Making Friends with the Supermarket for Back-To-School Success

Got kids? You bet! After all, it wouldn’t be back-to-school season without those little bundles of joy and never-ending energy we call, kids. As nutrition professionals and parents, we try to stay one step ahead of chaos in the kitchen where family meals are concerned. We have good intentions to put only healthy choices out for breakfast. We vow to pack a lunch box that won’t be traded away in the school cafeteria. We promise to be creative and cook dinner at home more often. But how? If you are looking for a smooth transition for back-to-school, then try making friends with your supermarket. Sounds simple, and it can be with some basic tips and tricks up your nutritional sleeve.

Simple Food, Please
Let’s face it – kids need basic, simple food choices to thrive in school and at home. They need calories to match their energy needs and they need all the concentrated nutrition they can get out of those calories. Basic food is the easiest and most economical way to deliver the proper balance of nutrient density and flavor to kids whether it be breakfast-on-the-go, a school lunch box, an after-school power snack or dinner before bath/shower and bed.

Finding simple food can be a huge challenge. An average American supermarket, for example, has 46,000 products on its shelves according to the Food Marketing Institute. Kids Food Trends, an online newsletter, estimates that globally, there is a $400 billion children’s food & beverage market. These stats are hard to swallow but they give us an idea of the enormity of this growing food segment and the challenge it represents.

Sargento String & Stick Cheese

Many kids love cheese and, for busy moms, you can’t beat it. To the rescue is Sargento, who offers a wide variety of fun string and stick cheeses unlike other cheese companies in the marketplace. The ingredient lists are a quick read at 7 items: milk, cheese culture, salt, enzymes, annatto vegetable color, vitamin A palmitate and natamycin, a natural mold inhibitor. Add the individually-wrapped convenience, the novelty of how it is eaten and the dairy nutrition in the Sargento line, and everyone wins.

Flavors available at the supermarket include varieties of cheddar, Colby jack and part-skim Mozzarella. All kids will enjoy a two-tone flavor called, Twirls, which is made from part-skim Mozzarella cheese in a twirly color pattern of orange and white. Adventurous kids will enjoy the newest stick cheese flavor of Pepper Jack – oye! Multi-packages of the string and stick cheeses offer 6 to 12 servings of 21 g, 24 g or 28 g pieces of cheese. Even the smallest ones, 21 g, contain 15% Daily Value of calcium which is half that of a cup of 1% or nonfat milk. Per serving, calorie counts range from 50 (light string cheese, 21 g) to 100 (mild cheddar, 24 g) with the least sodium in reduced-sodium varieties of the newest stick cheese flavor of Pepper Jack – ole! Multi-packages of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sargento Reduced-Fat Colby Jack Cheese Sticks</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Nutrition Facts</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Calories: 60</td>
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<tr>
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| % Daily Value:
| Vitamin A: 4% |
| Vitamin C: 0% |
| Calcium: 15% |
| Iron: 0% |

Sargento String & Stick Cheese

Our mission statement
To provide objective, balanced, and science based information on new food products, health issues, food labels, trends, and educational resources.

Key to information boxes
- Rating: 
  - ★★★ Recommended
  - ★★ Recommended (see ‘Cons’) 
  - ★ Not Recommended
- Distribution:
  - SM = Supermarkets
  - HN = Health/Natural Food Stores
  - GS = Gourmet & Specialty Stores
  - DC = Drug & Convenience Stores
  - CS = Club & Super Stores
  - ND = Nationally Distributed
  - RD = Regionally Distributed
  - SD = Spotty Distribution
  - TM = Test Market
  - IO = Internet Order
  - FS = Food Service
- NA = Information not available at the time of publication
- FREE OFFER = Link to obtain Free Sample Offer
- Editorial comments

FREE OFFER
Coupon for a free Sargento Cheese
Contact: pat.lombardo@sargento.com
Subject: SUPERMARKET SAVVY Coupon
Expires: December 31, 2010

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Snack.........................7-9
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Colby Jack (105 mg), mild cheddar (105 mg) and string cheese (110 mg), all 21 g. For all varieties, protein ranges from 4 to 6 g per cheese stick.

**What Kids Like:** Choice of flavors, kid size and on-the-go appeal.

**What Moms & Dads Like:** Dairy nutrition of protein and calcium, individual packages and simple and fun at mealtime or snack time.

**Wacky Mac Veggie Spirals**

This creative choice, located in the supermarket’s pasta aisle, offers all the nutrition of pasta with a colorful twist. The veggie spirals are vibrant orange, green and purple thanks to the addition of natural veggie powders from tomato, spinach and beet. No dyes, no worries. This fun item helps moms and dads turn a ho-hum evening meal into dinner at the circus. What kid wouldn’t love that?

