

SNACKING FOR

KIDS

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PITTSBURGH PIRATES SPORTS NUTRITION & FUELING

We often try to control how much and when our kids eat, and making sure your kids don't graze mindlessly at home can be difficult. It is important to let them feel and understand their own hunger & fullness cues. Read on for some tips that address these very real concerns!

1. GET ON A SCHEDULE

If your kids have a daily learning schedule, include snack time as well. That way, their systems will get used to that schedule and they'll feel better knowing what comes next.

2. CREATE A SYSTEM

Keep a small basket with each child's name on it in the fridge. Each night, give your child the opportunity to choose one snack of their choice and then you choose the other snacks. Your child might choose chips or sugary snacks, which are not ideal but it gives them some ownership.

Then the rule for each day is, "You can eat any snacks in your basket whenever you want. But when they're gone, they're gone. So if you eat all your snacks before lunch and you are hungry at night, then you will learn not to do that again tomorrow."

This strategy can work for older kids, generally second grade and up. Younger kids still need more guidance in portion control and eating cues.

3. LET THEM CHOOSE

Don't tell them what they don't like. If your child decides he wants one of his snacks to be grapes with peanut butter, go for it. A better response than "That won't taste good" would be "Wow, that sounds interesting. Let me know how that tastes." And if they don't like it, your response could be "Well it's great that you tried something you never had before. That's how we learn what we like."

SIMPLE SNACK IDEAS FOR KIDS (OR GROWNUPS!)

- Apple slices with peanut butter
- Greek yogurt with berries & granola
- String cheese and a serving of pretzels
- Banana with peanut butter
- 1/2 PBJ sandwich on whole grain bread
- 1 serving of cheese cubes with saltine crackers
- Carrots with hummus (or other raw veggie)
- Kind bar (these are more hearty than a regular granola bar)
- 1 serving of trail mix
- Banana chips with almonds (one serving each)
- Grapes and cheese cubes
- Hummus and pretzels