

Meal Pattern Requirements for Children Age 1 through 12			
AGE	Children 1-2 Years of Age	Children 3-5 Years of Age	Children 6-12 Years of Age
BREAKFAST			
Milk *	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1 cup
Vegetable or Fruit or Juice (100%)	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	1/2 cup
Grains/Breads (enriched or whole grain)	1/2 slice* (or 1/2 serving)	1/2 slice* (or 1/2 serving)	1 slice* (or 1 serving)
- or cold dry cereal	1/4 cup (or 1/3 oz.)	1/3 cup (or 1/2 oz.)	3/4 cup (or 1 oz.)
- or cooked cereal	1/4 cup	1/4 cup	1/2 cup
SNACK (select two of the following four components)			
Milk *	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	1 cup
Vegetable or Fruit or Juice (100%)**	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup
Meat or meat alternative	1/2 ounce	1/2 ounce	1 ounce
- or yogurt (plain or sweetened)**	2 oz (or 1/4 cup)	2 oz (or 1/4 cup)	4 oz (or 1/2 cup)
Grains/Breads (enriched or whole grain)	1/2 slice* (or 1/2 serving)	1/2 slice* (or 1/2 serving)	1 slice* (or 1 serving)
LUNCH/SUPPER			
Milk *	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1 cup
Meat or poultry or fish	1 ounce	1 1/2 ounce	2 ounces
- or cheese	1 ounce	1 1/2 ounces	2 ounces
- or cottage cheese, cheese food, or cheese spread	2 ounces (1/4 cup)	3 ounces (3/8 cup)	4 ounces (1/2 cup)
- or egg	1 egg	1 egg	1 egg
- or cooked dry beans or peas	1/4 cup	3/8 cup	1/2 cup
- or peanut butter, soy nut butter or nut or seed butters	2 Tablespoons	3 Tablespoons	4 Tablespoons
- or peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts or seeds	1/2 ounce	3/4 ounce	1 ounce
- or yogurt	4 ounces (or 1/2 cup)	6 ounces (or 3/4 cup)	8 ounces (or 1 cup)
- or an equivalent quantity of any combi- nation of the above meat/meat alterna- tive			
Vegetables and/or Fruits (2 or More)	1/4 cup (total)	1/2 cup (total)	3/4 cup (total)
Grains/Breads (enriched or whole grain)	1/2 slice* (or 1/2 serving)	1/2 slice* (or 1/2 serving)	1 slice* (or 1 serving)
POINTS TO REMEMBER:	<p>* Or an equivalent serving of an acceptable grains/breads such as cornbread, biscuits, rolls, muffins, etc., made of whole grain or enriched meal or flour, or a serving of cooked enriched or whole grain rice or macaroni or other pasta products.</p> <p>** For snack, juice or yogurt may not be served when milk is served as the only other component.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep menu production records. • The required amount of each food must be served. • Use full-strength (100%) juice. 			

* Dry/reconstituted milk is not acceptable.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Building Blocks for Fun and Healthy Meals: A Menu Planner for the Child and Adult Care Food Program* (www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/buildingblocks.html); Appendix Q, *Caring for Our Children*.

Ideas for Nutritious Snacks

Fruits and vegetables

- **Apple sandwich**—Slice an apple, spread peanut butter on the slices, and make a sandwich. Or put a piece of cheese between apple slices.
- **Yogurt sundae**—Let children make their own—just supply bowls, plain yogurt, cut-up fruit, and toppings of chopped nuts, sunflower seeds, wheat germ, or dry cereal.
- **Fruit kabobs**—Skewer fresh fruit and low-fat cheese cubes, pitted dates, or prunes on long straws or long toothpicks (for older children). Serve kabobs with a dip made with plain, low-fat yogurt sprinkled with cinnamon or a few drops of vanilla flavoring, or well-stirred, mixed fruit yogurt.
- **Fruit juice surprises**—Divide 1 cup of cut up fruit (apple, banana, orange, strawberries) into four glasses. Add 3 cups of unsweetened fruit juice and chill.
- **Veggie kabobs**—Skewer (see note above) cut up fresh vegetables such as cherry tomatoes, zucchini, carrots, cucumbers, green peppers, mushrooms, and low-fat cheese cubes. Serve with salad dressing or a dip made with mashed beans, yogurt, or cottage cheese and seasoned with herbs.
- **Toss a salad**—Or invite children to a homemade salad bar. Set out dishes of cut up veggies for children to create their own salads.
- **Celery stuff-its**—Fill celery with part-skim ricotta cheese mixed with unsweetened crushed pineapple. Or, fill celery with peanut butter and add a few raisins (this is called “Ants on a Log”).
- **Lettuce roll**—Spread tuna or chicken salad, peanut butter, or low-fat ricotta cheese on a lettuce leaf, roll it up, and eat.

