

# The Likeable Lunch!

Packing a healthy and low cost school lunch can be easier than you think. Following the simple tips and ideas below will get you in the swing of sending your child to school with a lunch that both of you feel good about!

- **Cool Lunch Equipment**
  - Let your child choose lunch box, insulated bag, brown bag, etc.
  - Arm yourself with snack size bags and small containers
  - Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold
    - Wrap cold pack in paper towel and put in Ziploc
    - Thermos for hot/cold foods
  - Water bottle/Thermos that appeals to your child
  - Fun shapes/cookie cutters to use for sandwiches, tortillas, etc.
  
- **Give Choice A Chance**
  - Involve kids in Choices – school lunch is not the time to introduce new foods
  - Encourage kids to help with advance preparation
  - Make it Fun – encourage new ideas, use online resources, brainstorm together!
  - Don't be critical – focus on good choices not on less than optimal choices
  - Occasionally pack a “less healthy” choice; no foods are forbidden
  
- **Dip or Dunk**
  - For dipping appeal, pack lower fat dressings, dips, and sauces
  - Use small reusable Tupperware containers
  
- **Balance the Beverages**
  - Buy or pack low-fat white milk
  - Water – bottles or use Thermos/water bottle
    - Add ice or freeze before adding to lunch box
  - 100% Juice or low fat chocolate milk on occasion
  - Stay away from punch, lemonade or soda
  
- **Plan Ahead**
  - Prep in advance
    - Wash and cut up fruits or veggies on the weekend or the night before – saves time and stress on school mornings
    - Portion non-perishables (crackers, nuts, pretzels, etc.) days in advance
  - Focus on a week of lunches at a time; don't try to plan for the whole month!
  - Write it down – jot ideas (or have your child do it) down on a grocery list
  - Plan to pack or buy
    - Look at the weekly school menu and talk with your child about days to pack and day(s) to buy school lunch
  - Taste test and try new foods at home, not in the lunchbox