In gearing up for summer, we at Food Gatherers are getting ready for our busiest season! From Summer Food Service Program: our summer school feeding initiative, Grillin’: our annual outdoor picnic, silent auction and fundraiser, Hunger Study, and all the action on our Gathering Farm, we can’t wait to start! Summer is also the perfect time to refocus your family’s diet and fully take advantage of the bounty of fresh produce available! This issue delves into healthy snacks and healthy eating for the whole family. Some key sections to note are **Information on Recommended Sodium Levels** (Page 3) and **Information on Limiting Sugar** (Page 5). Try and challenge yourself this summer to look for alternative sources when you’re craving sugar or salt. Expand your daily recipe index to include different flavor combinations and foods you’ve never tried before. Try cooking vegetables in different ways to explore how flavor changes according to cooking type. Make this summer special by developing a healthier food regimen for you and your family!

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Meal and Snack Ideas

For breakfast, make a yogurt parfait: layer low-fat vanilla yogurt with strawberries, blueberries, oranges or sliced bananas in a glass. Top with a sprinkle of low-fat granola.

Make a smoothie by blending low-fat or skim milk, frozen berries and a banana together. Dip whole wheat waffles in natural applesauce mixed with Greek yogurt.

Snacks

Wraps: Spread a layer of mustard or small layer of low-fat mayo on a side of deli turkey and cheese. Or, make a veggie wrap with roasted vegetables and low-fat cheese rolled in a whole-wheat tortilla.

Mini Pizza: Toast a whole-wheat English muffin, drizzle with pizza sauce and sprinkle with low-fat mozzarella cheese.

Core an apple, slice it into four pieces and spread crunchy peanut butter between the slices.

Microwave a small baked potato. Top with reduced fat cheddar cheese and salsa.

Snack Kebabs: Put cubes of low-fat cheese and grapes on pretzel sticks. Spread celery sticks with peanut butter or low-fat cream cheese. Top with raisins.

Homemade trail mix: mix together cereal, dried fruit and nuts in a sandwich bag. Make a mini sandwich with tuna or egg salad on a whole-grain dinner roll.

Sprinkle your favorite cheese on a corn tortilla, microwave for 20 seconds and serve with salsa.

Snack on edamame, pomegranate or pistachios.

Sweeter Items

Banana Split: Top a banana with low-fat vanilla yogurt and top with low-fat granola. Alternatively, dip a banana in melted dark chocolate, cover with sliced almonds, peanuts, coconut and stick it in the freezer until it hardens!

Apple Pie Oatmeal: Make one packet of plain microwave oatmeal with low-fat milk. Mix in 1/4 cup unsweetened applesauce. Sprinkle with apple pie spice or cinnamon.

Stuff a whole-grain pita pocket with ricotta cheese and Granny Smith apple slices. Add a dash of cinnamon.

Toast a whole-grain waffle and top with low-fat yogurt and peaches.

Make a healthy Rocky Road: Break a graham cracker into bite-sized pieces. Mix the pieces with low-fat chocolate pudding with a few mini marshmallows for a treat.

Spread your favorite nut butter and sliced bananas on a whole wheat cracker. Honey is optional, but a nice addition.
Creative, Kid-Friendly Ways to Incorporate Fruits and Vegetables in your Daily Diet

Use vegetables to top pizzas. Use broccoli, spinach, bell peppers, tomatoes, mushrooms, zucchini or other vegetables you enjoy.

Try crunchy vegetables instead of chips with your favorite low-fat salad dressing for dipping: carrots, celery, or bell peppers.

Grill colorful vegetable kabobs packed with tomatoes, green and red peppers, mushrooms and onions.

Add color to salads with baby carrots, grape tomatoes, spinach leaves or oranges.

Keep cut vegetables handy. Try bell peppers, broccoli or cauliflower, carrots, celery sticks, cucumbers, or snap peas.

