Tips For Child Care Providers

Snacks are like mini-meals that allow children to get enough to eat over the day.

Plan for snacks to be offered mid-morning and mid-afternoon. If children are thirsty, offer water in-between meal times.

A snack should not be used to calm a child or reward behavior.

Model healthy snacking by eating together with the children.

Offer a variety of foods, new and familiar, and let the children decide what and how much to eat.

Smart snacks have...

- at least two food groups
- a fruit or vegetable most of the time
- a little protein or healthy fat for longer lasting energy (try cheese, yogurt, avocado, beans, egg, tofu, nuts or seeds)

Quick Snacks with Two or More Food Groups:

- Snap peas and cheese strings
- Blueberries (fresh or frozen) and yogurt
- Cereal, strawberries and milk
- Rinsed canned black beans, frozen peas and corn niblets
- Whole grain pita triangles and store-bought hummus

Choking Hazards

Adapt foods for young children to prevent choking.

See Preventing Choking in Babies and Young Children at the link on page 2 under “Need more ideas?”
Snack time can be learning time – Involve children in making their own snack. For more ideas see the Food Activities for Young Children fact sheet at the link under “Need more ideas?”.

Banana Splits: Top a whole or half banana with plain yogurt and ‘drizzle’ with a little maple syrup. Sprinkle with a whole grain, unsweetened cereal.

Smoothies: Blend fruit, yogurt and milk.

Fruit and Yogurt Parfaits: Layer yogurt, fruit and granola (or Bran Buds™ cereal).

Baked Apples: Stuff with oats, brown sugar and chopped walnuts.

Peanut Butter Balls: Mix together peanut butter and cornflakes (optional: add raisins or chopped dates). Shape into balls and roll in crushed graham crackers.

Healthy Nacho Bites: Melt grated cheddar and hot pepper flavoured cheese over plain mini shredded wheat cereal. Optional: Serve with salsa mixed with plain yogurt or guacamole.

Mini Pizzas: Use whole wheat English muffins for the crust and set out a variety of toppings.

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Dip it!

- Veggies and bean dip
- Fruit chunks and yogurt dip
- French toast strips and apple sauce
- Baked tortilla chips and guacamole

Chocolate Chip Chick Dip
(Mmmm…tastes like cookie dough!)

1 can (540 mL/19 oz) chick peas (drained and rinsed)
2 tsp (10 mL) vanilla extract
1/4 cup (50 mL) nut butter (for a nut free option try tahini, soy or pea butter: e.g. No Nuts™)
Up to 1/4 cup (50 mL) milk, as needed
3 Tbsp (45 mL) sugar
1/3 cup (75 mL) mini chocolate chips
2 to 3 Tbsp (25-45 mL) oats (or ground flax)

Add all ingredients (except chocolate chips) to a food processor and blend until very smooth. Then mix in the chocolate chips. Serve with sliced apples or graham wafers.

Need more ideas?

See the Interior Health website for additional resources including Food Flair (a manual for child care providers containing food activities, feeding tips, and recipes).

www.interiorhealth.ca/childcarefood