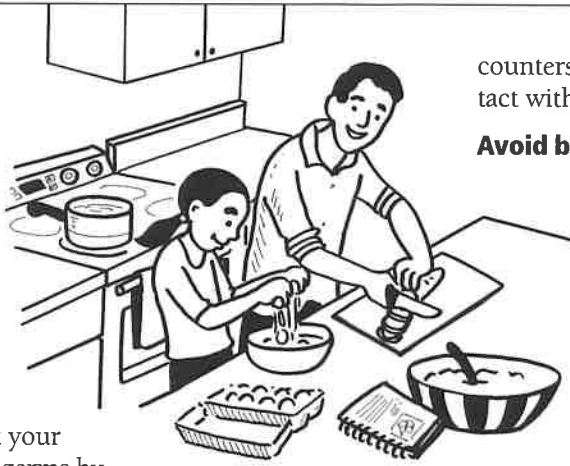
- Search flea markets, thrift shops, and online yard sales. For just a few dollars, you might find a gently used balance ball or yoga mat (disinfect before use). Or you could buy a jump rope, a can of tennis balls, or a Frisbee for less than a dollar.

*Note:* Always make sure used gear is in good condition.



# Kitchen safety for kids

Confidence in the kitchen can set your youngster up for a lifetime of healthy eating. Before the two of you cook together, share these basic safety rules. *Note:* Always supervise your child in the kitchen.



counters and wash cutting boards that come in contact with uncooked meat or eggs.

**Avoid burns.** Show your child how to turn pot handles toward the back of the stove to avoid accidental bumps. Also, teach her to never touch anything hot (pans, plates) with bare hands. She could practice using potholders by carrying dishes that aren't hot.

**Practice cleanliness.** Explain that your youngster should avoid spreading germs by washing her hands in warm, soapy water before and after touching food. Point out that it's also important to wipe

**Use knives carefully.** Demonstrate the "two-hand" technique: One hand grips the knife firmly while the other holds the food in a "claw" position (fingers curled under). *Tip:* Have your youngster start with a plastic or butter knife and soft foods like bananas or bread. 🍌

## Q&A

### Healthier beverage choices

**Q:** With holiday parties coming up, how can I help my daughter steer clear of soda and choose healthier drinks?

**A:** One easy solution for parties? Offer to supply beverages! Drop off a gallon or two of fat-free milk—it's perfect for dunking holiday cookies. Or let your daughter help you make a bowl of healthy punch to share. She could choose a flavor of sparkling water and decide what kind of fruit to mix in.



Before you go to a party, talk to your daughter about making good choices. Keep in mind that banning treats completely may make them more tempting to her. For example, suggest that she drink just one glass of chocolate milk or apple juice, then switch to water or regular fat-free milk for the rest of the party. 🍌

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Nutrition Nuggets™ is reviewed by a registered dietitian. Consult a physician before beginning any major change in diet or exercise.  
ISSN 1935-4630



## ACTIVITY CORNER

### Winter "field day"

Your youngster doesn't need to wait until spring to enjoy Field Day. Pick his favorite events, and create your own versions at home with family and friends. Here are two.



**1. Three-legged race.** Split into teams of two. Use a scarf to tie one person's right leg to his teammate's left leg, and line up about 25 feet away from a pile of snow (or leaves). On the count of three, teams race around the pile and back. The first team to return to the starting line wins.

**2. Football ring toss.** Tie several hula-hoops or large rings cut from cardboard to a tree branch using different lengths of rope. Assign a point value to each hoop, with higher hoops worth more points. Each person gets five tries to throw a football through any of the hoops. Have each player keep track of his own score. Earn the most points to win. 🍌

## IN THE KITCHEN

### Better-for-you appetizers

Chips, mozzarella sticks, and deviled eggs are popular among kids—and they can actually be nutritious. Try these recipes.