Nutritionally, the colorful veggie spiral pasta mirrors other enriched semolina pasta for one serving which is cooked from 2 oz dry. Prepared plain, both contribute 200 calories, 1 g fat, 0 saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 0 cholesterol, 15 mg sodium, 41 g carbohydrates, 1 g fiber and 8 g protein.

Wacky Mac is a smart starting point for homemade macaroni and cheese and it can be made very simply as shown below. The finished recipe is full of flavor and more nutrient dense than boxed mac and cheese. For example, the homemade version here supplies 14 g protein, 25% DV for calcium and 210 mg sodium per serving whereas a natural brand of the boxed kind reveals 9 g protein, 15% DV calcium and 660 mg sodium per serving.

**What Kids Like:** Fun shape, fun colors and bite-size pieces.

**What Moms & Dads Like:** Simple nutrition of pasta, natural colors without added dyes and an attention-getter at dinner time.

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**FREE SAMPLE OFFER**

**Wacky Mac Pasta**

**Nutrition Facts**

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<th>Serving Size</th>
<th>Calories</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cholesterol</td>
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<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sodium</td>
<td>15mg</td>
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<td>Dietary Fiber</td>
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<tr>
<td>Protein</td>
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**FREE OFFER**

Coupon for a free package of Wacky Mac Pasta

**Contact:** wackymac@stromproducts.com

**Subject:** SUPERMARKET SAVVY Offer

**Expires:** December 31, 2010

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**Wacky Mac and Cheesy Cheese**

*For a kid-pleasing dinner you make from scratch*

Kids Can Help: Kids can help grate the cheese, measure the ingredients and stir the pasta, with supervision.

Serves 8

| 4 cups | Wacky Mac pasta, dry|
| 2 cups | Medium cheddar cheese, grated|
| 1 cup | Milk, 1%|
| 1 Tbsp | Spicy mustard|
| ¼ tsp | Ground red pepper (optional)|

1. Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain.
2. While pasta is cooking, grate cheese into a bowl.
3. Return cooked and drained pasta to its cooking pan.
4. Add milk, cheese and mustard to pasta. Stir gently to mix.
5. Turn stove to very low heat, cover pan with lid and allow to warm up, about 3-4 minutes.
6. Stir gently a couple more times as milk and cheese melt into sauce.

**Note:** Leftovers keep 2-3 days in the fridge. Reheat slowly on stovetop or in microwave.

**Nutrition per serving:** 280 calories; 10 g fat; 6 g saturated fat; 0 trans fat; 30 mg cholesterol; 210 mg sodium; 33 g carbohydrates; 1 g fiber; 14 g protein; 8% DV vitamin A; 0% DV vitamin C; 25% DV calcium; 10% DV iron

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F or kids of all ages, the cereal bowl is comfort food for morning. There's no disputing it – cereal is an easy breakfast. When navigating the supermarket's cereal aisle, be sure to lift kids up above the eye-level 'sugar bombs', made famous by the Calvin and Hobbes comic strip as shown here. Instead, direct their attention to a host of whole grain cereal options and, once home, let kids choose toppings for their bowlful. Kid-friendly milk includes low fat 1% or nonfat from a cow, plain or vanilla low fat soy milk, rice, or almond milk. Instead of liquid milk, low fat vanilla or fruit flavored yogurt also works on top of cereal. And, remember that a switch to nonfat, Greek yogurt doubles the protein value of regular yogurt for one serving. For a sweet cereal topping, kids enjoy dried fruits like craisins, cherries, blueberries or raisins, along with colorful berries or chopped fresh apples. Let them finish with a half teaspoon of sugar, cinnamon-sugar or a sprinkling of nutmeg. All this keeps added sugars to a more moderate level.

Stopping with cereal at the breakfast table can be a lost opportunity and a nutrition shortfall. Kids need more. For a pleasing protein, go for string cheese or little squares of natural cheese cut up in kid-size bites. Nuts and nut butters also work well and choices abound on the store shelf – peanut, almond, cashew, sunflower and sunflower butter, this may not be true for everyone. Though many kids with peanut allergies can safely enjoy Sunbutter and much of the company's advertising targets this customer. Visit the handy, online recipe file at Sunbutter's website.

