

Teen Food & Fitness

Healthy Ideas for Middle and High School Students

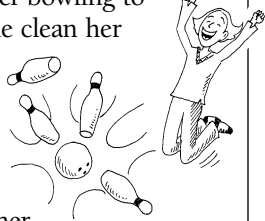
September 2007

FAST TAKES



Good job!

Did your child do well on a test? Take her bowling to celebrate. Did she clean her room without being asked? Head to the skateboard park. Use physical activity—rather than sweet treats—to recognize a job well done. She'll learn that you value exercise and that dessert is not a prize.



Did You Know?

A quarter of the bones in the human body are in the feet. Consider investing in good sneakers for your tween or teen. Shop in a store with knowledgeable salesmen, and look for last year's styles on sale. Your child will spend more time being physically active if his feet don't hurt!



Avoid trans fat

Show your teen the trans fat line on food labels, and teach him to pick foods that say zero. Even easier: Suggest that he look for food packages that say "no trans fat" on the front. Explain that trans-fatty acids clog arteries and can lead to heart disease.

Just for fun

Q: When do you stop at green and go at red?

A: When you're eating a watermelon!



On the go

Healthy eating for busy kids

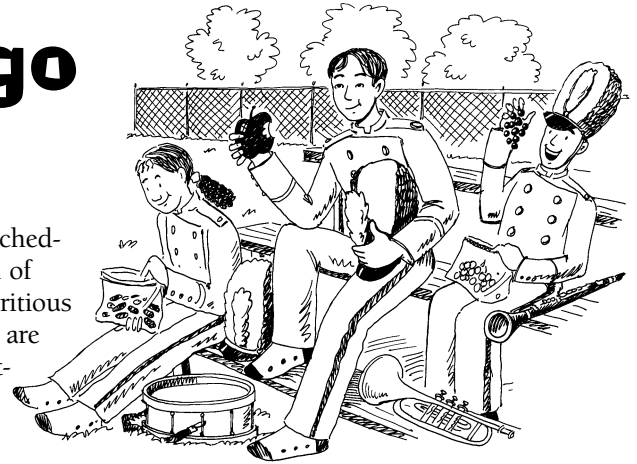
Between your own hectic schedule and your teen's whirlwind of activities, finding time for nutritious food can be a challenge. Here are ways to make sure healthy eating doesn't go out the door when your child does.

Take food along

Encourage your youngster to take food from home when he's going to games or other activities. He'll be less tempted to buy the high-fat, high-sugar snacks usually offered. For example, he could carry fresh fruit (apples, kiwi, plums, grapes), bags of trail mix (combine whole-grain cereal, nuts, and raisins), or baby carrots.

Be creative

Put healthy, speedy twists on old favorites. Instead of ice cream, make a Two-Minute Smoothie: In a blender, mix fruit, low-fat flavored yogurt, and ice cubes. Forget the fast-food burger:



Microwave a frozen veggie burger, and serve on a whole-wheat bun with lettuce, tomato, and sliced avocado. Rather than picking up fries, keep cooked brown rice in the fridge, and add leftover veggies or salsa and canned beans. Kids will eat healthy foods if they find them more interesting!

Work together

Show your child how to fix quick meals and snacks. When you're cooking, have him help you. Borrow a library cookbook with time-saving ideas, and look through it together. You can check TV listings for a cooking show that features health-conscious fast food. Involving your teen in healthy planning will make him more likely to eat well. ●

Vending choices

Vending machines are part of a teen's everyday life—at school, the rec center, or the ballpark. Encourage your child to make healthy choices with these tips.

■ **Drinks.** The best choices are water or fat-free milk. While not as healthy as water, 100% juice, unsweetened teas, and diet soda are better than regular soda. Sports drinks are okay sometimes (say, after an hour of strenuous exercise to make up for fluids and nutrients lost).

