



# Hazles Farm Childcare Ltd

## HEALTHY LUNCH BOX GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

MAKING YOUR CHILD'S PACKED LUNCH HAS NEVER BEEN SO EASY WITH OUR HEALTHY LUNCHBOX ADVICE, TIPS AND IDEAS USING GUIDANCE FROM THE NHS AND CHANGE4LIFE.

GOOD NUTRITION IS NOT ONLY ESSENTIAL FOR YOUR CHILD'S GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT BUT IS ALSO IMPORTANT IN KEEPING THEM ADEQUATELY FUELLED FOR THE LONG NURSERY DAY. WHETHER STARTING NURSERY FOR THE FIRST TIME, PROGRESSING FROM NURSERY TO PRIMARY SCHOOL OR RETURNING TO A FAMILIAR ROUTINE; SUCH TRANSITIONS CAN BE A BUSY TIME FOR YOUNG CHILDREN, TEENS AND PARENTS ALIKE. THIS TIME SHOULD BE USED AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO ENCOURAGE HEALTHY LIFESTYLE ROUTINES AND HABITS FROM THE GET-GO.

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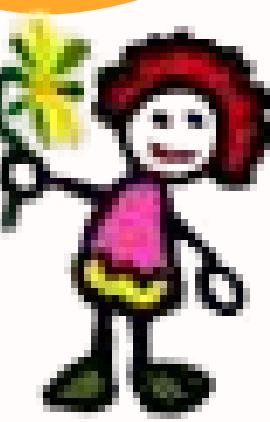
DON'T FORGET THAT A NURSERY LUNCH IS ONE OF YOUR CHILD'S THREE MEALS A DAY, SO IT'S IMPORTANT TO ENSURE THEY ARE GETTING NUTRITIONALLY BALANCED LUNCHES AND SNACKS.

TYPICALLY, A PACKED NURSERY LUNCH SHOULD CONTAIN ALL OF THE MAJOR FOOD GROUPS; CONSIDER:

1. 1 PORTION OF STARCHY CARBOHYDRATE (E.G. WHOLEGRAIN BREADS, PITAS AND WRAPS, BROWN RICE/PASTA)
2. 1 PORTION OF MEAT OR MEAT ALTERNATIVE (E.G. CHICKEN, FISH, EGG, PULSES)
3. 1 PORTION OF DAIRY (E.G. YOGURT, CHEESE)
4. 1(+) PORTION OF VEGETABLE (E.G. CARROT STICKS, PEPPERS, SWEETCORN, SALAD)
5. 1(+) PORTION OF FRUIT (E.G. APPLE, ORANGE, BANANA, PEAR, KIWI)
6. A DRINK OF WATER AND/OR MILK

WE POLITELY ASK THAT SAUSAGES, CHERRY OR PLUM TOMATOES, GRAPES AND NUTS ARE NOT PROVIDED IN PACKED LUNCHES. THANK YOU.

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## THE DO'S AND DON'TS

### DO:

- GET THE CHILDREN INVOLVED – LEARNING ABOUT FOOD AND NUTRITION ARE IMPORTANT LIFE SKILLS AND SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED FROM AN EARLY AGE. CHILDREN ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE INTERESTED IN THEIR LUNCHES IF THEY HAVE HELPED TO CHOOSE AND PREPARE THEM. DON'T BE AFRAID TO LET THEM EXPERIMENT.
- TRY NEW FOODS – TRYING NEW FOODS FROM AN EARLY AGE PLAYS A HUGE ROLE IN A CHILD'S WILLINGNESS AND ACCEPTANCE OF DIFFERENT FOODS. CHILDREN'S FOOD PREFERENCES EVOLVE AS THEIR PALATES MATURE, SO CONTINUOUSLY ENCOURAGING THEM TO TRY NEW AND DIFFERENT FOODS IS A CRUCIAL STEP IN THEIR DEVELOPMENT OF GOOD EATING HABITS.
- SHAKE THINGS UP – VARIETY IS KEY, NOT ONLY DOES VARIATION IN THE DIET PROVIDE NUTRITIONAL BENEFITS, BUT REDUCES BOREDOM AND LACK OF INTEREST IN FOOD. THIS IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT FOR CHILDREN, AS THEY CAN BE PRONE TO BECOMING FUSSY EATERS.
- TAILOR LUNCHES TO THE TIME OF YEAR – FOR EXAMPLE, A FLASK OF SOUP WITH BROWN BREAD DURING THE COLD WINTER MONTHS OR PASTA SALAD DURING SPRING AND SUMMER.
- MAKE IT LOOK APPETISING – IT IS WORTH SPENDING THAT EXTRA FEW MINUTES ON PRESENTATION, ESPECIALLY FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN.
- AIM FOR A VARIETY OF SHAPES, COLOURS AND TEXTURES IN THE LUNCHBOX. THE MORE PLEASING A PACKED LUNCH LOOKS; THE MORE LIKELY CHILDREN ARE TO EAT AND ENJOY IT. IT MAY BE WORTH INVESTING IN COLOURFUL, EASY-OPEN TUPPERWARE, LUNCHBOXES AND THERMOS FLASKS TO LIVEN UP THE SCHOOL LUNCHTIME.
- BE PREPARED AND ORGANISED – PREPARATION IN ADVANCE WILL NOT ONLY SAVE YOU TIME, BUT WILL REDUCE THE CHANCES OF OPTING FOR LAST MINUTE READY-MADE LUNCHES OR CONVENIENCE FOODS WHICH CAN BE HIGH IN SUGAR, FAT AND SALT.