Sunbutter

Move over peanut butter and make room for your new neighbors — nut and seed butters — which are gaining in popularity as healthy choices. Sunbutter, a leading brand of sunflower butter, is one scrumptious, spreadable option that’s found in the peanut butter & jelly aisle of the supermarket. Sunbutter (SB) is a good nutrition decision versus peanut butter (PB), too. In a 2 tablespoon serving, both have 200 calories which come from 7 g protein, 16 g total fat and 7 g carbohydrates. SB, in the original or crunch version, however, has twice the fiber (4 g SB vs. 2 g PB), more than twice the iron (8% DV SB vs. 3% DV PB), twice the zinc (10% DV SB vs. 5% DV PB), almost double the copper (25% DV SB vs. 14% DV PB), almost 3 times the vitamin E (27% DV SB vs. 10% DV PB) and less sodium (120 mg SB vs. 150 mg PB) than peanut butter.

Sunbutter offers a healthy dose of flavorful vegetarian protein and great satiety value for active kids. Typically, kids with peanut allergies can safely enjoy Sunbutter and much of the company’s advertising targets this customer. Visit the handy, online recipe file at Sunbutter's website.

What Kids Like: Tastes great, makes an awesome spread/dip for apple slices and it makes a quick and easy sandwich.

What Moms & Dads Like: Peanut-free and gluten-free, makes an easy meal or snack and it is versatile in the kitchen.

Be Aware: Though many kids with peanut allergies can safely enjoy sunflower butter, this may not be true for everyone.
Sugar Intake Recommendations for Kids

One year ago, the American Heart Association (AHA) announced new recommendations to American adults for limiting their added sugars to no more than half of the daily discretionary calories allowance from USDA’s MyPyramid. For most American women, that is no more than 100 calories per day, or about 6 teaspoons of sugar. For men, it is 150 calories per day, or about 9 teaspoons. Read more in the Wall Street Journal. Six years earlier, in 2003, the World Health Organization recommended a daily upper limit for kids of 40 grams, or 10 teaspoons of sugar. (Read Policy). But, AHA left kids out.

Now, involved parents, dentists and doctors are eager for an update. Leading health experts are concerned that the food industry is not making it a realistic challenge for today’s kids. Read the Chicago Tribune’s 2010 article for insight about a shortfall in nutrient density, including too much sugar, in processed, kid-centric foods.

Kellogg’s Chocolate Frosted Mini Wheats, Little Bites

The Kellogg company added a new whole grain choice to its popular line of frosted mini wheats cereals late last fall – yes, chocolate. These semisweet and cocoa-flavored, whole grain tidbits make a fine showing at the breakfast table as one element of a healthy and balanced meal. Kids need high fiber choices, as do adults, and one serving of this kid-pleaser (52 tiny biscuits, 55 g) provides 41 g of whole grain and 6 g of dietary fiber for GI health.

Sugar is the second ingredient in this cereal bowl choice; however, its positive nutrition is a cut above other chocolate-flavored cereals that kids like. Per serving, the Kellogg item has 6 g fiber (vs 1 to 2 g in Cocoa Puffs and Cocoa Krispies), 5 g protein (vs. 1 g in Cocoa Puffs and Cocoa Krispies) and 70% DV for iron (vs. 25% DV in Cocoa Puffs and Cocoa Krispies).

Kids might rather choose to nibble on this item for their snack, as it tastes like a chocolate brownie but, again, it scores nutritionally higher than other leading brands of chocolate, kid-friendly nibblers. For example, per serving, the bite-size chocolate bears and chocolate graham crackers come in at 2 g fiber each, 2 g protein each, and 15% and 8%, respectively, for the Daily Value of iron.

What Kids Like: Chocolate flavor, tiny bite-size and icing on top.

What Moms & Dads Like: Great fiber content, less sugar and it works as a healthy cookie, too.

Be Aware: For kids under 3 years, the dry bite-size squares may be safely eaten after crushing them. The tiny squares soften up somewhat in a cup or bowl with milk.

Kids’ Health on Fiber

Kids’ Health provides timely information on a wide variety of health and wellness topics in an online format. Consumers and professionals alike will appreciate their weekly, online newsletter with easy subscription. Below is their easy-to-understand explanation about fiber intake as it relates to kids.

A simple way to determine how many grams of fiber a child older than 2 years should eat each day is to add 5 to the child’s age in years. For example, a 5-year-old should get about 10 g of fiber and a 6 year old should shoot for 11 g per day. After the age of 15, teens should get about 20-25 g of fiber per day. A high-fiber food has 5 g or more dietary fiber per serving and a good source of fiber provides 2.5 to 5 g per serving. This list is a good one to post on the family refrigerator.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiber (g)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>½ cup of cooked navy beans</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>1 ounce of almonds</td>
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<tr>
<td>½ cup of cooked lima beans</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>1 medium raw apple with skin</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 cup whole grain mini wheat cereal</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>½ cup of raisins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 medium baked sweet potato with peel</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>¼ cup of baked beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 whole-wheat English muffin</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>1 medium orange</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 medium banana</td>
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</table>
**School Lunchbox Fun**

It is clear that kids need healthy calories throughout their school day to think well and feel strong. Lunch is the midday opportunity to boost their energy and performance, so what goes into kids’ lunchboxes is extremely important. School cafeteria trades typically leave kids with less nutrition in their lunchbox, but smart planning and ideas from the supermarket shelf can come to the rescue. For preschoolers, these same ideas can make an at-home lunch both satisfying and nutritious.

