



**ESSEX COUNTY  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

*Building a Pathway to Excellence*

# Nutrition Know-how Essex High School

March 2014

FOOD AND FITNESS FOR A HEALTHY TEEN

IN THIS ISSUE

## The School Day Just Got Healthier

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday>

❖ School meals matter! The school day just got healthier thanks to new school breakfast and lunch meal standards. Encourage your child to check out these new meals and find their favorites.

❖ The new school meals focus on more whole grains, fruits, and vegetables; low-fat or non-fat milk; and less sodium and fat.

❖ Nutritious meals and snacks will help kids stay healthy, reducing their risk for obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, and other serious chronic diseases.

❖ School meals are "rightsized." Based on their age, students are getting the right portions and now they will be getting more of some foods like fruits and vegetables.

❖ You have the power to encourage your child to build a healthy plate at school and home. Review the school menu with your kids and encourage them to try new foods, especially the healthy foods offered.

❖ Kids need to try new foods many times before they like them! Here are some helpful tips to take an active role in school meals and encourage your child to eat healthy foods:

- Make time to join your child for lunch

in the school cafeteria.

- When your child gets home from school, ask what was served and what (s)he ate for lunch.
- Eat meals with your child whenever possible. Let your child see you enjoying fruits, vegetables, and whole grains at meals and snacks.
- Grocery shopping can teach your children about food and nutrition. Help your child make healthy choices.
- Discuss where vegetables, fruits and grains, dairy and protein foods come from with your child.
- Share the adventure and serve new foods offered in the school cafeteria at home.
- ❖ The School Day Just Got Healthier! Together we can make a difference and help our kids develop healthy habits for life!



### Eat In or Dine Out... Meal Makeover

Creative ways to make meals more nutritious.

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### Snack Attack

Making the right choices when hunger calls

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# Eating Healthy When You Dine Out... Meal Makeovers

Fashion trends come and go. The styles of decades past always seems to pop back up... bell-bottoms, leg warmers, high-waist jeans, leggings etc.. Who can forget the crazy colors of the eighties? What I wore as a child, I now see (with a modern flare) roaming the halls of EHS. While fashion may simultaneously change and remain the same, childhood obesity trends have just changed... dramatically and only for the worse. In the 1960s obesity among U.S. teenagers (12 – 17 years old) was just 4.6%. 2008 data from the USDA shows obesity rates of 18.1% for 12 – 19 year olds. So, over the past 40 years obesity rates have quadrupled. That's one trend no one should celebrate.

The problem is how do we create achievable goals for slowing down and reversing this trend? What tools can we use to change our eating habits so we are constantly "*Building a Pathway to Excellence*" in all areas of our lives? There is no quick fix, but making small changes to our diets and making healthier choices is a great start! Here are some easy tips to use when eating out:

- As a beverage choice, ask for water or order fat-free or low-fat milk, unsweetened tea, or other drinks without added sugars.
- Ask for whole-wheat bread for sandwiches.
- In a restaurant, start your meal with a salad packed with veggies, to help control hunger and feel satisfied sooner.



- Ask for salad dressing to be served on the side. Then use only as much as you want.
- If main portions at a restaurant are larger than you want, try one of these strategies to keep from overeating:
  - Order an appetizer-sized portion or a side dish instead of an entrée.
  - Share a main dish with a friend.
  - If you can refrigerate the extra food right away, take leftovers home in a "doggy bag."
  - When your food is delivered, set aside or pack half of it to go immediately.
  - Resign from the "clean your plate club" - when you've eaten enough, leave the rest.
- To keep your meal moderate in calories, fat, and sugars:
  - Ask for salad dressing to be served "on the side" so you can add only as much as you want.
  - Order foods that do not have creamy sauces or gravies
  - Add little or no butter to your food.
  - Choose fruits for dessert.
- On long commutes or shopping trips, pack some fresh fruit, cut-up vegetables, low-fat string cheese sticks, or a handful of unsalted nuts to help you avoid stopping for sweet or fatty snacks.

## SNACK ATTACK!

When teens get hungry, they want food fast. And they're old enough to make something themselves, or run off to the store for something that might be less than nutritious. Be ready for your hungry teens – stock up on these snacks :

- ❖ Lite Popcorn
- ❖ Healthy Beverages (water, milk & 100% Juice)
- ❖ Trail Mix
- ❖ Granola Bars
- ❖ Pretzels
- ❖ Frozen Grapes
- ❖ Fresh Veggies and Dip
- ❖ Whole Grain Bread & Peanut Butter
- ❖ Hummus & Crackers
- ❖ Fruit Smoothies



For healthy snack, lunch & dinner recipes visit : <http://www.letsmove.gov/blog/2012/02/09/42-healthy-and-kid-friendly-recipes-try-home>

## BREAKFAST, FUEL FOR YOUR BRAIN!



### Eat to Succeed!

To find more information about eating healthy and living an active life, visit:

<http://www.letsmove.gov/eat-healthy>



### Eat Well, Test Well

Research shows students learn better when they're well nourished. Healthy eating has been linked to higher grades, better memory, more alertness, faster information processing and improved health leading to better school attendance, according to registered dietitian Elisa Zied, author of "Feed Your Family Right." Conversely, unhealthy eating habits can negatively affect learning.

#### FAST FACTS

# 17.5%

According to a study from the nonprofit organization Share Our Strength, **kids who eat breakfast are better at math**. On average, kids who eat breakfast score 17.5 percent higher on math tests than kids who skip breakfast.

# 12%

Data provided from an app called Eatery (by Massive Health) found that **people who regularly consume breakfast eat 12% healthier throughout the day** than people who skip breakfast. The application tracks the daily eating habits of the people who use it.

## National School Breakfast Week March 3-7

### School Breakfast Ensures That All Students Start School Ready to Learn

#### Here's why:

Research shows that kids who eat a nutritious breakfast have:

- ❖ Better test scores
- ❖ Longer attention spans
- ❖ Improved attendance
- ❖ Fewer disciplinary problems

#### Many Kids don't eat breakfast at home:

For many busy families, there is often not enough time in the morning to make breakfast. Other children report that they simply are not hungry when they first wake up.

#### School breakfast can supplement your budget:

The low prices offered make eating breakfast at school good for your budget. Prices range from free, .30¢ or \$1.25. Please contact the school office for a free/reduced price meal application.

**Help your kids succeed in school!**  
**Breakfast at Essex High School is served**  
**Monday through Friday**  
**8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.**

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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