



Healthy Choices Healthy Minds

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MAIN DISH MASTERPIECES

Fruit & cheese plate. Fill a divided container with cubes or slices of reduced fat cheese, easy-to-eat fruit like apple and pear slices, grapes, berries or melon and whole wheat crackers.

It's a Wrap! Wraps are a great change of pace from the usual sandwich. Use a multigrain tortilla and spread on mustard, hummus, light mayo or salad dressing. Then fill it with chicken Caesar salad or lean meats, cheese, tomato, cucumber and romaine lettuce. Just roll it up and wrap it in foil.

Peanut butter pack. Put two tablespoons of natural-style peanut butter or other nut butter in a reusable plastic container. Then add in wheat crackers or pita wedges plus raw veggie sticks, like celery, zucchini or jicama.

Use smart substitutes. Is your child a PB&J lover? Use whole grain bread, natural peanut butter and reduced sugar jelly, and you've made some healthy changes without giving up taste!

Mix and match sandwich choices. Besides trying out the fun and healthy choices listed below, try cutting a favorite sandwich into a fun shape with a metal cookie cutter.

- Bread: Pita pockets, mini bagels, wraps, a hoagie roll, English muffins or French bread. Try to pick whole grain products.
- Spreads: Hummus, light cream cheese, nut butters, honey, all-fruit jams.
- Toppings: Sliced lean meats and reduced-fat cheeses are great with tomatoes, lettuce, shredded carrots or pepper rings. Dress up a nut butter sandwich with bananas, apples or raisins.

KEEP IT...

COLD! For safety's sake, include a reusable ice pack in the lunch. Better yet, freeze a small water or 100% juice. Your child will have a slushy drink to enjoy at lunch without having to remember to bring an ice pack home.

WHOLE! Include more whole foods and less processed foods. Look for higher amounts of fiber and nutrients that children need, like calcium, protein and Vitamin C.

FUN! Pack items that kids can stack or mix up to their liking. Cut foods into shapes with cookie cutters.

SUPER SIDES

Fruit or applesauce cups — choose varieties packed in juice without added sugar.

Shelled nuts or seeds (if age and allergy appropriate) — walnuts, pistachios, peanuts or sunflower seeds are ideas.

Cheese sticks — 2% cheddar, part skim-milk mozzarella and pepper jack are great choices.

Remember veggies — carrot sticks, dried veggies, broccoli salad, vegetable juices, sliced peppers, jicama sticks, celery with peanut butter, shredded cabbage or even a small tossed salad are all yummy and nutritious choices!

Chips or crackers — choose whole grain tortilla chips, pretzels or whole grain crackers for added fiber.

Desserts & Drinks

The natural sugars in fruit — fresh or dried — make it a sweet treat to end a meal!

Individual container of yogurt — Keep it cold with an ice pack or frozen drink.

Pack a homemade treat... instead of a processed snack cake.

A small 8 oz. bottle of water is usually sufficient for most kids.

Juice — Make sure it is 100% fruit juice.

Make it simple with milk. Cold low-fat milk is always available at school for 50 cents.



Lunchbox Guide