Dipping and spreading is not only fun, but it affords kids the chance to be independently creative. Moms can feed their kids’ development by offering a lunch including dips made from yogurt, beans or light, flavored cream cheese. Favorite dippers include pretzel sticks or rods, breadsticks, baby carrots, melon spears, grape tomatoes and whole grain crackers. As for lunch spreads that get kids’ attention, how about chunky chickpea hummus, smashed egg salad or minced chicken salad? These go nicely stuffed into mini pita bread pockets, wrapped into pinwheels with whole wheat tortillas or piled on top of crunchy rice crackers.

Mix it up, make it fun and include a sticker or silly riddle now and then to make kids eager to open their school lunchboxes. Here are a couple riddles to try: Why shouldn’t you tell an egg a joke? Because it might crack up! Or, What is green and sings? Elvis Parsley! Preschoolers love lunch in the park, at the backyard picnic table or from their backpack after a fresh air, neighborhood hike. Tongue twisters really get their attention so here are two with a food theme: Freshly-fried flying fish or Greek grapes. See if you can say either of them 5 times – fast. It’s not easy. Yes, humor and kids truly go together.

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**Starkist Lunch To Go**

Starkist makes packing school lunch easy. Lunch-To-Go offers two versions (chunk light and albacore) of two choices: a handy, tuna-in-water lunch kit that requires adding reduced-calorie mayo and pickle relish then mixing at the table, and a handier, tuna-in-water salad kit with premixed tuna salad that is ready-to-eat. Both kits include crackers and a hard candy mint as well as plastic ware and a napkin. Find these items next to shelf stable, fish products at the supermarket and store them at home for up to 6 months. Busy moms who are careful to pack their kids a balanced lunch will need only to add a healthy beverage, fruit &/or veggie to Lunch-To-Go. That is sweet!

A nutritional comparison of the 4 varieties of Lunch-To-Go items shows that in one serving or one kit, the ready-to-eat, tuna salad choices are lower in calories than the mix-it-yourself lunch choices (190 to 200 calories vs. 240 to 250 calories), total fat (6 to 7 g vs. 9 to 10 g) and higher in protein than the ready-to-eat salad kits (18 to 19 g vs. 12 to 14 g). All Lunch-To-Go varieties are salty, ranging from 530 to 680 mg sodium per serving.

Apart from the Starkist kits, plain, shelf-stable albacore tuna in a 3 oz serving is richer in omega-3 fats (730 mg) than chunk light (230 mg). The chunk light, however, is richer in vitamin D (39% DV) than albacore (17% DV). Both tuna varieties have less total fat, saturated fat and cholesterol in 3 oz than the same amount of broiled, skinless chicken breast, beef sirloin or pork tenderloin. To see a comparison of key nutrients in tuna varieties versus poultry, pork and beef, take a look at the Starkist company website chart, Tuna Education.

**What Kids Like:** Mixing the tuna, spreading the tuna on the crackers and eating it as a quick meal or filling snack.

**What Moms & Dads Like:** Easy lunch, positive nutrition and convenience of storage in the kitchen pantry.
Snyder’s of Hanover Eat Smart Naturals – Garden Veggie Crisps & Sticks

Snyder’s of Hanover’s 2010 line of better-for-you snacks includes items such as Garden Veggie Crisps and Garden Veggie Sticks, both of which received Snyder’s Kid Kritics seal of approval. Take a peek at Kid Kritics.

Made from fine ingredients like potato flour, potato starch, expeller-pressed sunflower oil, tomato, salt, spinach powder, turmeric, and beet powder; the crisps and sticks both contribute 140 calories, 6 g total fat and 1 g protein per 30 g serving. The mildly salty taste comes from 150 mg sodium for crisps and 120 mg sodium for sticks in one serving. Favorite brands of salty snacks can be much higher in sodium for one serving (Lay’s classic potato chips, 180 mg; Baked Lays BBQ flavor chips, 210 mg; Cheetos Puffs, 370 mg).

As with all categories of snacks, sensory features such as crunch and flavor appeal to kids. To honor its most traditional crunchy snack, Snyder’s of Hanover offers an organic pretzel in its Eat Smart Naturals snack family, too. Read a fascinating history of pretzels.

