

Backpack Buddies

Donating Healthy Foods for Healthy Kids?



If you are concerned about elementary school children getting healthy balanced foods on weekends, **donate these items to your local food pantry, backpack program, or food bank.**

GRAINS

Whole wheat/white wheat bread
Whole wheat pita bread
Whole grain crackers
Whole wheat pasta
English muffin, Mini bagels
Graham crackers, Animal crackers
Light popcorn
Brown rice
Oatmeal, Grits
Pretzels
Whole grain cereal/granola bar
(look for 2g or more fiber
and 12g or less sugar)

PROTEIN

All types of nuts & seeds
(Peanuts, sunflower
seeds, soy nuts, almonds)
Canned or packaged tuna,
salmon, or chicken
Peanut butter
Canned or dried beans (kidney, gar-
banzo, pinto, lentils, split peas)
Baked beans
Bean, lentil, or split pea soup
Beef or chicken soup - lower sodium

FRUIT & VEGETABLE

Fresh fruit - apples, oranges,
clementines, mangos
Dried fruit - raisins, dried plums,
dried cranberries
Canned fruit/fruit cups - in light syrup
or in its own juice
Applesauce
Canned soup - lower sodium
Spaghetti sauce
Canned vegetables - tomatoes, peas, corn,
green beans, carrots, mixed vegetables

DAIRY

Instant non-fat dry milk powder
Fat-free Sugar-free instant pudding mix

DRINKS

Water
Sugar-free drink mixes
(Crystal Light, Wyler's Light,
Sugar-free Kool-Aid, Sugar-
free Hawaiian Punch)
Low-calorie beverages (Flavored water,
Kool-Aid Jammers 10)
100% fruit juice

The Dietary Guidelines recommend limiting total fat (25-35% of calories), saturated fat (less than 10% of calories), and added sugars. Items high in fat or added sugars include soft drinks, fruit drinks, sweetened cereals, toaster pastries, cookies, pies, and muffins. For the health of your families, limit these foods and beverages. Instead, include more nutritious choices in the backpacks such as these for a healthy ending (and beginning!) to their week.

Building Healthy Backpacks



To meet 1/3 of recommended nutrition needs for the weekend, include in each backpack:

4 ounces Grains 2 cups Vegetables 1 cup Fruit 2 cups Milk 4 ounces Protein

1 ounce of Grains =

- 1 slice bread
- 1/2 of 6" pita
- 5 whole-grain crackers
- 1 oz dry pasta
- 1/2 English muffin
- 3 squares graham crackers
- 8 animal crackers
- 3 c low-fat popcorn, popped
- 1/4 of 4" bagel
- 1 oz uncooked rice (1/8 c)
- 1 packet oatmeal (1 oz dry)
- 1/3 c oats
- 1 packet grits (1 oz dry)
- 1 oz pretzels
- 1 ounce granola bar
- 1 c cereal

1 cup of Vegetable =

- 1 c (8 oz) vegetable juice
- 1 c tomato sauce
- 2 c vegetable soup
- 1 c canned vegetables or beans
- 1/3 c dry beans

1 cup of Milk =

- 1/3 c instant dry milk
- 1 c pudding made with milk
(1 packet makes 2 c)

1 cup of Fruit =

- Small apple (2.5" diameter)
- Large orange (3" diameter)
- Large banana (8" long)
- Med. grapefruit (4" diameter)
- 3 medium plums
- 1/2 c dried fruit
- 1 c canned fruit or applesauce
- 1 c (8 oz) fruit juice

1 ounce of Protein =

- 1 oz canned salmon, tuna, or chicken
- 1/2 oz nuts/seeds
(12 almonds, 7 walnut halves, 15 peanuts, 9 cashews, 1/4 c roasted soybeans, 1 1/2 T sunflower seeds)
- 1 T peanut butter
- 1/4 c cooked dry beans
- 1/4 c baked beans
- 1/2 c bean soup
- 1 c chicken/beef soup

Examples that meet recommended nutrition needs for elementary school age kids:

BACKPACK 1:

- 1-4" bagel
- 2 c canned vegetables
- 1 large orange
- 1 pkt pudding mix, 2/3 c instant dry milk
- 3 oz canned tuna

BACKPACK 2:

- 4 oz dry pasta
- 2 c tomato sauce
- 1 large banana
- 2/3 c instant dry milk
- 3/4 c cooked dry beans

BACKPACK 3:

- 2 slices of bread, 2 c cereal
- 2 c vegetable soup, 1/3 c dry beans
- 1 c canned fruit
- 2/3 c instant dry milk
- 15 peanuts, 1/2 c baked beans

BACKPACK 4:

- 4 oz (1/2 c) uncooked rice
- 2 c canned beans
- 1 small apple
- 2/3 c instant dry milk
- 1 c chicken soup, 3 T sunflower seeds