

Snack Ideas

A full day of learning means your child gets off the bus ready to eat everything in sight. Here are some great tips for establishing healthy eating habits and appeasing your child's ravenous appetite.

KEEP IT SIMPLE

Include simple, healthy snacks in your grocery run. Baby carrots, mini peppers, celery sticks and cucumbers all make quick and easy finger foods. Also look for snack-sized cheese, applesauce, hummus, granola bars and other healthy alternatives to junk food. Keep preparation to a minimum and store them in a place that's easy for your kids to reach.

HOMEMADE GOODNESS

You don't have to be a Pinterest mom to make a week's worth of homemade goodies for your kids to snack on after school. Breakfast cookies are easily customizable and make a great after school snack, as do muffins and any quick breads. You can also whip up a week's worth of sandwich wraps or cut fruit and store it in the fridge.

FRESH AND FRUITY

Pick a peck of fresh fruit at the grocery store for your kids to nibble on in the afternoons. Kiwis, bananas, apples and oranges are all great choices. Your local grocer may even stock smaller, kid-sized fruits so there's less waste. Or, instead of a

full-sized orange, try clementines. Let your kid try a new fruit or veggie every week.

DON'T FORGET THE DRINKS

One way to make sure your kids stay hydrated is to give them their own water bottle. They can fill it with the beverage of their choice and refill it as needed. Make sure it has a handle or a clip so they can carry it with them on any after school adventures. If they go to an after-school program, make sure having a drink is allowed. Also keep in mind that drinks like juice pouches may be a kid favorite, but they add extra calories to the meal. Bear that in mind when you're planning out snacks.



© ADOBE STOCK

Homework Help

With back to school comes that dreaded avalanche of homework, the start of many a parent-child fight over the ages. But it doesn't have to be something to dread. Here are some ways to make homework a little less painful.

FIND A GOOD TIME

FOR HOMEWORK

Establish an after-school routine and fit in homework where it best suits your child. If she needs to expend a little energy before she sits quietly, let her go play before tackling her work. Some children do better after a snack, or even after bath time. Wherever to establish homework time, give your children some ownership over their routine and make sure to check their work.

FIND A GOOD PLACE

FOR HOMEWORK

Give your child a quiet, well-lit place for doing their homework. This could be a desk in their room, the living room floor or the kitchen table -- anywhere they are able to concentrate and focus on learning. Avoid distractions like the television or people coming and going.

DEFINE YOUR ROLE

Show your children how their homework relates to your adult life. For instance, while they're doing math homework, sit down and pay bills or balance the checkbook. If a child asks for help with their homework, follow the Department of Education's advice and make sure you provide guidance and not answers. And if the teacher asks for your involvement, get involved. But if they don't, stay away and let your child go, even if it means they make a mistake.

HANDLE FRUSTRATION

Keep an eye on your child for any signs of anger or frustration while he's doing his homework and be ready to help him figure out how to deal with it. You may need to let him take a short break and come back to a challenging assignment. Make sure to readily reward and encourage good homework behaviors and positive progress.

TALK TO THE TEACHER

If you think your child is bringing home too much or not enough homework, or if you're unsure of the teacher's homework expectations, don't be afraid to bring it up in a quick email or chat. Keeping open lines of communication with your child's teacher or teachers can go along way to soothing homework angst for the both of you.