What Kids Like: Flavor and crunch, waffle chip and potato puff textures and colors.

What Moms & Dads Like: Snack food with more nutrition, natural source colors and textures and a sustainability message on the package.

Apple & Eve Fruitables Fruit/Vegetable Juice

Apple & Eve was founded thirty-five years ago and their first product was pure, unfiltered natural apple juice. In 2009, they launched a line of fruit and vegetable juice beverages called Fruitables that offer sweet flavors plus one serving of fruits/veggies per 6.75 fl oz serving. In a colorful and appealing package, the wording states that there are no added sugars, high fructose corn syrup, artificial sweeteners, artificial flavors or artificial preservatives.

The nutrition for one serving of Fruitables (6.75 fl oz) is 70 calories, 0 g fat, 10 mg sodium, 13 to 15 g carbs, and 9 to 10 g sugars. Apple & Eve has kept the calories and sugars low compared to other fruit juices (1 cup grape juice has 150 calories and 24 g sugar; 1 cup pineapple juice is 130 calories and 25 g sugar; 1 cup apple juice is 115 calories and 24 g sugar) by diluting their fruit-veg blends with filtered water. As consumed, Fruitables are 66% juice.

There is a real lesson for kids here if they read the ingredient list because surprises abound: orange, yellow and purple carrots, sweet potatoes, butternut squash and beets — yes, beets — are all part of the yummy flavors. Rounding out the ingredients, depending on flavor, are more familiar favorites like raspberries, strawberries, kiwis and pears.

Berry-berry, tropical orange and strawberry-kiwi Fruitables are healthy picks for kids whether in their school lunchbox or chilled in a cooler at soccer or ballet practice. This item comes in an 8-pack of 6.75 fl oz juice boxes or a 46 fl oz, family friendly bottle, depending on flavor. For smaller appetites, there is a 4.23 fl oz, carrot-apple flavor, as well.

What Kids Like: Juice box format; sweet juice flavors; colorful and fun.

What Moms & Dads Like: Fruit and vegetable nutrition; convenient package for lunch box and no high fructose corn syrup or other additives.
School Lunchbox Menus

Here are some combinations that will end up in your kids’ stomach rather than traded away in the school cafeteria.

**The Picnic Lover:**
Chickpea hummus + whole corn chips + baby carrots + watermelon cubes + low fat chocolate milk

**The Nibbler:**
Homemade Chex mix (plain Chex cereal + cinnamon-apple toasted oat rings cereal + mini pretzel twists + tiny baked cheese crackers + raisins) + yogurt cup or tube + peeled hardboiled egg + small banana + water

**It's Wrap Time:**
Flour tortilla wrap (whole wheat or spinach) with light cream cheese spread, thin sliced turkey and grated carrots + veggie potato crisps + red and green grapes + low fat milk or 100% juice

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Snacks You Feel Good About

As school ends in the mid-afternoon, watch out for hungry kids in the kitchen. This is, after all, a primary refueling time of day for little people. Crunchy snacks are a favorite and baked potato, rice or corn-based chips are OK, but don’t stop there. An added protein will tide kids over to dinnertime and give moms and dads time to put a simple and nutritious meal on the family table. To the crunchy, baked snack, try adding a kid-size handful of nuts, natural cheese cubes, natural yogurt or a cup of cottage cheese with pineapple tidbits. And pour a smart drink such as 1% milk, nonfat milk, fruit juice, vegetable juice or a sweet combination of the two.

Homemade, mini muffins and a nutritious drink delight most kids as they return from school. Sources for muffin recipes range from online sites to the back of a whole grain cereal box. When making them, remember to substitute whole wheat flour or ground oatmeal for ½ the white flour, up to ½ cup unsweetened applesauce for the oil or butter and toss in some chopped, dried fruits, all for extra nutrients. The pumpkin muffin recipe below is a true kid-pleaser.

It is a powerful lesson for kids to become smart, supermarket consumers for their snacks. One way to educate them is to post a family shopping list in the kitchen and have kids contribute ideas, with supervision. For a time and budget-efficient shopping trip, write the shopping list so that it matches the layout of the supermarket and teach kids to do that, too. Putting kids in charge of the snack aisle and/or cracker and cookie aisle is worth trying as long as there are rules that they follow the family list – another great consumer lesson. For more insight into lessons learned by kids who help at the supermarket, read ‘Grocery Shopping with School Age Kids’ by Elizabeth Ward, MS, RD.

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**Pleasing Pumpkin Muffins**

Create these muffins for hungry and healthy kids

**Kids Can Help:** Kids can crack the eggs, measure the ingredients, stir the batter and fill the muffin pans, with supervision.

