



Kid-Friendly Healthy Lunches Report

If you want to raise healthy kids, it all starts with their nutrition. One of the ways kids eat unhealthy is when they take lunch to school. Whether they are eating cafeteria food or processed items because it's easier, this is really going to slow down their health. Here are some easy, kid-friendly healthy lunches you can prepare.

1. Faux Lunchables For Kids

We want to start with Lunchables, because this is a common lunch kids frequently enjoy. The problem isn't the quantity, but the lack of nutrition. It is a packaged food, so automatically the fact that it is processed means it isn't very good for your kids to eat. Plus, the ingredients in Lunchables are not high-quality. Add to that it is not a lot of food, and contains no fruits or vegetables whatsoever. Plus, they often have candy and a sugary drink to go with it.

But that doesn't mean you can't give a Lunchables to your kids for lunch. It just means you are making your own version, replacing the highly-processed options in the lunch pack with something more nutritious, and adding some more nutrients to make it a well-balanced meal for them. Here are some different ways to prepare a faux Lunchables for your kids.

Add Lean Meat, Cheese, and Crackers

The basic combination of a Lunchables includes crackers, meat, and cheese. So you can still use this combination, but you want to go with healthier options. Start with the types of crackers you go with. Instead of using a high-fat and overly processed butter or cheese-flavored cracker, go with whole grain or 100% whole wheat crackers. Even rye crackers would be better for your kids.

Next, you want some meat and cheese. For sliced cheese, slice it yourself from a block of cheese you got from the deli. This is fresher and hasn't been sitting in a package for a long time. The same goes for the meat. If you want to use turkey or ham, which many Lunchables contain, get it sliced fresh right at the deli counter. That way, it isn't processed like many of the other ones.

Provide Fruits and Veggies

For the side of the Lunchables, you want to add more nutrition to it. This is one of the main problems with them. To give your kids a healthier lunch, try to add both fruits and veggies on the side of the crackers, meat, and cheese. Here are some different options:

- Grapes and tomatoes
- Celery sticks and sliced strawberries
- Bananas, blueberries, and carrot sticks
- Mandarin oranges and carrot sticks

Don't Include the Candy or Sugary Drink

You also don't want to include the sugary drink and the candy on the side. If you want to include a drink, it should be juice you made at home, a fruit and vegetable smoothie, or just a bottle of water. These are going to be much better for your kids!

2. Self-Serve Bento Lunch Ideas

The next option available for making a kid-friendly healthy lunch is to use Bento boxes. These are a type of lunch box that includes different compartments inside. They are fun for kids because most lunches will have different finger food options, plus it is easier to organize multiple ingredients. As an added bonus, it helps the environment because you are not having to use different baggies for your kids' lunch. The lunch boxes are small enough to fit in a backpack, so they are convenient as well.

Here are some different options for Bento lunch ideas, speaking specifically about 'self-serve' lunches for your kids. This means they put the lunch together instead of choosing something already assembled. How fun!

Include Different Snacks in the Lunch Box

Many parents simply choose to fill up the different compartments of their Bento lunch box with various ingredients that are healthy for their kids. Keep in mind this is definitely something you can do! Kids have fun with it because instead of just a sandwich and a bag of carrot sticks, they have multiple types of foods.

You can also choose healthy snacks put together into the box to create a healthy and well-balanced lunch for them. Just focus on balance, including a carb, vegetable, fruit, whole grain, and protein. You want to have all these important elements in the lunch box.

Here are some different combinations you can try, but these are only some ideas. There are hundreds of different combinations of ingredients your kids might enjoy.

Turkey slices, cheddar cheese cubes, green grapes, carrot sticks, celery sticks

Leftover chicken, cherry tomatoes, black olives, strawberries, banana slices, almonds

Prepare chicken salad, dried cranberries, walnuts, celery sticks, broccoli and cauliflower medley

Add Ingredients For a Wrap or Pita

The next option for putting together a Bento box for a kids' healthy lunch is by giving them ingredients for creating their own pita sandwich or wrap. This prevents you from having to include bread and cut the carbs, but also making it fun. Plus, kids like alternatives to sandwiches whenever possible.

Wrap – You can give them ingredients to have a simple chicken wrap with some roasted chicken, cherry tomatoes sliced, and shredded cheese with a large leaf of lettuce. This includes their protein, carb, fruit, vegetable, and cheese for added flavor.

Pita – You can give them stuff to put into a pita you start to prepare for them. Start the pita by spreading some hummus onto it, then putting it in the box. Now in the other

compartments, add sliced veggies like bell peppers, carrots, zucchini, and anything else your kids like. They can put the veggies into the pita, and enjoy it for a healthy lunch.

3. Fun and Healthy Wraps For Kids

Since kids enjoy them so much, we wanted to go over some more wrap ideas for their lunch. Not just hummus and veggies, but some other options as well. Take a look at these healthy options for a kids wrap at lunchtime or just for a snack.