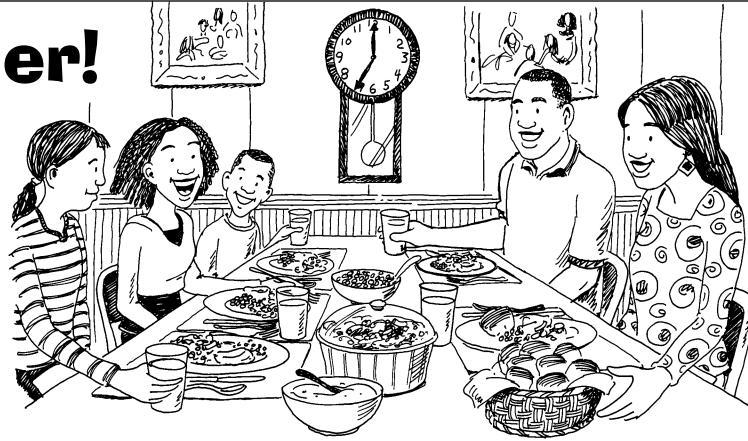
■ **Snacks.** Look for baked crackers and chips, unsalted pretzels, and low-fat cereal or granola bars. Some vending machines also offer fresh fruit, vegetable trays, and yogurt. Stay away from fried chips, high-fat cookies, and candy. ●



Eat together!

You probably know that family meals are a nice way to catch up on each other's day. But did you also know that kids who have dinner with their families eat healthier, get higher grades, and are less likely to drink, smoke, do drugs, get into fights, be suspended, or have sex at a young age?

Try these ideas for getting your busy family to sit down to a meal together.



Make a rule. Require that everyone be home for dinner at, say, 7 p.m., three times a week. Review your schedules, and come up with a time and nights that will work. While this might mean you'll eat later than you would like or your child will miss out on some time with friends, the payoff will be worth it.

Make meals fun. Discuss topics that are enjoyable. Give each person a chance to talk about something that happened that day. Ask questions that will start interesting conversations ("Where would your dream vacation be?" "What's the next great invention?"). Try to avoid arguments, criticisms, or lectures. ●



PARENT TO PARENT Cut from the team

Our son Jared loved soccer from the time he was a toddler. Imagine his heartbreak—and ours—when he didn't make the team his freshman year.

His immediate reaction was, "I'm not good enough. I've had it with sports." My husband and I wanted to keep Jared from giving up.



First, we gave him some time to handle the hurt. We also let him know we were proud of him for trying. Then, we brainstormed ways he could stick with

soccer, such as staying with his community team and attending soccer clinics. We also suggested that he consider taking up another sport.

Jared decided to try lacrosse. He realized he could use some of his soccer skills, such as speed and quick stops and starts, in that sport. Now Jared is a sophomore and, I'm happy to say, a proud member of the JV lacrosse team! ●

OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ways to promote healthy nutrition and physical activity for their children.

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Teen Food & Fitness™ is reviewed by a registered dietitian. Consult a physician before beginning any major change in diet or exercise.

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In the Kitchen

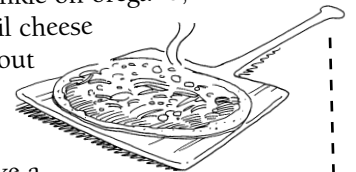
Pizza with pizzazz

Serve up these new takes on pizza, and you're sure to serve up some healthy fun.

Tortilla Pizza. Place a whole-wheat tortilla on a baking sheet coated with nonfat spray. Top with cooked chicken, frozen or canned corn, salsa, and shredded, reduced-fat cheddar and Monterey Jack cheeses. Bake at 350° for 10 minutes, until cheese is melted.

Pizza Muffin. Top each half of a whole-grain English muffin with marinara sauce and skim mozzarella

cheese. Add sliced mushrooms and onions. Sprinkle on oregano, and broil on high until cheese bubbles (about 5 minutes).



Fruit Pizza. Bake a frozen thin pizza crust according to package directions. When cool, spread with light cream cheese. Decorate the pizza with fruits of your choice: blueberries; melon and pineapple chunks; or strawberry, banana, and mango slices. ●

ACTIVITY CORNER

Home workouts

You don't have to belong to a gym for your child to exercise. With little trouble—and no expense—your teen can work out at home. Show him these ideas:

1. Jog around the house. You can run laps around the yard or run inside, alternating jogging in place, jogging a square around the room, and jogging across a room and back.

2. Do bicep curls using soup

cans as "weights." Hold your arms at your sides, with your elbows close to your body and your hands holding the cans facing up. Raise your hands to your shoulders, and then lower them.

3. Sit at the edge of a chair with your hands behind you on the seat. Edge your body off the chair, and lower to a squat position, not quite touching the floor. Repeat.

4. With arms stretched wide, hold each end of a long scarf. Stand with feet apart, and alternate touching each end to the floor while raising the other end diagonally toward the ceiling. ●

