

6-12 YEARS OLD

# Feeding Your Grade-School Aged Child

During grade school years, your child continues to grow physically and mentally. **Strong nutrition supports this growth** and helps build healthy, lifelong eating habits. Family meals play an important role in this stage as they give your child a supportive space to try new foods and learn about balanced eating.

**Dairy**  
3 Cups

**Fruits**  
1 - 2 Cups

**Grains**  
5 - 9 Ounces

**Veggies**  
1 1/2 - 3 Cups

**Protein**  
4 - 6 1/2 Ounces

## Snack Smarter



**Cheese & Crackers**



**Carrots & Hummus**



**Apples & Peanut Butter**



**Yogurt & Granola**



**Milk & Berry Smoothie**

## Dairy

### Strong Bones

Dairy provides more **bone-building nutrients** than any other food group.

### Brain Booster

Dairy is a great source of **key nutrients** to help your child learn.

### Tummy Troubles?

If your child is lactose-intolerant, try these easy to digest choices:

- Lactose-free milk
- Yogurt
- Cheddar or string cheese

## Fruits

### Energy & Immune Support

Fruits provide **natural energy** for growing bodies and are packed with immune boosting nutrients like Vitamin C.

### Fresh & Frozen

Fresh and frozen fruits are great choices for packing in nutrition **without added sugar**.

## Grains

### Fill Up on Fiber

Fiber from whole grains supports a **healthy heart and gut**.

### Whole Grain Goodness

Choose **whole grains** most often, like oatmeal and 100% whole grain breads and cereals.

## Veggies

### Color Counts!

Different colors of vegetables are **packed with unique nutrients** to help kids stay healthy.

### Focus on Flavor

Try veggies prepared in variety of ways:

- Add to a mixed dish
- Grill with protein
- Serve with dips or sauce

## Protein

### Protein Power!

Protein foods help to **build muscles** as your child grows to help them become stronger, faster and healthier.

### Think Lean

Choose lean, low-fat sources of protein:

- Chicken
- Fish
- Beans
- Tofu
- Lean beef
- Eggs
- Dairy foods



# Build the Perfect Lunch

Use a **variety of food groups** to help your child build the perfect lunch! Whether packing a meal or traveling through the lunch line at school, this activity can help your child explore different combinations, try new foods and develop healthy eating habits to last a lifetime. Choose at least one item from each group:

## Grains

- Whole-wheat bread
- Whole-grain crackers
- Wheat tortilla
- Pasta
- Rice
- Corn tortilla



## Protein

- Deli lunch meat
- Eggs
- Chicken
- Beef
- Pork
- Tuna
- Beans
- Hummus
- Tofu
- Nuts
- Peanut butter



## Dairy

- Sliced cheese
- Yogurt
- Milk
- Low-fat or fat-free chocolate milk
- Cottage cheese
- String cheese



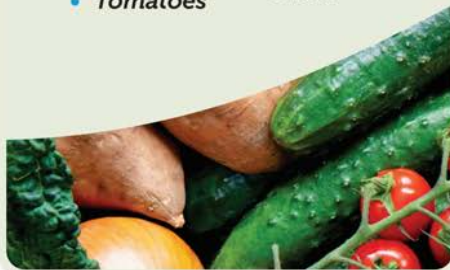
## Fruits

- Apple
- Orange
- Grapes
- Melon
- Pear
- Banana
- Plums
- Apricots



## Vegetables

- Baby carrots
- Celery
- Snap peas
- Tomatoes
- Sweet peppers
- Lettuce
- Cucumber slices



## School Meals are Healthy Meals

School meals offer **quality choices from every food group**, ensuring your child gets nutritious food without needing to plan ahead.

## Nutrition Tips for Grade Schoolers

### Growing Needs for Growing Bodies

As children go through times of rapid growth spurts, their **nutrition needs increase**. Eating a variety of foods from all groups will provide the essential nutrients and energy to grow well and be well.

### Importance of Family Meals

Family meals provide a **prime opportunity** to introduce new foods, learn healthy eating habits and spend time together.

### Think, Drink, Grow

Choose milk at meals and water in between for good hydration. Low-fat or fat-free milk provides essential nutrients for growth, development and strong bones. Be sure to **limit sugar-sweetened beverages** such as soda and juice.

## Physical Activity and Screen Time

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children ages six to 12 should be physically active throughout the day for optimal growth and development. This includes:

- At least **60 minutes** of structured physical activity, like exercise or sports
- At least **60 minutes** of free-play time
- Limiting screen time to **no more than two hours per day** to support cognitive and social development