

Pack It Up!

Snacks for Field Trips and Outings

Federal law requires every school district to have a local wellness policy. These policies promote healthful school environments by addressing nutrition education, physical activity, school meals, and all foods and drinks at school. Research shows that children and teens who eat smart and move more focus better and have fewer behavior problems. They also have better math, reading, and writing test scores. As educators and administrators, you have the chance to put the policy into practice in a variety of ways. Encourage smart snacks and beverages from home and healthy options for after-school programs, staff meetings and field trips. Support pricing options that sell healthy foods for less. Restrict marketing to students. Promote quality nutrition education.

Field Trips are an excellent opportunity to talk about, model healthy eating and give students a chance to try a new snack or meal. You have the chance to teach children how to make healthful food choices, build positive attitudes about food and eating, and develop healthy eating and activity patterns over time. Serving healthy snacks does not have to be time consuming. There are many snacks that are non-perishable or require minimum prep, but that are packed with lots of smart ingredients.

Field trip snacks can be part of the educational experience too! For example, serve dried apple snacks or applesauce on a trip to an apple orchard or string cheese during a dairy farm trip. So, before you make that next turn into a fast food restaurant parking lot, here are some tips:

What to pack?

- Give the full field trip experience by planning snacks to fit the theme of the trip.
- When possible, serve fresh fruits and vegetables. Pack hardier produce that will not be easily damaged like apples, oranges or pears.
- Choose whole grains and purchase reduced-fat and reduced-sodium snacks whenever possible.
- Find out if water fountains are available at the destination. If not, ask children to bring their own water bottle or pack enough for them.
- Give these a try! Pack crackers with peanut butter and jelly, a peanut butter and banana or apple slices sandwich, or an almond butter and honey sandwich.

How to pack it?

- If you have cold food items, bring along a cooler with plenty of ice. (Note: an insulated lunch bag is only good for 3-4 hours with an ice pack.)
- Store food out of direct sunlight and away from any engines.
- Be prepared! Plan ahead to bring napkins, utensils, plates, and a plastic chopping board and knife to cut up any fruits or vegetables if needed.
- Serve small portions, like a handful of nuts/seeds, or one to two tablespoons of dip or dressing to go with raw vegetables.

Snacks on the Go!

Fruits/Vegetables

- Grapes
- Apples
- Oranges
- Mandarin oranges
- Tangerines
- Pears
- Bananas
- Watermelon cubes
- Honeydew or cantaloupe cubes
- Fresh fruit in season (like strawberries, blueberries, cherries, peaches, apricots, nectarines, plums, kiwis, pineapple)
- Cherry tomatoes
- Baby carrots
- Broccoli florets
- Vegetable sticks (like cucumber, red or green bell peppers)
- Dried fruit/fruit chips (like raisins, figs, pineapple, cranberries, apple rings or banana)
- Fresh fruit salad or packaged fruit cups
- Fruit leathers (without added sugars)
- Applesauce
- Canned fruit (in its own juice)
- Chunks of cooked sweet potato
- Frozen grapes or blueberries
- Fig bars

Non-Perishables

- Whole-grain bread
- Whole wheat pitas
- Baked tortilla chips
- Animal crackers
- Hard pretzels
- Rice cakes
- Whole-grain dry cereal

- Mini-bagels
- Whole-grain bread sticks or crackers
- Vanilla wafers
- Low-fat/low-sugar breakfast, granola or chewy bars
- Graham crackers/cookies
- Nuts/Seeds (like sunflower seeds, plain corn nuts or trail mix)*
- Beef jerky (natural kind, without preservatives and sodium)

Dips and Spreads

- Bean dips
- Banana Peanut Butter*
- Peanut butter/other nut butters*
- Fresh salsa
- Low-fat salad dressings

Cold Items

- Hummus
- Low-fat cream cheese
- Low-fat string cheese
- Sliced cheese
- Low-fat yogurt
- Pudding cups
- 1 percent low-fat milk
- Nonfat milk
- Soy and rice milks (fortified with calcium and vitamin D)

Other Beverages

- 100 percent fruit juice
- 100 percent vegetable juice
- Bottled water

*If no nut allergies

Serve Healthy Snacks and Save!

- Plan what snack(s) to bring and collect field trip money in advance if needed.
- Go to local discount retailers (examples are Sam's Club, Costco, Smart and Final, Dollar Tree), local food banks, local farmers and donations from local businesses as potential sources.
- Buy items in bulk and pre-package into smaller snack bags beforehand.
- Buy fresh fruits and vegetables in season.
- Watch for grocery store sales and stock up on non-perishables in bulk.

For more information on local wellness policy...

www.NCActionForHealthyKids.org
www.nutritionnc.com
www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com

