



12 Tips for Healthy Meals *(That Your Kids Will Eat!)*

- 1. Hide the Vegetables!** It's easy. Spaghetti sauce is a great place to hide carrots, squash or other vegetables.
- 2. Soup is good food!** Another great way to make sure kids get a good dose of vegetables is with soups. They nourish, satisfy and are healthy. Most soups in cans have lots of salt so look for low-sodium versions (they taste the same) but making soup (together with your kids!) is great fun, and great food.
- 3. Homemade Frozen Dinners!** Get your kids involved in making their own meals with Dinner Packets. Foil: check. Rice or potatoes: check. Chicken or turkey or fish: check. Add seasoning and sauces, fold, freeze and you're set
- 4. Frozen Fun.** Another great treat from the freezer is Graham Cracker Frozen Yogurt Sandwiches! Take fat free graham crackers, spread fruit yogurt on top, put another cracker atop that, wrap in plastic wrap and stack several in a freezer bag. Ta-dah! You have homemade delicious (and healthy!) treats for after meals, after school or even to finish off a healthy breakfast!
- 5. Food on a stick.** Kabobs are another way to get your kids involved in the cooking and get some veggies in there too. Make-ahead kabobs with chicken, beef or bison meat make great mid-week meals that freeze easily and are inexpensive. A bag of minute rice and shazam...you have a complete meal.
- 6. Wraps are not just for lunch anymore.** Kids love wrap sandwiches. Use low-fat wraps to create "meals in pockets!" Add anything you want: meat, vegetables, rice, beans, leftovers, whatever.
- 7. Breakfast for dinner?** Don't you remember when your Mom made pancakes for dinner? Buckwheat pancakes are a perfect (yet nutritious) way to easily make dinner for everyone! Chicken sausages with sautéed apples and cinnamon are perfect companions for pancakes made from whole-grains and topped with sugar free syrup!

Go to www.louieskids.org to find out more about programs geared to kids struggling with obesity and how you can help kids right in your community. Louie's Kids is a non-profit organization dedicated to fighting obesity ...one child at a time!

8. Oatmeal for the week! Okay, we all know breakfast is the most important meal of the day. But did you know 48% of girls and 32% of boys don't eat breakfast? Try making a big pot of Irish oatmeal (it's chewier and more filling, plus it has almost 3 times the fiber!) on Sunday. Have your kids cut apples or dates, and throw cranberries or raisins into the pot. Try cinnamon or vanilla extract too. You can store it all week and pop it into the microwave in the morning! Oatmeal topped with sugar-free syrup and a glass of OJ is a great way to start any day. Eat it cold in the summer too.

9. Oven cooked French Fries. Cut potatoes to look like fries, toss them in egg whites with any spice or seasoning you or your kids like. (Try fajita spice!) Cook for 40 minutes in a 400-degree oven (turning every 8 minutes) and you'll have just discovered the most nutritious French fries you'll ever eat! Your kids will like them too.

10. Substitute, substitute, substitute. There are so many things you can substitute for healthier versions of kid-favorite foods Always be on the look-out for low-fat versions of the fatty foods your kids like. Substitute:

- 4 Light Chips from Tostitos vs. full-leaded corn chips
- 4 Fat free mac and cheese for the full fat version.
- 4 Soup thickened with cooked rice pasta, instead of cream.
- 4 Bison or turkey meat for fatty beef. Your kids would never know bison wasn't beef, but it has only 2 grams of fat per serving.

11. "Waiter, hold the ____." When you got out to eat, ask your server to skip the bread basket, or the tortilla chips. The tortillas are full of fat, and you're going to load the bread with butter. Don't tempt yourself by even having it on the table.

12. Eat together! Worried that junior's eating too much? Don't know what happened at school today? Eat dinner with your kids – as often as possible – and set good examples at the table. A study done at the University of Minnesota on what high-achieving kids had in common showed the only thing they had in common was that these kids had meals with their families at least 3 times a week! There's your proof of the power of the dinner table!