



BEGIN NOW! Improve your child's eating habits

Good food choice in the early years has a huge impact on your child's growth and development and alertness in school.

- ☺ Infrequent or no soft drinks, caffeine drinks or highly sugared drinks.
- ☺ Snacks: sliced fruits and vegetables, air popped popcorn, and non-fat yogurt are appropriate choices. Food offered in different and creative ways encourages a wide range of food choices.
- ☺ Breakfast: Low sugar breakfast with BOTH a carb and a protein should be the norm.
- ☺ Make mealtimes a pleasant time. Eat together as a family as often as possible. A child doesn't learn much about eating or table manners if he eats alone or in front of the TV. Use this time to share the day's experiences, but don't use mealtimes as the time to discuss family problems or for disciplining.
- ☺ Offer small portions of food at first and let your child ask for more. If a child sees more food on his plate than he can eat, he may get discouraged.
- ☺ DO NOT give in to dessert or treats if normal food choices are rejected. This is critical for developing a taste for a wide range of healthy foods - vegetables, fruits and grains.
- ☺ Offer new foods matter-of-factly. Don't coax, bribe or punish. Avoid power struggles around food.
- ☺ Try to think of ways to encourage your child's interest in a new food. Letting your child help with the shopping and preparation can be very effective. After all, it's hard to reject your own cooking!
- ☺ All children enjoy one treat in their lunch box, but a balance of good food is needed for healthy growth and development.

What are you packing in your child's lunch?

UNHEALTHY

Lunchables
Fruit roll-ups
Cheese curls
Tastycakes
Cookies
Candy
Soda
Prepackaged snack bags
High sugar drinks
Pop-tarts



HEALTHY

String cheese
 $\frac{1}{2}$ banana
Veggie sticks
Whole grain crackers
Seasoned rice cakes
Yogurt
Hard boiled eggs
Sliced pita chips
Skim milk pudding
100% vitamin C fruit snacks





Making Lunch Count



"Spicing" up Lunches

Favorite sliced veggies with a dressing dip

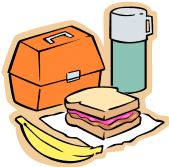
Toasted bread slices with a nut butter dip

Pretzel sticks with a cream cheese dip

Draw funny faces on hard-boiled eggs. Include a little spice for shaking or dipping the egg.

Stick cheese cubes on the end of a pretzel stick

Note: Real dried fruit is nutritious, most commercial fruit roll ups are not.



Not Just Sandwiches...

Cut sandwiches into fun shapes using metal cookie cutters or cut in the shape of your child's initial.

Vary the sandwich bread: Try popcorn cakes, a croissant, pita bread, tortillas, English muffins, graham crackers.

Roll lunch meat and cheese slices up in a tortilla.

Make kabobs with cut up cubes of cheese, meat, olives etc.

Make a finger food lunch. Include rolled slices of lunch meat, cheese, pickles and any other favorite finger food.

Yogurt with a healthy muffin is a fun lunch sure to be enjoyed.



Fancy Fruit

Scratch a few words or a picture on the skin of a banana. By lunch time the lines will be darker and your child will get a unique message.

Make fruit kabobs with melon cubes, strawberries, grapes, pieces of pineapple or bananas, etc.

Put apple slices into a small container with an ice cube. The ice water keeps the slices white.

A caramel fruit dip or a little cinnamon sugar mixture will make sure your child will eat apple slices.

Core an apple, cut it into rings, spread peanut butter or cream cheese between the rings. Apple-wiches!



Remember.....at Red Hill Christian School

Milk & water are offered to children at lunch. For snack we serve milk, water, chocolate milk & occasionally fruit juice.

Lunches at school should NOT include candy, soda, sugar filled cakes, or sticky foods like cheese curls.

Crusts are often not eaten. Try cutting crusts off so entire sandwich can be enjoyed.

Keep foods real, and natural: fruits, vegetables, whole grain breads + fiber rich crackers.

Hot food may be brought to school in a wide-mouth thermos.

Pack lunches with just what you feel your child will eat. No dessert is needed.

Cut up fruit so your child can manage it easily.

Make sure your child's NAME is on the outside of their lunch box.