#### Tortilla chips

Cut 6 small corn tortillas into 6 wedges each. Combine 3 tbsp. lime juice, 1 tbsp. olive oil, and ½ tsp. salt. Arrange wedges in a single layer on a baking sheet, and brush both sides with the mixture. Bake at 350° for 15 minutes, flipping once.

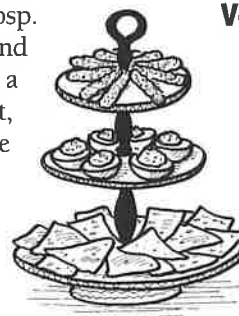
#### Baked cheese sticks

Combine ½ cup whole-grain breadcrumbs with

1 tsp. each onion powder, garlic powder, and salt. In a separate bowl, beat 1 egg. One at a time, dunk 12 part-skim mozzarella cheese sticks into the egg, then coat with the breadcrumb mixture. Bake at 425° for 10–15 minutes.

#### Vegetable deviled eggs

Peel 6 hard-boiled eggs, and cut in half. Scoop the yolks into a bowl, and add 3 tbsp. fat-free Greek yogurt and ½ tsp. Dijon mustard. Then, stir in 2 tbsp. each diced cucumber and tomato. Divide the mixture among the egg whites. 🍌



# Teen Food & Fitness

Healthy Ideas for Middle and High School Students

December 2018

Coal City Community Unit School District  
Food Service Department



## FAST TAKES

### Healthy selfies

Snapping a selfie is a quick way for your tween to capture how good she feels when she exercises or enjoys a nutritious meal. She can challenge friends to join the fun—they'll motivate each other to be active and eat right. They might share post-workout pictures of themselves eating colorful salads, for example.

### Did You Know?

Encourage your teen to sit on a balance ball while he reads or does homework. By



engaging his torso muscles to keep the ball steady, he'll improve posture, balance, and strength. Look for a ball that lets him sit

with his feet flat on the floor and his knees at a 90-degree angle.

### Start a dinner club

With a monthly potluck dinner club, your child can practice cooking nutritious foods. Suggest that she and her friends take turns hosting. The host picks a theme (say, Mexican), and everyone brings a healthy dish (turkey tacos, cilantro-lime brown rice).

### Just for fun

**Q:** What is harder to catch the faster you run?

**A:** Your breath!



## Eating the right amount

Building good food habits is not just about *what* your tween or teen eats, but also about *how much* he eats. Share these tips to keep him from overeating.

### Slow down

It can take 15 minutes for the brain to realize the stomach is full—a delay that may lead to eating too much. To allow time for the message to get through, your teenager might:

- Set down his fork between bites.
- Chew slowly, and focus on the flavors.
- Wake up earlier to allow enough time for breakfast, or eat breakfast at school.



### Divide and conquer

Help your tween outsmart the urge to “eat the whole thing” by suggesting that he:

- Dish up a serving instead of eating directly from a carton or bag.
- Split a restaurant meal with a friend, or box up half to take home.
- Create single-serving portions. For example, fill baggies with a helping of trail mix, and cut cheese into 1-oz. cubes.

### Avoid distracted dining

Your child may overeat when he's focused on the TV, his phone, or his homework. To keep his mind on his food, he should:

- Always sit down to eat.
- Leave electronics in another room.
- Have a snack in the kitchen rather than at his desk.

*Idea:* Smaller dishes fool the mind into thinking you're eating more. Consider serving dessert in cups rather than bowls, for instance. 🍪

## Family fitness traditions

Holidays don't have to focus solely on food. Make being active a new tradition with these suggestions.

**Catch up over catch.** Stand in a circle, and toss a ball around—asking a question on every third or fourth throw. You tween might ask her uncle, “What's your favorite book?” He can answer her question while everyone continues throwing the ball. Then, her uncle gets to ask someone else a question.

