

Teen Food & Fitness

Healthy Ideas for Middle and High School Students

September 2008

W.A. Cunningham Intermediate School 234

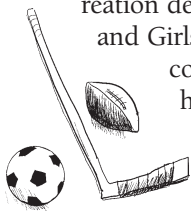
Ms. Susan Schaeffer

FAST TAKES

Sports leagues

Looking for a way to keep your child as active this fall as she's been all summer? Enroll her in a sports league. Check with your recreation department or Boys and Girls Clubs for cross-country, volleyball, or hockey programs. *Tip:*

Signing up with a friend will double her fun!



Lighten up

Most kids love Caesar salad, but it's usually high in fat and calories. Make a healthier version by using low-fat Caesar dressing. Putting the dressing on the side, and suggesting that your child use only a little, can keep the calories down even more.

Also, look for packaged croutons that are baked rather than fried.



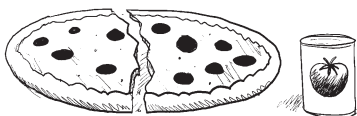
Did You Know?

It's recommended that children get 60 minutes of exercise a day. Sound like a lot? Not when you add up your teen's everyday activities. For example, if he rides his scooter, shoots baskets, and washes the car, he will get the exercise he needs.

Just for Fun

Q: How do you fix a broken pizza?

A: With tomato paste.

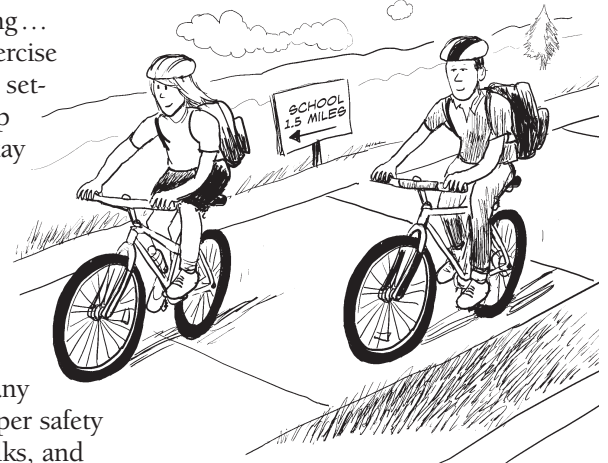


Routines for health

Studying, sleeping, socializing... where do healthy foods and exercise fit into your child's life? As she settles into a new school year, help tweak her routine so she can stay healthy and active.

Daily activity

Walking or biking to school is an easy way to get exercise. Encourage your youngster to team up with a neighborhood friend for company and safety. Be sure she has proper safety gear, uses bike paths or sidewalks, and follows traffic rules. If school is too far for a walk or bike ride, suggest a regular after-school routine like jogging or following along with a TV fitness show.



A nutritious start

It's not always easy for kids to get up in the morning, but luckily, healthy breakfasts don't take long to prepare. Nonfat yogurt and an apple with peanut butter is a quick, nutritious morning send-off. Or suggest that your child meet a friend for breakfast at school.

Save time, too, by having her buy a school lunch instead of packing one.

Smart snacks

Keep nutritious foods on hand for easy after-school and weekend snacks. For example, stock low-salt rice cakes (try ranch or cheddar flavors), frozen 100% juice pops, and heat-and-serve turkey meatballs. Or make a batch of egg salad: chop 6 hard-boiled eggs, and mix with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup light mayonnaise and 1 tbspc spicy mustard. ♥

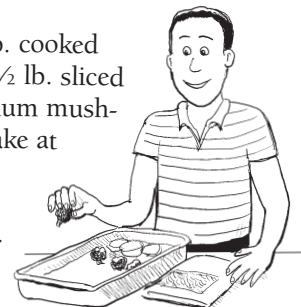
No time to cook!

Put healthy meals on the table quickly with these time-savers.

● **Freeze ahead.** Double recipes, and freeze half for later. Pour soups or stews into single-serving containers for snacks that can be easily defrosted in the microwave.

● **Make one-dish meals.** For example, mix 1 lb. cooked egg noodles, 1 can drained tuna (packed in water), and $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. sliced mushrooms. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fat-free milk and 1 can low-sodium mushroom soup. Sprinkle with low-fat cheddar cheese, and bake at 350° for 20 minutes.