Makes 12 regular or about 24 mini muffins

| 1 can, 15-16 oz Pumpkin, solid pack, canned | 2 Tbsp Canola or light-flavored olive oil | ½ tsp Baking soda | 1 tsp Pumpkin pie spice or ½ tsp each, cinnamon and nutmeg |
| ½ cup Sugar | ½ cup Water | ¾ tsp Baking powder | 1 cup Raisins |
| 2 Eggs, large | ¾ cup White flour | ¼ tsp Salt | |
| 2 Tbsp Unsweetened applesauce | ¾ cup Whole wheat flour | | |

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Get out a large bowl and add the wet ingredients: pumpkin, sugar, eggs, applesauce, oil and water.
3. With an electric mixer or hand whisk, mix up everything for 1-2 minutes.
4. In a different bowl, add the dry ingredients: white flour, whole wheat flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt, spice and raisins. Stir up with a spoon until well mixed.
5. Add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients slowly. Mix with an electric mixer or a big, wooden spoon until everything is moist. Do not over mix.
6. Lightly spray the muffin pan(s) with vegetable oil cooking spray.
7. Using a soup spoon, fill the muffin pans about halfway full.
8. Place into the oven and bake for 20 minutes.

Nutrition per serving (one regular muffin): 170 calories; 3.5 g fat; 0.5 g saturated fat; 0 g trans fat; 35 mg cholesterol; 140 mg sodium; 33 g carbohydrates; 3 g fiber; 4 g protein; 110% DV vitamin A; 4% DV vitamin C; 4% DV calcium; 8% DV iron

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Sunshine Cheez-It Scrabble Junior

Sunshine’s familiar cheez-it crackers are still made with white cheddar cheese. What’s new is that they now come with letters stamped onto each piece and a Scrabble game board on the back of the box. Getting young kids interested in learning the alphabet and making words, while snacking, is a great idea.

These fun crackers are baked and a 31 g serving counts for 140 calories, 5 g total fat, no trans fat, 3 g protein and 190 mg sodium. With less than 1 g fiber per serving, moms will want to add a cut-up pear or kiwi to kids’ snack plates along with the letter crackers for better nutritional balance.

The Scrabble Junior snacks work well as a carry-along favorite when mixed into a fun, trail mix with toasted oat cereal and tiny twist pretzels. What’s a mom not to like with Sunshine’s new cheesy snack? It might even make spelling homework a breeze.

What Kids Like: Crunch & cheesy flavor, letters on each cracker and older kids can play the Scrabble game, too.

What Moms & Dads Like: Creative learning snack, easy to carry in a baggie anywhere and kids engaged with the game board may sit still longer at their snack table.

Food Network & Kids

Though many nutrition professionals enjoy the Food Network, did you know there are cool, online videos that can inspire cooking ideas for kids? Check out Cricket’s Cooking for Kids videos. Her recipes are terrific!

Yoplait Simply Gogurt

Yoplait’s new tube yogurt for kids, Simply Gogurt, is a nutritionally cleaner version of their familiar Gogurt product. As a matter of fact, much of what’s new is what is not in this fun product – artificial colors, flavors and sweeteners. Simply Gogurt is a 2.25 oz (64 g) serving that provides 70 calories and 2 g protein with only 0.5 g total fat, 0 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat and 5 mg cholesterol. The dairy nutrition accounts for 10% DV calcium, 10% DV vitamin D and 6% DV phosphorus. Strawberry and mixed berry flavors are available.

Yoplait is currently evaluating the feasibility of expanding their nutritionally-cleaner, tube yogurt will, undoubtedly, be a key factor in the company’s decision.

What Kids Like: Great flavor, cool tube and welcome treat in school lunchbox.

What Moms & Dads Like: Simple ingredients, dairy nutrition and online coupon for $0.50 off at www.yoplait.com/simplygogurt/
Homemade Baked Tortilla Chips

For a rich corn flavor and crunch that fits everyone’s budget

Kids Can Help: Kids can help count tortillas, stack tortillas and lay them onto the baking sheet, with supervision.

4 servings
8 Corn tortillas

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Place tortillas in a stack on a cutting board.
3. With a big knife, cut straight down through all tortillas, cutting them in half.
4. Rotate tortillas one half turn.
5. With a big knife, cut straight down through all tortillas, cutting them in half again.
6. Lay tortilla triangles onto a flat baking sheet in one layer.
7. Cook for 8 minutes, or until golden.

