School Lunch Your Kids Will Munch

We all have a role to play

Parents and caregivers decide **what** to pack in their kid's lunch.

Kids decide **what and how much** to eat from what is available. It's okay if they are less hungry on some days than others.

School decides **when and where** students eat.

Check in with your school to see if food is provided throughout the day. Some schools may offer a Student Nutrition Program.

Kids who help make their lunch are more likely to eat it.

Does your school follow a Balanced School Day?

- Your child still needs the same amount of food throughout the day.
- Try making a lunch kit using reusable containers so kids can choose what and how much to eat at each break.

Food Safety Tips

- Insulated lunch bags, freezer packs, and insulated containers help keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot. Warm the thermos with boiling water before filling it with steaming hot food.
- Wash all vegetables and fruit before packing.
- Compost or throw out perishable foods that come back home. Whole fruits and non-perishable snacks can be re-packed.
- Wash reusable containers and utensils each day with soap and hot water.
- Teach your kids to wash their hands before and after eating.
- Check in with your school about their policy on food allergies and foods that cannot be sent.

Try adding foods from each box below

Vegetables and Fruit

- broccoli or cauliflower
- sugar snap peas
- okra
- leafy greens (lettuce, bok choy)
- roasted eggplant or squash
- apples or pear slices
- grapes or melon
- berries (fresh or frozen)
- clementines or oranges
- applesauce
- canned fruit

Protein Foods

- milk or soy beverage
- cheese
- yogurt or yogurt dip
- canned tuna or salmon
- hummus or bean dip
- leftover chicken, pork, or beef
- lentils or chickpeas
- tofu or edamame
- fish or wild game
- hard-boiled egg or egg salad
- sunflower or pumpkin seeds

Whole Grain Foods

- rice or wild rice
- pasta
- bagels, tortillas, pitas, breads, buns, or bannock
- English muffins or crackers
- chapatti, roti, or naan
- quinoa, oatmeal or other cooked grains
- cereal
- pancakes or waffles
- muffins
- granola bars

Dips like hummus, salad dressing, salsa, or tzatziki add flavour and fun.

Time Saving Tips

Children usually have about 20 minutes to eat lunch at school. Try these time saving tips:

- Peel foods and cut them up into bite-sized pieces
- Have your child practice eating lunch and opening containers

Don't forget a reusable water bottle

5 ways to fill a thermos:

- Spaghetti or casseroles
- Soup, stews or curry
- Smoothie, milk or kefir
- Scrambled eggs or oatmeal
- Taco in a bowl

Have more questions? Speak to a Registered Dietitian at no cost. Call Health Connect Ontario at 811

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