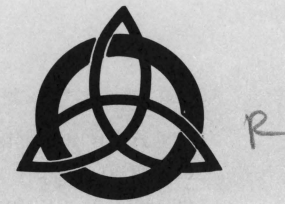


HOME ECONOMICS GUIDE



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Some Food for Thought on Snacks

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Almost all children enjoy and need snacks. Their small stomachs aren't built for a three-meal-a-day schedule so snacks provide an important portion of their daily nutrition.

Snack time usually is less busy than mealtime for a mother or a day care provider so often the children can help in the preparation. Something as simple as pouring juice and spreading peanut butter on a cracker is good for developing muscle control. Following a simple recipe has many hidden benefits too.

Children learn to follow the recipe's directions. They learn to work together as a team by taking turns mixing, measuring, and peeking in the oven. They may learn about time as they watch a clock or a timer waiting for an egg to cook or a cookie to bake. They learn also about measuring—1 cup, 2 teaspoons, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup. They learn new words and their meaning, such as stir, broil, bake, mix, baste. They see how butter changes when it melts, how cake batter changes as it bakes, what happens when something freezes and when it's combined with something else, and how egg whites expand when air is beaten into them. They learn skills that make them feel important—cooking is real grownup work.

Children should start their snack preparation with simple things. Putting cheese cubes on toothpicks can be a difficult job for chubby little fingers at first. Spreading peanut butter on a cracker or a piece of celery might be the next step.

From here children can learn to prepare powdered sugar icing, instant pudding, jello, scrambled eggs, or no-bake cookies then advance to more complicated recipes requiring more steps and accurate measurements.

Children will have a lot of questions which need to be answered as they cook. Close supervision, especially if they are working with sharp knives, a hot stove, or boiling water, will be necessary too.

As well as being nutritious and fun to fix, snacks should be easy for the children to manage without adult help.

Some snack suggestions follow. They have been proven popular with many children.



Most snacks for children should be easy to fix and easy to eat.

Beverages

Milk (powdered) or milk drinks. Making chocolate milk with powdered milk, cocoa, and sugar with vanilla or other flavoring is a simple project. Or use instant hot chocolate mix.

Fruit juice. Grape juice served with a few grapes and raisins help children understand fruit in different forms. Orange juice is important to serve because vitamin C is often lacking in children's diets. Tomato juice also is high in vitamin C but, unfortunately, children seldom like it.

Apricot nectar and prune juice may appeal to some children. Apple juice is very mild and usually a favorite, especially among very young children. They will often drink it when sick and nothing else appeals to them.

Frozen juice popsicles are delicious on a hot day and show children how a liquid changes form when it becomes very, very cold.

Vegetables

Carrot sticks or celery stuffed with cheese or peanut butter are easy to prepare.

Most fresh vegetables, especially after picking or digging them from a garden, are well liked by children. They love to shell and eat tender peas and will often eat young green beans and raw potatoes.

Potato soup is easily made with instant mashed potatoes. Or, a cup of instant soup, choice of flavors.

Fruit

Some fresh fruit may be expensive, so shop carefully. Dried fruit is popular but hard on teeth. It is sticky and stays in contact with the enamel for an extra long time.

Orange sections (try serving frozen), apples cut in various ways (wedges or circles), banana cubes, or any fruit cut in pieces make nutritious snacks. Children enjoy cutting fruit up and putting it on a toothpick for kabobs.

Baked apples or fresh applesauce is fun as a special treat especially after visiting an apple tree and collecting some summer apples.

Raisins are liked by children, but they should brush their teeth after eating them.

Peanut butter fruit squares are easy to make and good to eat.

Protein

Protein is especially important for fast growing young children. Some high protein snacks are:

Scrambled eggs—a rotary egg beater is great fun to manipulate and develops skill.

Deviled eggs—when each child devils his own, it's almost sure to be eaten.

Cheese cubes, toasted cheese sandwiches and cheese balls.

Peanut butter—on celery, crackers or bread.

Individual hamburger patties or meatloaves—nice and squishy to mold with the hands.

Dessert

It's important that not too many snacks be in the dessert category. Some of the more nutritious dessert snacks are:

Oatmeal or fruit cookie.

Molasses cookie.

Jello, pudding, custard.

Cupcakes for a special occasion.

Cheese Balls.

Peanut butter French toast.

PEANUT BUTTER CRUNCH COOKIES

½ c. reconstituted nonfat dry milk

1 c. peanut butter

1 c. sugar

1 c. rolled oats

Blend all ingredients thoroughly; drop by teaspoonfuls onto lightly greased cookie sheet. Bake 350°F. for 12 to 15 minutes. Cool slightly, remove from sheets and cool.

CHEESE BALLS

½ lb. grated cheese

½ c. margarine (1 stick)

1 c. flour

Have cheese and margarine at room temperature. Mix thoroughly. Add flour. Roll by hand into small balls. Bake on ungreased cookie sheet in 400° oven 15 to 20 minutes. About 36 balls.

PEANUT BUTTER FRENCH TOAST

2 Tablespoons peanut butter

2 Tablespoons honey

2 slices bread

1 egg, beaten

½ c. milk

2 teaspoons butter or margarine

Blend peanut butter and honey, and spread between 2 slices of bread to make a sandwich. Combine egg and milk. Soak sandwich in egg mixture. Melt butter or margarine in a baking pan. Bake sandwiches at 400°F. (hot oven) about 40 minutes. Turn sandwiches to brown both sides. Or cook slowly in fry pan on top of range. Cut into 4 pieces.