

Nutrition Nuggets

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

May 2009

Littleton Public Schools

BEST BITES



An open mind

We all have foods we like and don't like. Let your child form his own opinions. Rather than mentioning your own dislikes, encourage him to try all kinds of healthy foods. He may wind up loving broccoli—even if you won't touch it!



Activity log

Motivate your youngster to exercise by keeping a weekly family log. Help her create a tracking sheet on the computer, and make it your screen saver. Ask the whole family to enter their activities (cheerleading, jogging) and time spent (30 minutes, 60 minutes). Add up the minutes on Sunday night, and then start again.



DID YOU KNOW?

Americans eat nearly 100 acres of pizza every day! Here's a way to make a nutritious version of this crowd-pleaser. Buy a pre-baked, thin pizza crust. Top with bell peppers, mushrooms, tomatoes, and skim mozzarella cheese. Bake at 400° for about 10 minutes, until the cheese bubbles.

Just for fun

Q: What does it mean when you see nine elephants wearing the same jersey?

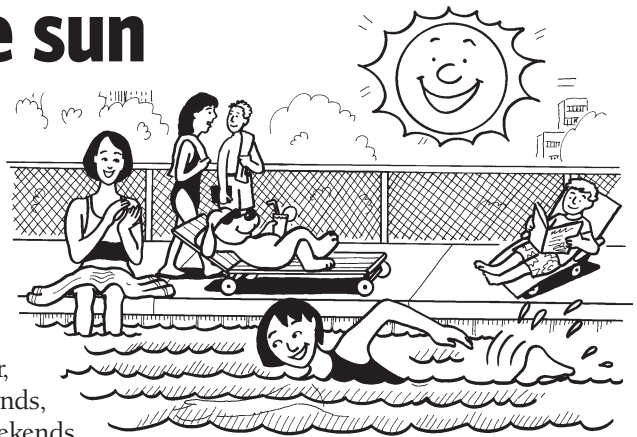
A: They're on the same baseball team!



Fun in the sun

Summer is almost here! Start planning now for ways to keep your child physically active throughout the school break. Here are some ideas to get started:

- Make biking a part of your family routine. Together, bike to the pool, to meet friends, or to the post office. On weekends, take bike rides along a nature trail or through a state park.
- Work fitness into vacations or visits to relatives. You might hike, go canoeing, or play tennis. On long car trips, plan to stop along the way for a walk or to tour a landmark.
- Swimming is the perfect summer exercise. Look for low-cost or free options like a community or public pool. Sign your youngster up for lessons if she doesn't know how to swim. *Safety note:* Be sure to keep a careful eye on her while she's in the pool.
- Play outside together. Go out after dinner for a game of freeze tag or



hide-and-seek. Have a basketball shootout (see who can make the most baskets in a row), or play follow the leader through the neighborhood.

- Have sports equipment handy. For example, put different-sized balls, hula hoops, jump ropes, soccer cones, skates, and scooters in a large container or on shelves. Keep costs down by shopping at yard sales or the dollar store, or ask family and friends for hand-me-downs.
- Build in time for free play in your neighborhood, at the playground, or in a park. When your youngster finds other children to play with, they'll think of all kinds of active games on their own! ♥

Beware! Nutrition traps to avoid

Carnivals... ballgames... trips. Along with summer fun come a few challenges to healthy eating. Avoid junk food with these suggestions.

Eat first. Before setting out for a carnival, fair, or sporting event, eat a meal at home. If your children are full, they'll be less likely to clamor for hot dogs or cotton candy. Cut down on the junk food and the expense by allowing them to pick one healthier snack each, such as a soft baked pretzel, roasted peanuts, or air-popped popcorn.

Take your own. Pack a cooler to carry with you on car, plane, or train trips. You might take sandwiches like turkey and cheese on whole-grain bread or hummus and sliced carrots in a pita pocket. *Other ideas:* sliced raw vegetables, fresh fruit, rice cakes, and yogurt pouches. ♥



