

Teen Food & Fitness

Healthy Ideas for Middle and High School Students

January 2018

Fayette County Schools
Coordinated School Health



FAST TAKES

The joy of the game

Winning games feels good. But remind your tween that having fun is a more important reason to play. After a game, talk about her favorite moments instead of focusing on who won or lost. You'll send the message that there's more to playing sports than the score.

I'll try that!

Peer pressure can be a good thing—when it introduces your child to healthy foods. Encourage him to notice nutritious items other students put on their lunch trays. If a friend reaches for kiwi, he might, too. When his friends or cousins visit for dinner, ask about their favorite meals, and add good-for-you ideas to your dinner rotation.

Did You Know?

Those end-of-aisle displays in stores can trip up even savvy shoppers. The



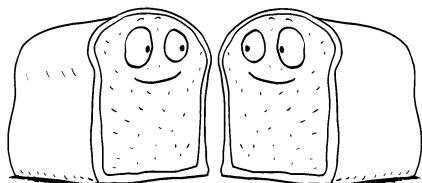
foods are placed there to catch your eye and tempt you to buy. But they

may not be the cheapest or healthiest choices. Teach your teenager to use a list to stay on budget and to avoid impulse buying.

Just for fun

Q: What looks just like half a loaf of bread?

A: The other half!



Nutrition resolutions

“We’re going to eat healthier this year!” That’s a great New Year’s resolution—and it will be easier for your family to stick with it if you set specific, daily goals. Share these ideas with your teen for a fresh start in 2018.



Resolution: Eat more fruit.

Tips: Place a bowl of colorful fruit on the counter so family members can grab a piece on their way out the door. Keep frozen berries on hand to thaw for dessert. Tuck slices of citrus fruits (oranges, clementines) into sandwich wraps for a sweet burst of flavor.

Resolution: Eat a variety of dark, leafy green vegetables.

Tips: Put raw, cut-up broccoli in zipper bags, and display front and center in the refrigerator for your tween or teen to snack on. Serve a salad with dinner. Try different greens with favorite foods—for example, romaine adds crunch to burrito bowls, and arugula’s peppery flavor makes it a tasty burger topping.

Resolution: Eat calcium-rich foods.

Tips: Drinking a cup of milk with breakfast or lunch is an easy way to fit in a serving of calcium. When you buy cereal or orange juice, opt for calcium-fortified varieties. Include high-calcium side dishes at dinner, such as turnip greens, bok choy, or white beans.

Resolution: Make your proteins lean.

Tips: Hard-boil a batch of eggs on Sunday nights—they’re an ideal portable snack, and they’ll stay fresh in the refrigerator for up to a week. Purchase lean meat in bulk when it goes on sale, and freeze in dinner-size portions. ♡

Stay hydrated this winter

In cooler temperatures, your tween may forget to stay hydrated. But it’s still important! Here are ways to work fluids into your family’s day.

Try tea. Brew caffeine-free herbal tea or flavored teas like raspberry, lemon, or mint. Drink it hot or iced with breakfast, after dinner, or on the go.

Sip soup. Broth-based chicken noodle and vegetable soups are satisfying options. *Tip:* If you buy canned soups, choose low-sodium varieties.

Drink water. Let your tween pick out a reusable water bottle to refill with tap water throughout the day. This is less expensive and more environmentally friendly than drinking bottled water. ♡



Power up for workouts

What your child eats before a workout can mean the difference between going the distance and hitting a wall. Suggest this plan.

The fuel: Your tween needs carbohydrates, such as those found in fruits and grains, for quick energy. She also needs protein from foods like chicken, nuts, and seeds for long-term fuel.

The timing: About 1–3 hours before a workout, she could have a small meal or a snack. ♥



Encourage your teenager to enjoy these pre-workout combos:

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup hummus and 6 whole-grain crackers
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Greek yogurt, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup blueberries, and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup whole-grain granola
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup peanuts with 2 tbsp. raisins
- $\frac{1}{2}$ grilled chicken breast and $\frac{1}{2}$ baked sweet potato
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup mashed black beans and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup carrot sticks
- 1 brown rice cake and 1 tbsp. sunflower seed or almond butter

Q & A Comfort foods

Q: My daughter Jessie and I crave “comfort foods” this time of year. Are there healthier ways for us to enjoy them?

A: Yes! You can enjoy the warm, cozy feeling of comfort foods without overdoing it on fat and calories.



Replace half of the cheese sauce in macaroni and cheese with steamed and pureed butternut squash. Instead of frying chicken, dip it in egg, roll in whole-grain bread crumbs, and bake. Substitute fat-free evaporated milk for heavy cream in casseroles and creamy soups. And choose cottage cheese over ricotta for lasagna or baked ziti.

These replacements should help you get through winter enjoying yummy comfort foods with your daughter—but with a better-for-you twist. ♥

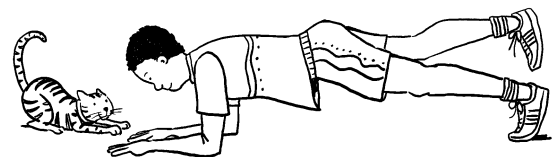


ACTIVITY CORNER

How to plank

Planks help strengthen your teen’s core, arms, and shoulders. Encourage him to try these.

Basic plank. Get into push-up position—but with your arms bent and your forearms, not your hands, shoulder-width apart. Keeping your entire body in a straight line, hold for at least 20 seconds, working up to 1 minute.



Cross-body mountain climber. From plank position, bring your right knee forward toward your left elbow. Return to start. Repeat with the left knee and right elbow. Alternate sides for 30 seconds.

One-leg plank. While doing a plank, lift your right leg straight behind you at least 6 inches off the floor. Keep your core engaged and the body straight. Hold for 10 seconds. Repeat with the other leg and continue alternating. ♥

In the Kitchen

Salad shakers

Give your tween a large mason jar (or any container with a lid), and let him make, shake, and eat one of these fun winter salads! Since the dressing isn’t mixed with the vegetables, he can put them together ahead of time and refrigerate for several days.

Chicken taco

Add 2 tbsp. salsa to the jar. Layer in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup shredded cooked chicken, $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp. low-sodium taco seasoning, 1 cup mixed salad greens, 1 tbsp. shredded cheddar, and 2 tsp. crushed tortilla chips.

Winter Cobb

Pour 2 tbsp. Italian dressing in the jar. Layer in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cubed lean ham (or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chickpeas), 1 cup bite-size green leaf lettuce, 1 diced hard-boiled egg, and 2 tbsp. dried cranberries. ♥

Grape and broccoli

Drizzle 2 tbsp. balsamic vinaigrette on the bottom of the jar. Layer in 1 cup bite-sized chopped fresh broccoli, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sliced red grapes, and 2 tbsp. toasted sunflower seeds.



OUR PURPOSE

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

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Teen Food & Fitness™ is reviewed by a registered dietitian. Consult a physician before beginning any major change in diet or exercise.
ISSN 1935-8865