Banana and Peanut Butter Wrap

This first wrap can be enjoyed for breakfast, lunch, or even a snack. It has protein and fruit, so you might also want to add a vegetable as a side if this is for a lunch. With this wrap, use a whole grain or whole wheat tortilla for the wrap portion. You will then spread some natural peanut butter on the tortilla, then add banana slices to it. They will stick well to the peanut so don't worry about the ingredients falling out. At this point, you can roll it up or add some honey drizzled on top before rolling it.

Cream Cheese and Veggie Wrap

Here is a good wrap if you want your kids to eat more veggies, but they don't like just a bag full of broccoli or carrots. When they are in a wrap with cream cheese, it is tasty and a lot more fun. For this wrap, use any tortilla you want, whether it is a whole grain tortilla or a green spinach tortilla. They even have tomato ones if your kids would prefer that.

You can then spread some cream cheese on the tortilla and add in some vegetables. It is good to start with a base of spinach leaves or another type of greens, then add slices of other veggies your kids enjoy. This might be broccoli and cauliflower, carrots, zucchini or squash, celery, bell peppers, or even onions.

Strawberries and Almond Butter Wrap

Next up is a sweet, fruity wrap for a snack or dessert. You can also give this to your kids for a fun breakfast. Use a whole grain or whole wheat tortilla that has almond butter spread on the inside. Now just add some sliced strawberries and any other berries you like, and roll it up. It is quick and easy.

Eggs and Avocado Wrap

If you are looking for a wrap that can be good for breakfast, but also a healthy lunch, then an egg and avocado wrap is perfect. Spread some mashed avocado on a tortilla, followed by some scrambled eggs. Scramble them with a little cheese and chopped up veggies to get those extra nutrients in there. The avocado should help the eggs to stick. Roll it up like a burrito so nothing falls out either end.

4. Turning Leftovers Into Kid Lunches

Kids' lunches don't always have to include foods you have chosen just for their lunch. Sometimes, you have leftovers from a dinner your family had the night before, but you don't want to waste these leftovers. It is perfectly acceptable to use leftovers in the kids' lunches. Here are some easy ways to do this.

Put the Leftovers Into a Bento Box

This first idea involves putting together a Bento box lunch, as we discussed in the second section of this report. Remember that these boxes have multiple compartments, so they are the perfect set-up for leftovers. All you have to do is take the different components from your dinner and put them into the compartments. This might be some sliced ham, a small side salad with dressing in a small storage container, roasted veggies, and even a little bit of dessert in there.

Create Fun Kabobs

You can also turn the leftovers into kabobs, which are fun for the kids and easy to put together. Just make sure you use plastic skewers and not wood or bamboo ones. The wood skewers sometimes splinter, and kids aren't always careful with the sharp edges.

Take for example a steak dinner you had. This might have included steak, roasted potatoes, and carrots. You can alternative between cubed pieces of steak, individual potato pieces, and the carrots on the kabob skewer, alternating between them. Plus, this won't take up a lot of room in their lunch bag or box.

Do Pancake Sandwiches

Did you make a big breakfast over the weekend, and now have some pancakes left? If so, you can use those pancakes in their lunch! The pancakes will actually become bread for a fun sandwich. There are a lot of ways to do this, some of which the ideas are in the previous section of this report. Here are some ideas for pancake sandwiches for the kids:

Deli meat, cheese, lettuce, and tomato

Fruit and peanut butter or almond butter spread

Sliced veggies and cream cheese or hummus.

5. Super Easy Snacks for Kids

For the final section teaching you how to prepare kid-friendly healthy lunches, we want to show you how to make the most out of their snacks. These snacks might be alongside their lunch they take to school, or snacks for when they are at home or going to a nearby park. It is possible to make yummy snacks your kids enjoy that aren't filled with sugar and empty calories.

Apples Slices With Peanut Butter or Almond Butter

This is an easy snack that only takes a minute to prepare. You can fit these ingredients in a lunch box with different compartments, or just serve it to your kids when they get home from school as a healthy afternoon snack. All you need is a couple tablespoons of either peanut butter or almond butter, along with some apple slices. It contains nutrients and vitamins from the apples, is low in fat and calories, and has some healthy fats from the peanut butter or almond butter.

Homemade Yogurt and Granola Bites

These are bites that are easy for you to make ahead of time, that you can fit into their lunch box or serve at any time. What you want to do is get silicone cupcake trays, then fill each of them about 1/3 of the way with any type of yogurt you want. This can be low or nonfat, flavored or plain, or even Greek yogurt. Now on the top of that, sprinkle some granola, then add sliced fruit. This can be bananas, strawberries, blueberries, or anything your kids enjoy. Put them in the freezer and wait a few hours. When they're done, you can pop them out and put them in a freezer bag or container.

Fruit and Cheese

You really can't go wrong with this combination. You can combine **any** fruit and cheese together into a simple, healthy snack for the kids.

CONCLUSION

As you can see, putting together healthy lunches for kids is not a difficult task. Whether you make them something fully prepared, they assemble it themselves, or you use leftovers, it is possible to feed your kids a healthy lunch every day.

Best Wishes!

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