

ENCOURAGING HEALTHY EATING

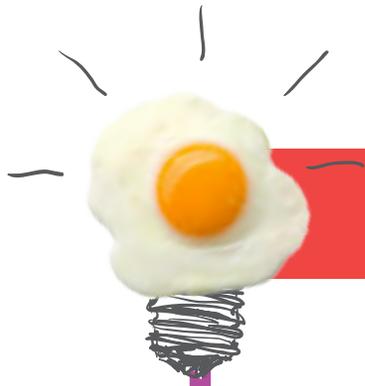
Raising healthy eaters is the responsibility of everyone in the home, school, and community. The breakfast club is an ideal setting for modelling healthy behaviours and educating about food and nutrition. The following tips can help raise healthy eaters at the breakfast club:

The following are creative ways to introduce more fruits and veggies into the breakfast club:

- Establish a routine that children and youth can rely on, including breakfast at the same time every day. Allow ample time for breakfast so that they don't feel rushed;
- Be patient and consistent when offering new menu items. Students are often skeptical about new foods and may reject the food the first time. Consistently offering a new food without forcing it often leads to a child accepting it;
- Be a role model for your breakfast program by eating with the students. If you are introducing new foods be the first to try it and encourage the students to follow;
- Allow students to take part in menu planning and preparation. Find out what healthy foods they would like to eat and work with them to make it happen. Use this as a teaching opportunity to discuss healthy options and the importance of a balanced breakfast;
- Be creative with the menu and make nutrition fun! Brightly coloured fruits and vegetables, unique shapes, and a variety of textures add interest at breakfast time;
- Understand that breakfast program staff and volunteers are responsible for what is offered at breakfast, while children are responsible for what they choose from the offerings and how much they eat.

- Offer sliced fruit. Simply cutting up fruit into bite size pieces can make a huge difference;
- Blend fruit smoothies (don't forget to try adding veggies too!);
- Serve apple slices with cinnamon sprinkled on top;
- Make fruit kabobs;
- Have an "orange smile" day;
- Prepare fruit parfaits – layer granola, yogurt, and fresh or frozen berries;
- Create a fruit platter that looks like a smiley face;
- Freeze 100% fruit juice or smoothies in Popsicle molds;
- Use cookie cutters to serve melon in different shapes;
- Offer little baggies of dried fruit: raisins, apricots, dates, cranberries, figs, apples;
- Make a banana split. Cut a banana lengthwise and top with strawberries, yogurt, dried cereal, raisins and nuts;
- Try the "dipper". Get the students to dip banana pieces in yogurt, then into coconut or crushed cereal;
- Make "ants on a log". Fill celery sticks with nut butter and raisins;





BRIGHT IDEAS

CHALLENGE STUDENTS TO TRY NEW FRUITS AND VEGETABLES WITH THESE FUN ACTIVITIES:

"TRY ME" OR "DARE" PLATES:

Introduce unique fruits and vegetables that students might not typically eat on a regular basis and challenge them to try it for bragging rights! Don't forget that to a child a green apple or strawberry might be unique. Start by introducing students to a wide variety of common fruits and vegetables to broaden their food experiences and build from there. The common "unique" food will be more available both financially and physically and introducing this is bound to have more impact than introducing an exotic fruit. Cut the pieces small (to avoid waste and save money) but showcase the whole fruit for students to see and touch as well. Make it fun! When students try the new fruit or vegetable they could either get a ballot to enter a draw for healthy prizes or a sticker to place beside their name. At the end of the month, the student with the most stickers could win a healthy prize.

TASTE TESTING:

Encourage students to taste test new fruits and vegetables using different scenarios and vote on their favorites. For example, sample different varieties of apples, or the same produce grown both locally (or in your school garden) and abroad and comment on the differences. Showcase the results on a graph to the whole school.

TRIVIA TUESDAYS:

Every Tuesday challenge students with a new food related trivia question. Ask them to try new fruits and vegetables and correctly identify what it is or where it is from (blindfold them if it is easily recognizable by sight). Bring in a plant, or picture of a plant, and ask students to correctly identify what is growing or introduce a new kitchen utensil and ask students to correctly explain what it's used for.

WORLD MAP ACTIVITY:

Introduce new fruits and vegetables grown around the world and locally. Invite students to place stickers or push pins on a map indicating the location of where the fruit and vegetable came from and discuss. What type of fruits and vegetables can be grown locally and when? Where does most of our produce come from and why? Etc.

CREATE COLOUR THEMED WEEKS:

Each week choose a new colour to focus on, and serve fruits and vegetables that represent that colour. Ask students to colour in a section of the rainbow (either individually or as a whole school project) for each new colour they try. For example:

GREEN

avocados, apples, grapes, honeydew, kiwi, limes, broccoli, green beans, green pepper, asparagus

ORANGE & YELLOW

apricot, banana, cantaloupe, grapefruit, mango, peach, pineapple, carrot, yellow pepper, corn, sweet potato

PURPLE & BLUE

blackberries, blueberries, plums, raisins, purple cabbage, purple fleshed potatoes

RED

cherries, cranberries, pomegranate, red/pink grapefruit, red grapes, watermelon, beets, red onion, red pepper, rhubarb, tomato

WHITE, TAN & BROWN:

brown pears, dates, white peaches, cauliflower, mushrooms, onion, potatoes, white corn

