Dear Parent/Guardian,

Many of the choices you make for your children today will influence their health in the future. One decision you make everyday is the choice and preparation of meals, particularly school lunches. Healthy eating habits started in childhood will stay with your children forever and will increase their chances of a healthy life. Children grow and develop fast, so they need a diet that has enough energy, proteins, vitamins, minerals and fibre. This booklet will give you information and some useful ideas to help you give your children a healthy lunchbox for school and for healthy eating in general.

Thank you to the Health Promotion and Community Nutrition Services of your Local Area for providing this information and some useful ideas to help you give your children a healthy lunchbox for school and for healthy eating in general.

Healthy Eating for Children

Nutrition Services of your Local Area

East Coast Area
(Dublin South East Coast and Wicklow) 01 2014290

South Western Area
(Dublin South Inner City, South Dublin, Kildare, West Wicklow) 01 4632800

Northern Area
(Dublin City North of River Liffey and Fingal County) 01 8823400

North Eastern Area
(Monaghan, Cavan, County Tyrone, County Fermanagh) 074 676400

North Western Area
(Mayo, Galway, Connacht) 091 548339

Midland Area
(Laois, Offaly, Longford, Westmeath) 044 47623

Western Area
(Galway, Mayo, Roscommon) 091 548339

South Eastern Area
(Waterford, Wexford, Carlow, Kilkenny) 056 7761400

Mid-Western Area
(Limerick, Tipperary, Clare) 061 483255

Southern Area
(Cork, Kerry) 021 4921641

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Healthy Serving

Each represents a serving. The number on the left shows how many servings from that shelf you are recommended to eat every day.

Here is a list of suggested servings from each shelf of the Food Pyramid.

Cereals, Bread and potatoes shelf
- 1 oz breakfast cereal
- 1 slice wholemeal bread
- 1 small bread roll
- 1/4 glass unsweetened fruit juice
- Bowl of salad vegetables - a mixture of tomato, lettuce, cucumber, carrot, celery
- Vegetable sticks made with carrot, pepper, celery, cucumber

Fruit and Vegetable shelf
- 1/4 glass unsweetened fruit juice
- 1/2 glass unsweetened fruit juice
- 2 wholegrain crackers or crispbread
- 1 oz plain popcorn
- 1 medium sized potato - boiled or baked
- 2 tablespoons boiled rice or pasta

Yogurt and milk shelf
- 1 small scone – 1 oz plain popcorn
- 1 small bread roll
- 1 slice wholemeal bread

Vegetable shelf
- 2 tablespoons cooked vegetable soup
- 1 oz plain popcorn
- 1 medium sized potato – boiled or baked
- 2 tablespoons boiled rice or pasta

Nuts and seeds
- 1 slice wholemeal bread
- 1 oz breakfast cereal
- 1 small bread roll
- 1/4 glass unsweetened fruit juice
- Bowl of salad vegetables - a mixture of tomato, lettuce, cucumber, carrot, celery
- Vegetable sticks made with carrot, pepper, celery, cucumber

Children and teenagers may need extra servings from the Cereals, bread and potatoes shelf for physical activity and growth.

Thank you to the Health Promotion and Community Nutrition Services of your Local Area for developing the original leaflet Healthy Eating for Children. Further information on healthy eating for children is available from the Community Health Services of your Local Area.
Meat, fish, eggs, beans shelf
- 2 oz lean cooked meat such as beef, lamb, ham or corned beef
- 2 oz chicken or turkey
- 3 oz fish such as tuna, mackerel, sardines
- 2 eggs – do not eat more than 7 eggs in a week

2 oz pate – low fat
1 oz peanut butter
4 oz baked beans

How many servings from each shelf on the food pyramid did you have today?

Cereals, Bread & Potatoes
- 1/3 pint of milk
- 1 carton yoghurt
- 1 oz hard cheese such as Cheddar, Edam or Blarney
- 2 cheese singles

Fruit & Vegetables
- 1 glass or carton of unsweetened fruit juice
- Corned beef sandwich on wholemeal bread
- 1 yogurt

Milk, Cheese & Yogurt
- 1 glass of water, or milk, or fruit juice

Meat, Fish, Eggs & Beans
- 1 glass or carton of unsweetened fruit juice
- Egg and salad sandwich on wholemeal bread or filled pitta bread
- 1 banana or pear

Tuesday’s lunch leaves time for playing
- Flask of soup
- Pate or tuna roll
- Carrot and celery sticks
- 1 mandarin orange or grapes