Nutrition per serving: 120 calories; 1.5 g fat; 0 g saturated fat; 0 g trans fat; 0 mg cholesterol; 5 mg sodium; 24 g carbohydrates; 3 g fiber; 3 g protein; 0% DV vitamin A; 0% DV vitamin C; 10% DV calcium; 4% DV iron

Family Dinner

A successful family dinner at home starts with a well-thought-out meal plan, shopping list, and trip to the supermarket. Or, for those who are organized enough to keep a well-stocked kitchen, the shopping trip typically precedes meal planning. Whatever your pattern, cooking dinner with kids can be a lot of fun. Read the homepage of Kids Cooking Activities for a list of ten good reasons for getting kids involved in the kitchen with food. By getting kids to help with tasks they can handle, parents are sometimes surprised at the results. Not only can kids assist with a colorful garnish for the entree and a creatively mixed salad, but they will most likely eat what they help prepare. Yes, it works because pride is a powerful thing. For kids who are 8 to 10 and over, making simple recipes with a parent’s help is realistic and for younger kids, simpler tasks are fine. On the busiest day of the week, try an interesting, quickie dinner from healthy frozen convenience, such as pot stickers or a salmon burger. Then, complete the meal with super simple side items like steamed rice and cut-up fruit.

Trident Frozen Salmon Burgers

This simple burger option is a refreshing change from beef. Convenient from the freezer, Trident’s Salmon Burgers cook in less than 10 minutes – from frozen. The burger is made from wild, ocean-caught, Alaskan salmon and then blended with a secret recipe of herbs and spices. Ingredients are natural and include familiar pantry items like canola oil, lemon juice, Kosher salt, onion and garlic. The natural smoke flavor in Trident’s recipe is well down the ingredient list and its flavor is not too strong, even when eating the burger by itself.

Traditional supermarkets sell a 4-pack of 2.8 oz salmon burgers while big box stores sell a 12-pack of 4 oz salmon burgers, both from the frozen seafood case. The 2.8 oz is a nice, kid-size portion that contains 130 calories, 7 g fat, no trans fat or cholesterol, 15 g protein and a whopping 960 mg omega-3 fat. The larger, 4 oz choice contains 170 calories, 9 gm fat, no trans fat, 20 gm protein and 1360 mg omega-3 fat.

What Kids Like: A different burger, decorating it with fun condiments and older kids can make it themselves with supervision.

What Moms & Dads Like: Delicious flavor, natural source of omega-3 fat, a new option for a backyard barbecue.
Asian food lovers come in all ages. Annie Chun’s new line of ready-to-cook, mini wontons and pot stickers make Asian night easy and tasty, at home. First, visit the supermarket’s International frozen food case. Find Annie Chun’s products in 8 oz pouches of several varieties: mini wontons come in chicken/cilantro, chicken/garlic and pork/ginger varieties; organic pot stickers come in chicken/vegetable and pork/vegetable varieties. The mini wontons work as an addition to a clear broth or miso soup, or pan-fried in a little oil as dinner with sides of steamed rice, soup and cut-up oranges for dessert. The pot stickers are versatile as a hearty appetizer or a dinner meal entrée with easy preparation instructions – from frozen – in 7 quick minutes.

Annie Chun products are all-natural and contain no MSG, preservatives or trans fats. A serving of 4 (36 g) mini wontons ranges in calories from 50 (chicken-cilantro) to 60 (chicken-garlic) to 100 (pork-ginger). They are low in fat from 0.5 g (chicken-cilantro and chicken-garlic) to 3.5 g (pork-ginger) and the sodium content goes from 150 mg (chicken-garlic) to 160 (chicken-cilantro) to 230 (pork-ginger). A 7-piece (140 g) serving of pot stickers ranges in calories from 220 (organic chicken-veg) to 260 (organic pork-veg), in fat from 3.5 g (organic chicken-veg) to 10 g (organic pork-veg) and in sodium from 600 mg (organic pork-veg) to 620 mg (organic chicken-veg). Adding a vegetarian choice to the line would be a positive step as would making an effort to reduce the high sodium content.

What Kids Like: Kid-size, savory flavors and looks like a tiny present.

What Moms & Dads Like: Natural ingredients, versatile as appetizer or meal and a quick and easy dinner solution on a busy weeknight.

Be Aware: The mini wontons are very small, so do not overcook them. The sodium content for the pot stickers is high (600 to 620 mg).

Annie Chun’s Frozen Mini Wontons & Organic Pot Stickers

Minute Rice Cups

This tasty, one-of-a-kind item combines a simple ingredient list with the convenience so many busy moms and dads like and need. One minute on high in the microwave delivers a hot, flavorful and satisfying cup of rice in 3 varieties – white, brown, or brown with wild rice. Nutritionally, the one-cup serving delivers 200 (white rice) to 230 (brown & wild rice) calories, 4 g (white rice) to 5 g (brown rice, brown & wild rice) protein, 135 mg (brown & wild rice) to 175 mg (brown rice) sodium, 55 mg (white rice) to 140 mg (brown rice, brown & wild rice) potassium, 2 g (white rice, brown rice) to 5 g (brown and wild rice) fiber and 40 g (white rice, brown rice) to 42 g (brown & wild rice) carbs.

