

Pack a Healthier Lunch with Less Litter

On average a child or youth taking a lunch to school will throw away packaging that can create 30 kilograms/67 pounds of litter in a school year. It's clear that lunches with less packaging will help reduce this litter, but they are also a chance to pack healthier foods. Some pre-packaged foods can have more sugar, salt, and fat than foods you choose and package yourself. Also, these ready-to-go options may not have a lot of fibre, vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients.

Here's one idea to reduce litter and pack a healthier lunch.

- Instead of buying a small pre-packaged lunch with meat and cheese, a fruit drink or pop, and a candy bar, try this tip:
- In reusable containers pack:
 - whole grain crackers, lean meat, and lower milk fat cheese
 - water in a reusable water bottle
 - a piece of fruit or cut vegetables



These simple changes may provide more fibre from choosing whole grain crackers, bread or wraps and fruit or vegetables. The changes may also help you to use less fat by choosing lean meats, lower milk fat cheese, and less sugar by sending water instead of a sugar sweetened drinks, and it is all done without throw away packaging!

For more information on lunch ideas you can pack visit

<http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/nutrition/if-nfs-whats-for-lunch.pdf>

Making Time for Play

School is a great new adventure for most children and a place where they learn, play and interact with other children. Play is child-led, unstructured, spontaneous, and flexible with no purpose or goal. It builds healthy bodies and minds and is important for your child's healthy development. During play, children are exposed to life skills such as communication, problem solving, cooperation, boundaries, perseverance and sharing. Your child's day is structured to fit around school, with lots of rules to follow. Sometimes parents worry that their child isn't doing enough structured activities after school. In fact, play where children decide for themselves what they want to do and how to do it is really valuable because it gives children time to:

- let their thoughts and imaginations roam
- explore ideas and think creatively
- develop social, language and communication skills
- develop physical skills

School-age children still learn through play. Plenty of play helps balance the structure of school lessons and also gives kids a chance to unwind after the routines and rules of school. When it comes to play and your school-age child, keep the focus on fun, rather than on learning. Let your child take the lead with play. Learning follows naturally when play is fun.