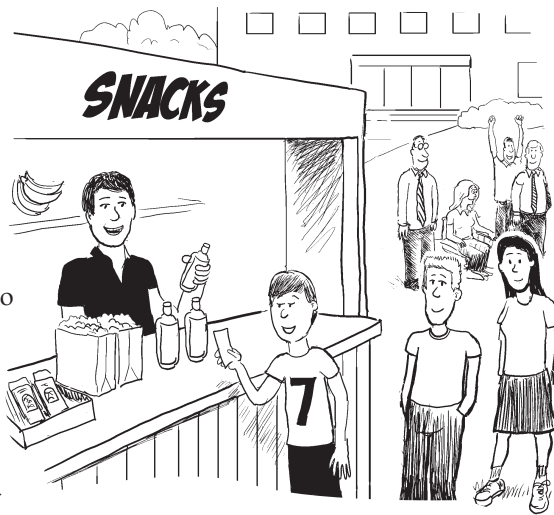
● **Use shortcuts.** Buy bottled marinades, ready-made crusts, and bagged prewashed fresh vegetables. For a weeknight meal, cover focaccia bread with marinara sauce, shredded skim mozzarella, and broccoli pieces. Broil until the cheese melts. ♥



Support from the sidelines

Be a part of your child's sports life, and he'll see that you value physical activity. Plus, going to games and talking about them afterward will give you a chance to spend time together. Here are three ways to participate:

1. Show support by driving your tween or teen to practices and staying to watch or help if you can. Offer to carpool to and from games if the team needs drivers. You'll meet your youngster's teammates and get a chance to hear their pre- and post-game talk.



2. Attend your child's games or meets to cheer him on. Show pride by wearing team colors or a team shirt. *Note:* Teach your youngster about good sportsmanship by being a good sport yourself. Be sure to root for the whole team, and don't question calls by the referee or umpire.

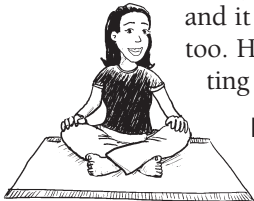
3. Consider being a coach, scorekeeper, or manager for your child's league. Join the booster club, take game pictures, or work in the snack bar. Any help from the sidelines will make you a part of your teen's sports life. ●



ACTIVITY CORNER

Try yoga

Many teenagers are discovering yoga these days. The popular workout increases balance, strength, and flexibility, and it can reduce stress, too. Here are tips for getting started:



■ Contact your community center or visit www.yogafinder.com for

classes in your area. See if your high school offers yoga as a PE elective or if there's an after-school yoga club.

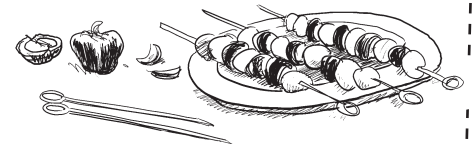
■ Encourage your child to practice at home with yoga books or videos from the library. She can build her own yoga sequence by arranging photos of poses at www.yogajournal.com.

■ Join her! You could try the cat pose to stretch your back. Begin on your hands and knees, with your back and neck flat. Exhale and arch your back up like a cat, letting your head fall forward. Inhale and return to the start position. ●

In the Kitchen

Skewer it

Make everyday food fun to eat by putting it on a skewer. Try these ideas.



Sweet and savory. On skewers, thread red and green bell pepper squares, pineapple, and beef or tofu cubes. Brush with a mixture of olive oil, balsamic vinegar, and soy sauce. Grill on the barbecue or broil in the oven for 10–15 minutes, turning several times until cooked through.

Curried chicken. Toss chicken chunks in a marinade of two parts olive oil, one part soy sauce, and a

dash of curry powder. Put on skewers, along with potato chunks and cauliflower pieces. Grill or broil until the chicken is no longer pink and the vegetables are tender.

Fruity dessert. Alternate watermelon cubes, thick kiwi slices, grapes, and halved strawberries on skewers. Serve with a dip—try low-fat vanilla yogurt with a little honey. ●

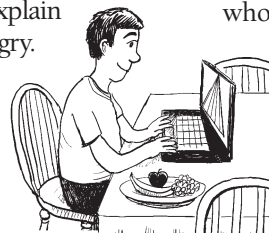
Q & A

Too much food?

Q: My 14-year-old son Louis seems to eat all the time. Is this normal?

A: Children need more food when they're growing rapidly. Most boys hit a growth spurt between the ages of 12 and 16, which may explain why Louis is always hungry.

To find out how much he should eat, visit www.mypyramid.gov. Put in his age, height, weight, and activity level to learn



his recommended amount from each food group.

Then, encourage him to meet these needs with three healthy meals plus two to three nutritious snacks a day. Suggest fruits and vegetables, lean meats or fish, fat-free or low-fat dairy products, and whole grains.

Filling up on healthy choices and drinking water throughout the day can keep your teen from going for soda and sugary, high-fat foods. And, of course, staying active will help him balance "calories in" with "calories out." ●

OUR PURPOSE

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

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