

Offering healthy food and beverage choices on school grounds can be an effective reinforcement of the healthy eating principles your children may be learning in their classrooms. School wellness policies and USDA meal regulations already establish healthier options in the cafeteria and classroom. Consider establishing guidelines, as well, for foods in the teacher's lounge, parent meetings, all-school events, and on-site vendors. This kind of role modeling by the adults in the school will go a long way towards reinforcing healthy choices that your children will make. Here are a few ideas:

Helpful Hints:

- Watch food portion sizes.
- Consider non-food items for staff and student celebrations, parties and gifts.
- Keep candies, pastries or other high-calorie snack foods as occasional offerings; not as the everyday norm.
- Consider healthy food choices when offering to share food and beverage items among staff.

For a wide range of nutritious and delicious meal ideas, visit: www.MealsMatter.org.



Beverages:

- Low-fat or fat-free milk
- Water
- Coffee—regular and decaffeinated
- Low-fat or fat-free milk as coffee creamer
- Tea—hot or cold
- Sugar-free beverages
- Flavored or seltzer water
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice



Breakfast:

- Low-fat or fat-free yogurts
- Fresh fruit
- Small bagels with light cream cheese spread
- Assorted unsweetened cereals and low-fat or fat-free milk
- Whole-grain toast or English muffins with peanut butter
- Oatmeal or granola
- Hard-boiled eggs



Snacks:

- Vegetable sticks served with yogurt dip or hummus
- Pita chips
- Fresh fruit and cottage cheese
- Pretzels
- Unsalted or lightly salted nuts
- Cheese and whole-grain crackers
- Popcorn (low-fat variety)
- Baked tortilla chips served with chunky salsa



For school-wide events, ask for:

- Whole-grain breads
- Milk to serve with coffee
- Salad dressings and spreads to be served on the side
- Broiled, baked, grilled or steamed items rather than fried or served with heavy sauces
- Fresh fruits and vegetables as a side
- Lower fat or smaller portion desserts such as sorbet, frozen yogurt, or angel food cake with fresh fruit topping
- Sandwiches served with lean meats, cheese and vegetables on whole-grain bread or tortilla (light spread or mayonnaise)
- Entrée salads with oil/vinegar or low-fat dressing
- Soups (e.g., minestrone, beef/barley, chicken noodle, tomato)
- Taco bar with corn tortillas, vegetables, beans, cheese and salsa
- Stir fry with vegetables and lean meat served on brown rice