Keep fresh fruit and vegetables washed and available as snacks. Apples, pears, bananas, grapes, figs, carrot sticks, celery sticks, broccoli, cauliflower are all easy to eat on the run. Add yogurt, nut butter or tahini to make it a well-balanced snack!

Add vegetables to your omelet. Try adding broccoli, squash, carrots, peppers, tomatoes or onions with low-fat cheddar cheese.

Add sliced pineapple, apple, peppers, cucumber or tomato to sandwiches for extra filling.

Add fruit to your morning oatmeal, ready-to-eat cereal, yogurt or toaster waffle.

Top a baked potato with beans and salsa or broccoli and low-fat cheese.

Add grated, shredded or chopped vegetables such as zucchini, spinach and carrots to lasagna, meat loaf, mashed potatoes, pasta sauce and rice dishes.

Add vegetables and fruits to baked goods—bananas and unsweetened applesauce serve as natural sweeteners instead of added sugar! Try fruit pancakes, zucchini or banana bread, carrot muffins and other healthy treats.

Add extra vegetables to soups, stews, and sauces. Grate them to blend in, or puree the whole soup!

Take your children to the farmers’ market! Engage them in the process of growing and eating food. Encourage them to pick something new out to try for a meal.

Daily Recommended Sodium Levels

One teaspoon of salt contains about 2,300 mg of sodium. Use this chart to find out what your child should be consuming.

Avoid processed, packaged, restaurant, and fast food. Processed foods like canned soups or frozen dinners contain hidden sodium that quickly surpasses the recommended limit. Many fast food meals are also loaded with sodium.

If possible, choose fresh or frozen vegetables. When selecting canned, choose no-salt-added.

Cut back on salty snacks such as potato chips, nuts, and pretzels.

Choose low-salt or reduced sodium products.

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<tr>
<td>14 to 18 yrs old</td>
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Tips for Picky Eaters:

- Offer a new food only when your child is hungry and rested.
- When presenting new foods, follow normal dinner patterns. Avoid labeling the food as new or different.
- Make it fun: present the food as a game, a play-filled experience. Try cutting the food into shapes!
- Mix it all together! Try blending healthy smoothies or tossing vegetables into the main dish.
- Serve new foods with favorite foods to increase acceptance.
- Finish your plate! Lead by example in choosing healthy foods.
- Have your child help prepare meals. Often, they’ll be willing to try if they helped make it (and smelled it)!
- Limit beverages. Picky eaters often fill up on liquids instead. Serve water with meals.
- Limit snacks to two per day.

Develop Healthy Eating Habits

Children develop a natural preference for the foods they enjoy the most, which is why it’s so important to make healthy choices appealing. The childhood impulse to imitate is strong, so it is key to act as a healthy role model for your children.

Top tips to promote healthy childhood eating:

◊ **Have regular family meals.** Knowing dinner is served at approximately the same time every night and that the entire family will be sitting down together is comforting and enhances appetite. Breakfast is another great time for a family meal, especially since kids who eat breakfast tend to do better in school.

◊ **Cook more meals at home.** Eating home cooked meals is healthier for the whole family and sets a great example for kids about the importance of food. Restaurant meals tend to have more fat, sugar, and salt. Save dining out for special occasions.

◊ **Get kids involved.** Children enjoy helping adults grocery shop, selecting what they’ll have for lunch, and preparing dinner. This is also a chance for you to teach them about the nutritional values of different foods, and (for older children) how to read food labels.

◊ **Make a variety of healthy snacks available instead of empty calorie snacks.** Children love snacks, so it’s important to make all snacks healthy to contribute to a well-balanced diet. Keep plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grain snacks, and healthy beverages around and easily accessible so kids will reach for healthy snacks instead of empty calorie snacks like soda, chips, or cookies.

◊ **Limit portion sizes.** Don’t insist that your child cleans the plate and never use food as a reward or a bribe. Try to eat slow and savor food to avoid second helpings.