Freezer delights

- **Frozen dixies**—Freeze one of the following in a paper cup with a Popsicle stick: applesauce, crushed pineapple, fruit yogurt (mixed well or made with fruit juices).
- **Frozen strawberry yogurt pops**—Blend 1 cup of frozen strawberries until smooth. Mix the strawberries with 1 cup of plain, low-fat yogurt and 3 to 5 tablespoons of honey. Pour into paper cups with a Popsicle stick in the center and freeze 1 to 2 hours until firm. Remove cup from frozen yogurt and serve. Makes seven pops.
- **Banana pops**—Mix 2 cups of low-fat, plain yogurt with 1 cup of mashed banana, 1 teaspoon of vanilla, and ½ cup of chopped walnuts (optional). Pour into six 4-oz. paper cups, insert Popsicle sticks in the center, and freeze until firm. Remove cup from frozen pop and serve.

- **Banana rockets**—Coat peeled, ripe bananas with orange juice or orange juice concentrate (to prevent discoloration), wrap in foil or plastic wrap, and freeze. Or, roll chilled, juice-coated bananas in chopped nuts or granola, press firmly to coat, and freeze until firm.

Homemade convenience snacks

- **Trail mix**—Combine dried fruits and dry cereal together, and divide into plastic bags or paper cups.
- **Cheese popcorn**—Make popcorn and sprinkle with grated Parmesan cheese. Add melted butter or margarine if desired.
- **Going crackers**—Crackers and cheese, crackers and peanut butter (with or without jelly), crackers and dip . . . just be sure to choose your crackers carefully. Crackers that are lower in fat or sodium include Melba toast, matzo, rice cakes, Wasa, Rye Krisp, bread sticks, unsalted saltines, zwieback, and graham crackers.
- **Yummo wrap-ups**—Have children make their own using flour tortillas spread with peanut butter, dried fruit, and raisins—ideal for hikes. Or use part-skim ricotta cheese and cinnamon or jam.
- **Nachos**—Cut corn tortillas into six triangles and top with grated mozzarella cheese. Place in the oven (or toaster oven) at 350° to crisp the tortillas and melt cheese. Serve with salsa.
- **Natural soda pop**—Combine half a glass of fruit juice (orange, grape, apple, or pineapple) with half a glass of club soda or seltzer. Add ice and enjoy.

Blender snacks

- **Blender basics**—For a shake, blend 1 cup of plain yogurt, 1 cup of chopped fruit (strawberries, bananas, etc.), and ½ cup of fruit juice (orange, pineapple, or grape). The shakes will be thicker if made with frozen fruit.
- **Melon cooler**—In blender, mix 1½ cups of ice cubes, 1½ cups of cubed watermelon, honeydew, or cantaloupe, and ½ teaspoon of lemon juice until smooth. Serve immediately. Makes 2½ cups.
- **Ambrosia shake**—In blender, mix four sliced, ripe bananas, ½ cup of orange juice, ¼ teaspoon of vanilla, 4 cups of low-fat, skim, or reconstituted nonfat, dry milk. Makes six servings.
- **Fruit soup**—In blender, combine ¼ cup of orange juice, ½ of a small banana, ½ of an apple, 1 teaspoon of lemon juice, 2 tablespoons of plain, low-fat yogurt, ¼ cup of strawberries, a dash of cinnamon, and a dash of dried mint. Chill before serving. Makes three ½-cup servings.

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Food Guide Pyramid for Young Children

FOOD

Guide

PYRAMID

for Young Children

A Daily Guide for
2- to 6-Year-Olds

Fats & Sweets **Eat LESS**

MILK Group 2 servings **MEAT Group** 2 servings

VEGETABLE Group 3 servings **FRUIT Group** 2 servings

GRAIN Group 6 servings

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CENTER FOR NUTRITION POLICY AND PROMOTION

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FOOD IS FUN and learning about food is fun, too. Eating foods from the Food Guide Pyramid and being physically active will help you grow healthy and strong.

WHAT COUNTS AS ONE SERVING?

<p>GRAIN GROUP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 slice of bread ½ cup of cooked rice or pasta ½ cup of cooked cereal 1 ounce of ready-to-eat cereal <p>VEGETABLE GROUP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ½ cup of chopped raw or cooked vegetables 1 cup of raw leafy vegetables 	<p>FRUIT GROUP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 piece of fruit or melon wedge ¾ cup of juice ½ cup of canned fruit ½ cup of dried fruit <p>MILK GROUP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 cup of milk or yogurt 2 ounces of cheese 	<p>MEAT GROUP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 to 3 ounces of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish ½ cup of cooked dry beans, or 1 egg counts as 1 ounce of lean meat. 2 tablespoons of peanut butter count as 1 ounce of meat. <p>FATS AND SWEETS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit calories from these.
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Four- to 6-year-olds can eat these serving sizes. Offer 2- to 3-year-olds less, except for milk. Two- to 6-year-old children need a total of 2 servings from the milk group each day.

EAT

a variety of FOODS

AND ENJOY!

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion; Appendix O, *Caring for Our Children*.