

IDEAS FOR THE LUNCH BOX

A PROPERLY FED CHILD IS A HEALTHY AND HAPPY CHILD. THEREFORE, IT IS IMPORTANT TO OFFER HEALTHY MEALS AND SNACK FOODS TO CHILDREN.

SANDWICHES:

TUNA FISH	HAM AND CHEESE	DEVILED HAM
EGG SALAD	TURKEY AND CHEESE	CHEESE SANDWICH
CHICKEN SALAD	PEANUT BUTTER AND JELLY	HUMUS AND PITA BREAD

SANDWICHES CAN BE MADE WITH WHITE BREAD, WHEAT BREAD, PITA POCKETS, FRENCH BREAD, BAGELS, ENGLISH MUFFINS, ROLLS, OR PLAIN BREAD CUT INTO A SHAPE (HEART, STAR, TRIANGLES...)

SOMETIMES CHILDREN ENJOY HELPING MAKE THEIR OWN LUNCH (IF YOU HAVE THE TIME), OR YOU COULD SEND IN A CONTAINER WITH CRACKERS OR BREAD AND SOME SLICED HAM AND CHEESE. YOUR CHILD COULD ASSEMBLE IT THEMSELVES AT THE LUNCH TABLE, OR EAT IT SEPARATELY. ROLL UP THE SLICED MEATS AND ADD CHUNKS OF CHEESE. SOME CHILDREN ENJOY HAVING VEGETABLES SUCH AS LETTUCE, TOMATOES OR SPROUTS TO ADD TO THEIR SANDWICHES.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES:

FOR A CHANGE, YOU CAN SEND A SMALL CONTAINER OF YOGURT (PLAIN OR FLAVORED), APPLESAUCE, OR PUDDING FOR DIPPING. FRUIT, OR COTTAGE CHEESE, SALAD DRESSING OR PREPARED DIP FOR DIPPING VEGETABLES.

BANANAS	CANTALOUPE	
APPLES	WATERMELON	
ORANGES	PINEAPPLE	TRY MAKING A SMALL FRUIT
TANGERINES	APPLESAUCE	SALAD BY MIXING A FEW
GRAPES (SLICED TO A SAFE SIZE)	KIWI	DIFFERENT FRUITS
STRAWBERRIES	BLUEBERRIES	
RAISINS AND DRIED FRUIT (FOR CHILDREN OVER 2 YEARS)		

CARROTS	TOSSED SALAD
CUCUMBERS	CAULIFLOWER
PEPPERS (YOU'D BE SURPRISED)	BROCCOLI
TOMATO WEDGES	PEA PODS
CELERY WITH CREAM CHEESE/PEANUT BUTTER	GREEN BEANS

WARM LUNCH IDEAS

IF YOUR CHILD CARE PROGRAM HAS A MICROWAVE OR STOVE AND THE TIME TO HEAT FOOD ITEMS FOR CHILDREN, YOU COULD TRY SENDING AN ICEPACK WITH LAST NIGHT'S LEFTOVERS.

SOUP WITH GOLD FISH OR OYSTER CRACKERS	TACOS, BURRITOS
BAKED BEANS	PIZZA
CHICKEN & RICE WITH GRAVY AND A STUFFING TOPPING	MACARONI & CHEESE (TRY ADDING PEAS, OR BROCCOLI, OR HAM)
PASTA WITH SAUCE OR MEATBALLS(SOMETIMES YOU CAN SNEAK A VEGETABLE INTO A SAUCE LIKE PEAS, CORN, SHREDDED CARROTS OR CHICK PEAS).	

DESSERTS:

YOU CAN TEACH CHILDREN AT AN EARLY AGE ABOUT HEALTHY CHOICES AND FOODS THAT HELP US GROW.

YOGURT	COOKIES (LOW SUGAR-LIKE ANIMAL OR GRAHAM CRACKERS OR OATMEAL COOKIES WITH RAISINS,)
PUDDING (HOMEMADE)	GRANOLA BARS
MUFFINS	FRUIT BREADS (BANANA BREAD, APPLE, ZUCCHINI, PUMPKIN, OR SQUASH BREAD)

TRAIL MIXES ARE FUN TO MAKE WITH CHILDREN-SCOOPING AND POURING AND MIXING-DRY CEREAL, SEEDS, NUTS, RAISINS, AND PRETZELS OR GOLDFISH OR OYSTER CRACKERS.

BEVERAGES:

MILK (LOW FAT FOR CHILDREN OLDER THAN 2 YEARS)	TOMATO OR V8 JUICE
UNSWEETENED FRUIT JUICES (100 % JUICE)	KIEFER (LIQUID YOGURT)

AVOID PUNCHES, DRINKS, AIDES AND NECTARS BECAUSE THEY ARE MOSTLY WATER AND SUGAR.

ROUND FIRM FOODS SUCH AS WHOLE SLICES OF HOT DOGS, GRAPES, HARD CANDY, NUTS, POPCORN, OR SPOONFULS OF PEANUT BUTTER SHOULD NOT BE OFFERED TO CHILDREN UNDER 2 YEARS OF AGE. THE WAY IN WHICH YOU CUT FOOD CAN MAKE IT SAFER FOR CHILDREN. FOR EXAMPLE BY SLICING AN ORANGE IN SLICES VERSUS WEDGES, A CHILD WOULD BE LESS LIKELY TO CHOKE.