**Take an active neighborhood tour.** Let your teen lead everyone on a brisk walk around the block. Stop at a basketball court to shoot hoops or at a soccer field to kick goals. She might also introduce younger cousins to the local playground. 🏀



# School lunch: Hot and healthy

Cafeteria lunches make it easy for your teen to choose nutritious (and delicious) options to fuel her body and brain. Here are ways to help her get the most out of school meals.

**Review the menu.** Keep a copy of the cafeteria menu at home (or look it up online), and talk about it with your tween. What looks good this week? At dinner or after school, ask what she ate—and why she picked it. You'll learn about her preferences and show that you're interested in her day.



**Try new things.** Schools offer a variety of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, which are all important for a healthy lifestyle. Challenge your child to sample new foods that incorporate these options like spinach-artichoke flatbread pizza. *Idea:* Ask her to share suggestions on how you can “healthy up” favorites at home, too.

*Tip:* Your teenager may qualify for free or reduced-price breakfast and lunch. Check with her school for details and to apply. ♡



## PARENT TO PARENT

### Emotional eating

I noticed that my daughter, Corinne, was snacking a lot more than usual. When I mentioned it to her, she got upset and said she was stressed about everything she had to do.

I told Corinne I understood how she felt. Sometimes when I'm stressed, I just want to eat cookies and chips, too. But then I realize what I'm doing and ask myself if I'm



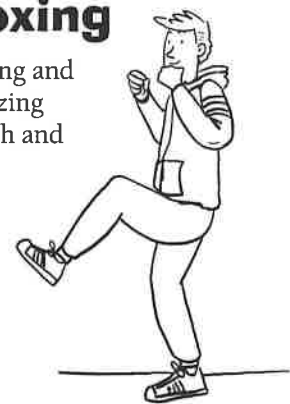
really hungry, or if I'm “stress eating.” If it's the latter, I try to find a healthier alternative like taking a walk or reading a chapter of a novel.

The other day while Corinne was taking a study break, she came into the kitchen, grabbed an apple—and asked if I'd go for a quick walk with her. I guess she was listening, and I'm happy that she's trying to make better choices. ♡

## ACTIVITY CORNER

### Kudos for kickboxing

Your tween can get his heart pumping and boost his confidence with these energizing kickboxing moves. *Tip:* He could start with 10 reps for each and work up to more as he builds endurance.



**1. Front kick.** Plant your feet shoulder-width apart, lift your right knee so your thigh is parallel to the floor, and “kick” straight out with the ball of your foot. Repeat with your left leg.

**2. Punch and kick.** Squat with your feet shoulder-width apart and fists in front of your face. Straighten your legs, and punch forward with your right fist while kicking with your right foot. Return to the starting position, and repeat using your left side.

**3. Front and back.** Raise your fists in front of your face, and step forward with your left foot. Kick your left leg out in front of you. Lower your left leg, and immediately kick your right leg backward to complete the move. Now switch legs, starting with your right leg. ♡

## In the Kitchen

### DIY food gifts

Homemade food gifts are a fun and low-cost way for you and your teen to spread holiday cheer! Consider these ideas that look nice in clear glass jars.

#### Strawberry-chia seed jam

Cook 2 cups frozen strawberries in a pot over medium heat until the berries break down, 5–10 minutes. Stir in 1 tbsp. lemon juice and 2 tbsp. honey. Remove from heat. Sprinkle with 2 tbsp. chia seeds (or sesame seeds), and let cool and thicken. Refrigerate.



#### Winter spice mix

Using ground spices, combine  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup cinnamon, 1 tbsp. nutmeg, 1 tbsp. all-spice, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. ginger. Add a label to the jar noting that the blend can add flavor to sweet potatoes, oatmeal, or warm milk.

#### Sunflower seed butter

Roast 2 cups shelled, unsalted sunflower seeds in a single layer on a pan at 350° until fragrant, about 10 minutes. In a blender or food processor, blend 5–7 minutes until smooth. Stir in a pinch of salt, and keep refrigerated. ♡

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ISSN 1935-8865