BUILDING BLOCKS FOR A HEALTHY SNACK

from the Food and Nutrition Department

FRUIT

Eat the rainbow! Fruits are full of antioxidants and fiber to keep us healthy:

Pears or Apples

Stone Fruits: Apricots, Cherries, Nectarines, Peaches, Plums

Berries: Blackberries, Blueberries, Grapes (red, green, or purple), Raspberries, Strawberries

Tropical Fruits: Bananas, Kiwis, Mangoes, Pineapples

Melons: Cantaloupe, Honeydew melon, Watermelon

Citrus Fruits: Grapefruit, Mandarin oranges, Oranges, Tangerines

Dried Fruits: Raisins, Apricots, Apples, Cranberries, Pineapple, Papaya, and others with little or no added sugars

VEGGIES

Did you know that when you eat vegetables, you are eating different parts of the plant?

Roots: Carrots, Sweet potatoes, Potatoes

Stems: Celery, Asparagus

Leaves: Lettuce, Spinach, Kale, Swiss chard

Flowers: Broccoli, Cauliflower

Fruits: Cucumbers, Peppers, Grape and Cherry tomatoes, Yellow Summer squash or Zucchini

Seeds: Snap or Snow peas, String beans, Edamame (pronounced "eh-dah-MAH-may")

DAIRY

Dairy is a great source of calcium to help build strong bones:

Yogurt: Look for brands that are low-fat or fat-free and low in sugars

Low-Fat Cheese: Cottage Cheese, Mozzarella, Feta, or Goat

Milk: Low-fat and Non-fat milk products are best

PROTEIN

Run faster and jump higher with protein!

Eggs: Hard boiled

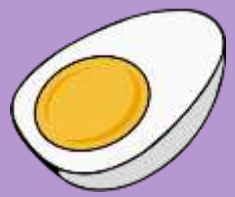
Nuts/Seeds: Small handful of nuts is a reasonable serving size – Sunflower seeds, Peanuts, Pistachios, Almonds, Walnuts, Cashews, or Soy nuts

Nut/Seed butters: Two Tablespoons is one serving size

Luncheon Meat: Choose lower-fat, reduced sodium brands of turkey, ham and roast beef

*Cheese is also a great source of protein

Beans: Chickpeas to make hummus or roasted for a crunchy snack



GRAINS

Eat whole-grain (WG) as much as possible for healthy fiber:

WG English Muffins, Pita or Tortillas

WG Breakfast Cereal: Cheerios, Grape Nuts, Raisin Bran, Frosted Mini Wheats and Wheaties

*Cereal can be made into trail mixes for on-the-go snacking!

WG Crackers: Triscuits, Kalvi Rye cracker or Whole Wheat Matzos

Baked Tortilla Chips: Look for lower-sodium brands

Rice Cakes: Made from Brown Rice

Granola and Cereal Bars: low in fat and sugars

Pretzels, Breadsticks and Flatbreads

Serving healthy snacks to children is important to providing good nutrition, supporting lifelong healthy eating habits and helping to prevent costly and potentially disabling diseases. Snacks play a major role in children's diets. Choose snacks from all the food groups to ensure a well-rounded diet. Here are some healthy snack ideas and tips from the Food and Nutrition Services Department!

For more information about food groups and My Plate, please visit ChooseMyPlate.gov

Try these healthy snack combinations:

If you see a * you can find this on the Somerville School menu!

- String Cheese, WG Crackers, and an Apple*
- Brown Rice Cake with Sunbutter and Carrot Sticks
- WG Nutri-Grain Bar and Orange Slices*
- Sliced Carrots or Zucchini with Hummus or another Bean Dip* [check out the salad bar!]
- WG Bagel with Cream Cheese and 4 ounces 100% Fruit Juice*
- Celery with Sunbutter and Raisins (ants on a log!)
- Trail Mix and a Yogurt **[See trail mix recipe ->]**
- WG Cereal, Milk and Fruit* (blueberries are delicious in cereal)
- Tomato, Cucumber and Mozzarella Skewers (cut up a string cheese into pieces and skewer with toothpicks)
- Smoothie with Frozen Strawberries and/or Blueberries, Yogurt and Milk
- Whole Wheat Pita Pockets with Assorted Vegetables and Dressing
- Half an English Muffin or Whole-Grain Waffle with Sunbutter Butter and Banana Slices
- Frozen Fruit, Yogurt, and Granola* (make a fun parfait!) – Grapes are delicious frozen
- Broccoli with Dressing and Hard-Boiled Egg

SNACKING TIPS

As a general guideline: prepare snacks that include at least two food groups, for example, a protein (cheese) and a grain (whole grain crackers)

Water should be the main drink served to kids at snack times. Water satisfies thirst without adding sugar and calories

Structure and timing are key! Scheduling snack times helps to avoid all day grazing – 2-3 snacks for children and 1-2 snacks for teens

BERRY BLAST TRAIL MIX

Servings: 4

- ½ cup Pumpkin Seeds
- ½ cup Sunflower Seeds
- ½ cup Dried Cranberries
- ½ cup Coconut Flakes
- ½ cup Freeze Dried Raspberries

Mix and Enjoy!

Note: try to choose dried fruit without added sugar, cranberries sweetened with apple juice are lower in sugar.

Recipe adapted from: superhealthykids.org