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## THE DO'S AND DON'TS

### DON'T:

- DON'T LEAVE IT TO THE LAST MINUTE – LACK OF TIME MAY INCREASE THE CHANCE OF FILLING LUNCHBOXES WITH UNHEALTHY, CONVENIENCE FOODS.
- DON'T REPEAT THE SAME LUNCHES OVER AND OVER – WHILE IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO ESTABLISH A NUMBER OF RELIABLE LUNCHES THAT WORK, TRY NOT TO OVERDO IT. MIXING IT UP WILL INCREASE THE VARIETY OF NUTRIENTS PROVIDED.
- DON'T FORGET ABOUT PORTION SIZE – THIS SHOULD BE SPECIFICALLY TAILORED TO YOUR CHILD'S AGE, SIZE AND ACTIVITY LEVELS. YOUNGER CHILDREN WILL GENERALLY NEED SMALLER PORTIONS THAN OLDER OR MORE ACTIVE CHILDREN.
- DON'T FORGET ABOUT HYDRATION – RESEARCH SUGGESTS DEHYDRATION CAN LEAD TO REDUCED CONCENTRATION AND PERFORMANCE IN CHILDREN. WATER AND MILK ARE TWO EXCELLENT TOOTH-FRIENDLY CHOICES; AVOID JUICE AND SUGARY DRINKS.
- DON'T FORGET ABOUT BREAKFAST – IT'S NO MYTH THAT 'BREAKFAST IS THE MOST IMPORTANT MEAL OF THE DAY'. BREAK THE OVERNIGHT FAST AND SET THEM UP WITH A BOWL OF MILKY PORRIDGE OR MIXED BERRIES WITH YOGURT AND GRANOLA. IT CAN BE A LONG WAIT UNTIL MORNING SNACK BREAK, SO OPT FOR A BREAKFAST THAT WILL FILL AND FUEL!

### DID YOU KNOW?

THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH'S HEALTHY EATING GUIDELINES RECOMMEND 3 SERVINGS FROM THE 'MILK, YOGURT AND CHEESE' FOOD GROUP EACH DAY AS PART OF A HEALTHY, BALANCED DIET. EXAMPLES OF ONE SERVING INCLUDE A 200ML GLASS OF MILK, 125ML YOGURT AND 25G (MATCHBOX SIZE PIECE) CHEDDAR CHEESE.

CALCIUM IS RECOGNISED FOR ITS IMPORTANT ROLE IN NORMAL BONE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT; WITH CHILDHOOD AND THE ADOLESCENT YEARS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT FOR FORMING HEALTHY BONES. HOWEVER, YOU MAY NOT REALISE THAT THERE IS MORE TO MILK AND DAIRY THAN CALCIUM, WITH ONE GLASS OF MILK ALSO PROVIDING US WITH PROTEIN, POTASSIUM, PHOSPHORUS, IODINE, VITAMIN B2 AND VITAMIN B12 - EACH PLAYING A VARIETY OF IMPORTANT ROLES FOR OUR HEALTH.