

Successful School Lunches

School is where children go to learn, play and develop skills that will last them a lifetime. Help your children to be their best at school by fueling their days with healthy food choices.

Lunch Matters for Children. Between grade one and the end of high school, a student may eat more than 2,400 lunches at school! Creating tasty, nutritious school lunches is a challenge for many parents. The good news is that with a little bit of planning and a few ideas, you can put together a lunch that not only tastes great, but also packs a nutritional punch.

1. Recruit some help - Children are more likely to eat a lunch that they have been involved in creating. Let your children choose some of the foods that will go into their lunch bags. Plan or prepare school lunches together - make it fun!
2. Get organized - Speed up the preparation process by organizing lunch supplies such as insulated containers, lunch bags or boxes, reusable drinking boxes, napkins and cutlery in one spot.
3. Lay a solid foundation - Teach children to include at least one choice from each of the four food groups. The four Canada's Food Guide food groups are: Vegetables and fruit, grain products, milk and alternatives, and meat and alternatives.
4. Mix it up - Offer a variety of foods to prevent boredom and make lunch a meal that your child looks forward to.

Short on ideas? Try the following:

- Hummus, pita bread wedges, raw vegetables, yogurt, 100% fruit juice
- Banana muffin, boiled egg, carrot sticks, milk
- Picnic Lunch: cut up cheese, leftover chicken or roast beef, whole grain roll, fruit salad, milk
- Whole grain tortilla filled with tuna salad, celery sticks, grapes, chocolate milk
- Leftover pasta with meat sauce, melon cubes, milk

Your School Meal Program Dietitian

