

Routines

Eating well

Establish healthy habits

Children learn ways to stay healthy and safe as they talk about and choose healthy foods to eat.

Parents play an important role in helping children to learn about the importance of being healthy and eating healthy food. Eating a wide variety of healthy food gives your child's body energy and vitamins, and promotes growth. Children need to eat a variety of foods from across the five food groups to stay healthy. They need to eat plenty of fresh fruit, vegetables, legumes and cereals.

It is also important that children enjoy proteins such as lean meat or alternatives, and dairy products such as milk, yoghurts and cheese. Butter, margarine and foods high in fats and sugars should be eaten in small amounts.



To encourage healthy habits

- Eat healthy food with your child and show them that you enjoy eating healthy food too.
- Praise your child when they choose healthy foods to eat.
- Avoid using food as a reward, comfort, bribe or punishment.
- Respect your child's appetite. Some children have small appetites or need to eat small meals regularly, while others may eat larger portions less often.
- Get children involved at mealtimes. Young children are more likely to eat something they have made themselves.
- At the grocery store, ask your child to help you select fruits, vegetables and other healthy food.
- At home, encourage your child to help you rinse vegetables, prepare foods or set the table.
- Encourage children to eat regularly and have a regular routine for mealtimes.
- Encourage your child to look at and taste new food. Continue to offer new food for them to try, along with familiar foods that they enjoy.

Healthy snacks

Children enjoy helping to prepare their own meals, and are more likely to eat healthy foods if they help to prepare them. The following simple recipes for healthy snacks use healthy ingredients such as vegetables, fruits, legumes, cereals and dairy products.

Vegetable sticks with dip

What you need

- Vegetables such as carrot, cucumber, celery and capsicum
- Cream cheese or hummus

What to do

1. Cut carrot, cucumber, celery and capsicum into sticks.
2. Serve with a small bowl of cream cheese or hummus.
3. Dip the vegetable sticks into the dip and enjoy.

Avocado and tuna sushi sandwich

What you need

- 2 slices of bread
- Avocado
- 1 small can of tuna (or salmon)

What to do

1. Spread avocado onto each slice of bread.
2. Spread tuna (or salmon) on top of the avocado.
3. Roll each slice of bread into a tube.
4. Cut the tube, with a knife, into small circular shapes.
5. Pick up the rolls with your fingers to eat (or try using chopsticks).

Hairy caterpillar sandwich

What you need

- 2 slices of bread
- Avocado
- Alfalfa
- Sultanas

What to do

1. Spread avocado onto each slice of bread.
2. Top avocado with alfalfa, and place two sultanas on each slice for the eyes.

You could also add small thin sticks of cucumber or carrot as legs.

Vegetable and cheese pikelets

What you need

- 2 cups of mixed vegetables such as grated zucchini, carrot and corn kernels
- 2 cups of self-raising flour
- 1½ cups of milk
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 cup of tasty cheese, grated
- Pinch of salt and pepper
- Butter (for cooking in the frying pan)
- Cream cheese to serve

What to do

1. Grate vegetables such as zucchini and carrot.
2. Whisk all ingredients together in a bowl.
3. Heat the frying pan and melt some butter to cover the surface.
4. Pour ¼ cup of mixture into the frying pan to make each pikelet.
5. Turn the pikelets when they are golden underneath.
6. Enjoy them warm with cream cheese on top.

Fruit kebabs

What you need

- A variety of fruit such as banana, apple, orange, grapes, mango, strawberries and watermelon
- Bamboo skewers

What to do

1. Cut fruit into cubes or bite-size pieces.
2. Thread fruit pieces onto a skewer to create a rainbow of fruit.

You could serve these with a bowl of yoghurt for dipping.

Fruit smoothies

What you need

- ½ cup of favourite fruit, such as banana, apple, pear, berries or mango
- ¾ cup of yoghurt
- 1 cup of milk

What to do

1. Peel the fruit, if needed, and cut into small pieces.
2. Put fruit, yoghurt and milk into the blender and blend until smooth.
3. Pour into a glass and serve with a straw.

Healthy snacks

As you prepare the snack, talk to your child about the vitamins and energy they gain from eating healthy snacks.

For further information, visit www.qld.gov.au/kindy

Disclaimer: the information in this resource sheet is offered as a guide only, and should not be treated as an exhaustive statement on the subject.