Wednesday’s lunch is nice and filling
- 1 glass or carton of unsweetened fruit juice
- Corned beef sandwich on wholemeal bread
- 1 yogurt
- Popcorn

Thursday’s lunch is hard to beat
- Cheese on wholegrain scone
- 1 apple
- 1 glass of water, milk or fruit juice

Healthy Light Lunches
- Monday’s lunch is fun and good to eat
  - 1 glass or small carton of milk
  - Peanut butter sandwich on wholemeal bread
  - 1 orange

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Cereals, Bread & Potatoes
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- 1 carton yoghurt
- 1 oz hard cheese such as Cheddar, Edam or Blarney
- 2 cheese singles

Fruit & Vegetables
- 1 glass or carton of unsweetened fruit juice
- Corned beef sandwich on wholemeal bread
- 1 yogurt

Milk, Cheese & Yogurt
- 1 glass of water, or milk, or fruit juice

Meat, Fish, Eggs & Beans
- 1 glass or carton of unsweetened fruit juice
- Egg and salad sandwich on wholemeal bread or filled pitta bread
- 1 banana or pear

These light lunches are healthy, yet are not expensive.

Use lettuce or slices of tomatoes or cucumber to brighten up a sandwich, and for added vitamin C.

Here is a suggested meal plan for a day, for children aged 5 to 10 years.

BREAKFAST
The most important meal of your child’s day.
- Fresh fruit or unsweetened fruit juice: Breakfast cereal - choose a wholegrain or bran type cereal, or porridge
- Wholemeal bread with butter or margarine spread thinly. Jam or marmalade
- Milk or tea.

LUNCH
Should provide one third of your child’s food for the day
- Meat, fish, chicken for sandwich filling: Bread for sandwich: such as wholemeal bread, rolls, pitta, soda bread Or Slice of quiche or pizza.
- Mixture of salad vegetables
- Fresh fruit or yoghurt
- 1 glass of water, milk or tea

BEDTIME / BETWEEN MEALS
A glass of milk and a small snack, such as a wholegrain cracker, scone or plain biscuit.

Healthy eating for children
- Do
  - Eat regular meals, not one big meal each day
  - Eat a wide variety of food as possible
  - Eat breakfast every day
  - Eat more fruit, vegetables and salad foods
  - Eat wholegrain cereals and bread
  - Drink plenty of water
  - Drink food instead of trying to
  - Eat mayonnaise, salad creams and salt sparingly

- Skip meals or eat lots of snacks each day
- Eat sweets, cakes and biscuits too often. Have them as occasional treats.

SODA BREAD PLAIT
- 8 oz soft raising flour
- 1 oz soft margarine
- 1 pint milk
- 1 egg beaten
- 1 oz poppy or sesame seeds, if liked.

This recipe can be used for a pizza base or scones. Follow the instructions to 5, then roll or cut into the shape you need.

FAMILY SALAD
- 8 oz boiled potatoes (cold)
- 1 small lettuce, shredded or cut up
- 1 red apple, sliced
- 1 onion, chopped
- 8 oz carrots, cut into thin sticks
- 4 oz tomatoes, cut into small pieces
- 8 oz cold, cooked chicken or meat cut into small pieces
- 4 hard boiled eggs

1. Cut the potatoes into chunks.
2. Place the potatoes, lettuce, apple, onion, carrots, tomatoes and chicken or meat into a bowl. Mix well together.
3. Cut the eggs into quarters and add to the salad.
4. Serve with French dressing

This dish will serve 6 people.

HEALTHY RECIPE
- Home-made vegetable soup: Lean meat or chicken or fish

- 2 or more servings of vegetables or salad

- Potatoes (boiled or baked) or rice or pasta

- Fresh or stewed fruit with milk pudding or yoghurt
- 1 glass of water, milk or tea

- A glass of milk and a small snack, such as a wholegrain cracker, scone or plain biscuit.

- Have them as occasional treats.

- Do not

- Skip meals or eat lots of snacks each day
- Eat sweets, cakes and biscuits too often. Have them as occasional treats.

- 1 banana or pear
- These light lunches are healthy, yet are not expensive.

- Use lettuce or slices of tomatoes or cucumber to brighten up a sandwich, and for added vitamin C.

- Meat, fish, chicken for sandwich filling: Bread for sandwich:

- such as wholemeal bread, rolls, pitta, soda bread Or Slice of quiche or pizza.

- Mixture of salad vegetables

- Fresh fruit or yoghurt

- 1 glass of water, milk or tea

- A glass of milk and a small snack, such as a wholegrain cracker, scone or plain biscuit.

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