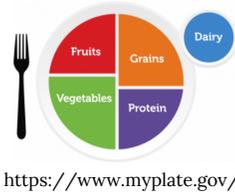


Packing Healthy Lunches:

Running out of lunch ideas to pack for your child? First, let's talk about what a healthy lunch looks like. MyPlate is a picture of what a healthy meal should look like. Half of the plate should be fruits and vegetables and the other half should be split between lean proteins and grains. Half of the grains in a day should be whole grains. Your dairy should be low-fat or fat-free.



Lunch ideas:

Veggies: carrot & celery sticks, cucumber slices, spinach

Fruits: berries, apple & orange slices, grapes

Proteins: turkey, hummus, peanut butter

Grains: wrap, bread, crackers, tortilla chips (whole grain)

Dairy: low-fat cheese sticks or cubes, low-fat yogurt

Involving Kids in the Kitchen

Getting kids involved in the kitchen can be fun for both you and your child. It can also boost their interest in trying new foods and help them get excited about eating the food that they are served. Some ideas to involve your child in the kitchen are listed below. Allowing your child to choose a theme meal is exciting and can even expose your child to new cultures. Using fun colors and shapes in meals can make fruits and veggies more exciting. Assigning kid-friendly jobs to your child while preparing the meals can make your child proud of their work and more likely to eat it.

Theme Meals:

- Mexican
- Asian
- Holiday themes
- Mediterranean
- Italian
- Breakfast

Fun Colors and Shapes:

- Create a rainbow of fruits/veggies
- Make a face using different components of the meal
- Use cookie cutters to make shapes out of sandwiches

Kid-Friendly Jobs:

- Grocery shopping
- Mixing/stirring
- Tearing
- Pouring
- Washing
- Scooping
- Measuring
- Tossing

All of these jobs are appropriate for children of all ages!



Budget saving tips:

Buying and cooking meals when working with a tight budget can be difficult. It may seem hard to serve your family healthy meals for a low cost. Below are some tips on how to shop and cook healthy meals on a budget. Keep in mind that frozen and canned fruits and veggies are just as healthy as fresh.

- Buy generic/store brands
- Buy in whole form and shred/chop/prepare yourself
- Freeze produce or leftovers before they go bad so that you are not wasting food
- Buy in bulk and freeze extra (especially helpful for meats)
- Buy in-season produce
- Plan ahead for meals so you know exactly what to buy

- Plan meals around items on sale
- Don't shop hungry - this causes you to buy more than you need



RECIPE: HOMEMADE FROZEN YOGURT

- 1 CUP FROZEN FRUIT
 - BERRIES, CHERRIES, PINEAPPLE, MANGO
- 1/2 CUP LOW-FAT YOGURT (PLAIN OR VANILLA)
- OPTIONAL; MIX INS
 - NUTS, FRESH FRUIT, DRIED FRUIT, HONEY

PUT ALL INGREDIENTS INTO A BLENDER AND BLEND UNTIL SMOOTH. FOR A THICKER TEXTURE, ADD HALF OF A BANANA, FOR A THINNER TEXTURE, ADD A SPLASH OF LOW-FAT MILK. MIX IN ANY DESIRED MIX-INS AND ENJOY.