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Limiting Sugar

The American Heart Association recommends no more than 3 teaspoons of sugar (12 grams) a day for children. This amount can be found in a single serving of Oreos or one granola bar. Keep these tips mind when shopping or preparing snacks:

**Read nutrition labels.** Boxed snacks, large bags of chips, cookie packages and other similar snack items all contain multiple servings, so try to pre-portion these items to limit mindless eating. To the right is the nutrition label for a serving of Oreos (2 cookies), which contains 14g of sugar (more than four times the daily recommendation). Label source: [http://dessertswithbenefits.com/homemade-oreos/](http://dessertswithbenefits.com/homemade-oreos/)

◊ **Don’t ban sweets entirely.** This is an invitation for cravings and overindulging when given the chance.

◊ **Give recipes a makeover.** Many recipes taste just as good with less sugar. Starting with less is key so your palette doesn’t become accustomed to extra sugary items.

◊ **Avoid sugary drinks.** One can of soda has about 10 teaspoons of sugar in it, more than three times the daily recommendation! Try adding a splash of fruit juice to sparkling water. Juices should also be limited, as they have a high sugar content.

◊ **Cut down on processed foods,** such as white bread, cakes, sugary breakfast cereals, fruit snacks, etc... These cause blood sugar levels to spike and quickly fall, leaving kids tired and sapped of energy.

◊ **Create your own popsicles and frozen treats.** Freeze 100% fruit juice in an ice-cube tray with plastic spoons as popsicle handles. Freeze grapes, berries, sliced bananas, peach slices, or other fruits and top with chocolate sauce or whipped cream for a cool, delicious treat!

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Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: 2 Oreos® (0g)

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* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

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Guide to Daily Eating

This is an updated version of the USDA’s food group pyramid. It emphasizes daily exercise and is another helpful teaching tool for kids.

THE HEALTHY EATING PYRAMID

Department of Nutrition, Harvard School of Public Health

For more information about the Healthy Eating Pyramid:

WWW.THENUTRITIONSOURCE.ORG

Eat, Drink, and Be Healthy
by Walter C. Willett, M.D. and Patrick J. Skerret (2005)
Free Press/Simon & Schuster Inc.

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Simple Pesto (dairy and nut free)

2 cups packed, coarsely chopped fresh basil leaves
1/2 cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil
1 to 2 cloves garlic, chopped
Salt and Pepper to taste

- Wash the basil, remove the stems and pat the leaves dry with paper towels.
- Chop the leaves coarsely and measure, packing them firmly down into the measuring cup.
- Place the basil, olive oil, and garlic in a food processor and pulse until smooth.
- Season with salt & pepper to taste.
- To add some nut-free creamy nuttiness, add 1/4 of unsalted sunflower seeds before processing!

Sweet Carrot Salad:

Carrots are full of natural sugars, so this recipe’s pairing shows carrots in a new light! Another great way to serve carrots is roasting them, which caramelizes them and allows them to retain a crisp outer layer.

1 1/2 lbs carrots, shredded
2 pieces Gala apples, peeled and shredded
1/2 c golden raisins
2 tbsp honey
1/4 tsp cinnamon
1/4 tsp vanilla extract
1/2 lemon, juiced
2 tbsp parsley
Salt and pepper, to taste

- Peel and shred carrots into a mixing bowl.
- Combine yogurt, honey, vanilla, cinnamon, and lemon juice in a separate bowl. Mix well. Pour over carrots and add peeled and shredded apples, parsley, and raisins.
- Toss well, chill, and serve.

To roast carrots, peel and cut lengthwise your desired quantity. Choose your desired fat source (cooking oil (olive, coconut, canola), butter, or margarine. Coat the carrots, then add seasonings that you enjoy, such as rosemary, thyme, or sage. Heat oven to 425° and bake on a cookie sheet or baking dish for 20-30 minutes.

