

# PLAN-IT SNACK

A Guide for Healthy Choices

## Is it Okay to SNACK?

**Yes—especially for your young child.**

A snack serves as a way to recharge a hungry child to do their best all day long in the classroom or on the playground.



**Snacks...  
the SECRET  
for SUCCESS**

**Both you and your child have a job to do. If parents do their part, kids will too!**

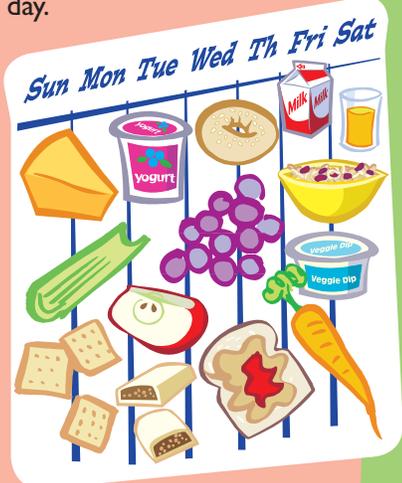


**Your job**, as a parent or caregiver, is to offer a variety of tasty snacks at regular times each day.

**Your child's job** is to decide how much or even whether to eat the snack.

If your child chooses not to eat or eats very little, there's no need to worry. He or she will know to count on you for a regular routine of meals and snacks.

This may be a new way of thinking about how to feed your child, but if raising a healthy eater is your goal, this rule is a winner!



Adapted from Elyn Satter, "Secrets of Feeding a Healthy Family," Kelcy Press; 1999.



## Kids, SNACKS and Weight

### What's the connection?

Kids bodies come in all shapes and sizes. A child's body weight is affected by many factors, including their food and activity choices. There's plenty you can do to help kids get the nutrition they need for a healthy body weight and to feel good about themselves as individuals. Start by helping your child make healthy food choices a habit.

### What can you do?

Talk with your child about making wise choices. Consider these ideas for steps you can both take. Check those you'll try today:

- Offer a variety of nutrient-rich foods most of the time, and "sometimes" foods less often.
- Help your kids tune into hunger and fullness cues; eat when hungry and stop when full.
- Serve kid-sized portions.\* Encourage kids to ask for more if they are still hungry.
- Share large portions when you eat out.
- Plan active play for every day. Limit TV and computer time to less than 2 hours a day.
- Enjoy meals and snacks together.

\*For portion size help: [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov)

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## SNACK Together!

Choose healthy snacks for yourself. Take a break and sit down to eat with your child.

Your child really does pay attention to the way you eat and most likely will eat the way you eat.



## Think AHEAD

Plan daily snacks for your child.



- Plan for your child to eat every 2-3 hours. Your child has a small stomach that needs refueling often.
- Keep mealtime in mind when planning snacks. Hungry children eat more at mealtime and may not seem so picky. Solve close-to-mealtime “hungries” with a small snack: a slice of cheese or a few crackers, carrot or apple slices.
- Make snacks mini-meals. Offer a variety of healthy “everyday” foods from the grocery list. Kids learn that snacks, just like meals, are important for healthy bodies.



## Keep Snacks HANDY

Have snack foods available that are easy to prepare and eat on the go.

- Take this grocery list with you when you shop. Buy a variety of foods from each food group.
- Have a bowl of fruit on the counter and pre-cut cheese and washed vegetables in the refrigerator.
- Be adventurous! Rather than have the same snack each day, try new foods and new combinations.
- Choose “sometimes foods”—like soft drinks, candy, chips—in small amounts. They have lots of calories and few nutrients.

## Create EAGER TASTERS!

Have children help with shopping and cooking.



- Ask your child to add foods to the grocery list.
- Let your child pick a new snack food each week.
- Encourage your child to help prepare snacks. Give them a task they can do: washing, spreading or cleaning up.
- When offering a new food at snack time, serve it with an old favorite.
- Try and try again! Explain that foods can taste a little different each time you try them. Be patient. It can take up to 10–15 tries for a child to accept a new food.

## SAMPLE GROCERY LIST

Keep your kitchen stocked with “everyday” snack foods. Choose or let your child choose a food from at least two columns. For example: apple & bagel slices, a fig bar & milk, melted cheese on an English muffin.

Fruit Basket	Cupboard	Refrigerator
Apples	Almonds	Broccoli
Bananas	Bagel	Bell peppers
Berries	Crackers	Carrots
Cantaloupe	Dry cereal	Celery
Dried fruit	English muffin	Cheese
Grapes	Fig bar	Deli meats
Kiwi fruit	Peanuts	Hard boiled egg
Mango	Peanut butter	Milk
Oranges	Sunflower seeds	Salsa
Peaches	Tortilla	Veggie dip
Pears	Trail mix	Yogurt