Mini Broccoli Trees with Asian Dressing

2 broccoli crowns, cut into florets
1 clove garlic, minced
1 tsp minced fresh ginger root
4 tbsp canola oil
1 tbsp rice vinegar
2 tbsp soy sauce
2 tsp honey
1 tbsp water

- Blanch the broccoli in boiling salted water and cook until fork tender
- Drain broccoli in a colander; run under cold water until the broccoli is cold.
- Drain well and chill.
- In a blender, combine garlic, ginger, canola oil, rice vinegar, soy sauce, honey and water.
- Serve chilled broccoli with dressing and enjoy!
Exercise!

Childhood obesity is one of the scariest health epidemics we face as a society. Indeed, overweight children are predisposed to being overweight adults, on both a mental and a physical level. There is even some research that would suggest the life expectancy of generation being born right now, might be lower than older generations — this would be a first in human evolution. In a word, scary!

More frightening still, are the aforementioned physical and mental consequences to being an overweight or obese child. The attitudes, behaviors, and habits we learn during the formative years of our childhood do, indeed, stick with us our entire lives. When these are unhealthy habits of sedentary behavior and overconsumption of unhealthy/high calorie foods we greatly increase the likelihood obesity continues (and worsens) into adulthood. If that isn’t bad enough, there are unique changes that happen to fat cells of children when they gain large amounts of fat. When a child gains fat they increase the amount of fat stored in each fat cell (just like adults), but they also increase the number of fat cells (unlike adults). So not only do you have fat cells that are more filled, but you also have more fat cells to fill, which automatically predispose someone to being overweight in adult life.

Fear not though. Just as childhood results from the perfect storm of behavioral and physical factors that cause severe, lasting changes in body composition, it can also be a period of positive behavioral change and great fitness development. Since behaviors aren’t entirely cemented as a child, they are easy to change (unlike adults, who can resist change). Secondly, since the body is young and developing, metabolism is high and hormones that can aid in fat burning are on the rise. Just as the body is primed to slip into a really bad place physically, it is equally as primed to progress to a great place, you just have to do the right things. Here are four simple tips for preventing and treating childhood obesity:

Set an Example: Kids learn by observation, anyone who’s ever used a few choice words in front of child knows this. The same is true with unhealthy diet and exercise habits. The vast majority of overweight kids do have overweight parents. Although there may be some minor genetic component at play, in many cases this occurs because the child emulates the parent’s unhealthy habits, such as no exercise and poor eating. If you want your overweight child to get in shape, work on yourself first, they’ll follow suit.

Encourage Sports Performance: Get your child involved with a number of sports at a young age (as young as possible, in fact). Emphasize fun and fitness, and de-emphasize competition and performance. All children should be engaged in at least one fun, physical intensive, sport at all times during the year.

Limit Access to Technology: Xbox, I-Pad, the internet are all impediments to being active, there use should be rationed (except for academic purposes). Setting rules like one hour of Xbox for every one hour of exercise, is a great way to ensure your child stays active and doesn’t succumb to technology.

Make Exercise & Activity Fun: Find out what your child likes to do and use that as their primary mode of exercise. It could be a sport, a particularly physical intensive game, or just running around the backyard with you. Whatever it is, the more enjoyable it is, the better the chance they’ll stick with it.

We do have the power to stop childhood obesity dead in its tracks. Start by implementing one or more of the above suggestions to make your child’s life healthier and happier!

By Michael Stack, BS CFP CSCS*D, Exercise Physiologist and Owner of Applied Fitness Solutions. To contact Michael you can email him at stack@appliedfitsolutions.com or call 734-994-8570. Visit www.appliedfitnesssolutions.com

What’s New at Food Gatherers?

Our Gathering Farm is starting to grow! We’re gearing up for another great planting season, bringing you more fresh produce. Look forward to: tomatoes, kale, collards, cantaloupe, watermelon, red bell peppers, cabbage, leeks, beets, carrots, turnips, radishes, and spinach!

Above: Our farm cleared off, ready for planting!
Right: Our seedlings, protected from the rain.