For any meal side or an after school snack, these fun rice cups can make kids happy. There are 2 additional flavor varieties, chicken and yellow rice, in the Minute Rice, ready-to-serve line. However, one serv-
Wake Up Kids to a Healthy Breakfast

It is incredibly smart for kids to start their day with a healthy breakfast. The burst of morning nutrition wakes up a body to feel great and a brain to think clearly. Healthy choices have no limits at breakfast though it is a good idea to mix it up with a variety of foods. If you and your kids slide into a breakfast rut, then climb out with choices such as strawberry and orange smoothie (see recipe), cheese stick and tortilla wrap, fruit and yogurt parfait or veggie sausage omelet. Want something more exciting? Warmed up soup and crackers, tuna salad with tomatoes or hummus on pita makes a healthy breakfast, too.

12 Mix-and-Match Breakfast Foods

Pick out 2 or 3 choices from different food groups, for your breakfast plate. It is best to combine Protein (P) or Dairy (D) with a Grain (G), Vegetable (V) or Fruit (F). Add them to your shopping list, too!

- P Chilled, hardboiled egg
- F Cut-up watermelon
- P/V Veggie sausage links
- P/V Hummus
- P/V Peanut butter (or sunflower butter for peanut allergy)
- G Quick oatmeal
- F Unsweetened applesauce
- G/D/P Cheese toast
- G Mini pita pocket bread
- D/P Low fat fruit yogurt
- V Homemade vegetable soup
- D/P Nonfat or 1% milk

Strawberry & Orange Smoothie

For a naturally sweet and tasty start to the day or anytime snack

Kids Can Help: Kids can measure the ingredients and pour them into the blender, with supervision

Makes 3 servings

1 cup Frozen unsweetened strawberries, partly-thawed with their juice
1 cup Orange juice
1 container, 6 oz Lemon yogurt, low fat
¼ cup Plain yogurt, nonfat

1. Measure all ingredients into a blender jar. Cover tightly with the lid.
2. Blend on medium to high speed for about 1 minute.

Nutrition per serving: 130 calories; 1 g fat; 0.5 g saturated fat; 0 trans fat; <5 mg cholesterol; 50 mg sodium; 28 g carbohydrates; 2 g fiber; 5 g protein; 2% DV vitamin A; 100% DV vitamin C; 15% DV calcium; 4% DV iron

5 Grab ‘n Go Breakfasts

Mornings can be tight on time but breakfast is still a top priority. Teens like this approach, too.

Breakfast balance means eating from a variety of food groups such as grains, protein, fruits and dairy.

Whole wheat frosted cereal squares in a baggie
- string cheese
- apple
- 1% or nonfat milk in a reusable water bottle

Whole wheat tortilla wrap and light cream cheese
- walnuts
- plum
- calcium fortified OJ in a reusable water bottle

Oat granola bar spread with almond butter
- Banana
- 1% or nonfat milk in a reusable water bottle

Lean ham and provolone cheese sandwich
- grapes
- 1% or nonfat milk in a reusable water bottle

Graham cracker ‘sandwiches’ spread with peanut butter
- (or soy nut butter for peanut allergy)
- pear
- 1% or nonfat milk in a reusable water bottle

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ing goes overboard in sodium (chicken, 1020 mg and yellow, 1030 mg) due to salt and MSG ingredients. Kids will be best to stick with the simpler varieties.

**What Kids Like:** A fun and handy cup, something different for snack and older kids can heat it themselves.

**What Moms & Dads Like:** Simple and few ingredients, quick to heat & kids make less of a mess from a cup than they do with rice on a flat plate.

**Be Aware:** Stick with the minimally-processed varieties for the most positive, overall nutrition: white, brown and brown with wild rice. The steam is very hot when opening the rice cup’s top and using a pot holder is the safest approach.

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**Meet Cindy Silver**

Cindy Silver, MS, RD, LDN is a seasoned dietitian who lives in Winston Salem, NC. Her career has included a variety of positions in research, college teaching, hospital outpatient counseling and the corporate supermarket world. Cindy believes that simple food choices and home cooking are at the core of a healthy family lifestyle and her passion is working with kids. Her business is Cindy’s chance to interact closely with kids and their families and friends who want to eat healthier, shop healthier and cook healthier but need tools, skill building, coaching and practice to get there. Please visit Cindy’s website, for a closer look. The website is under development and will be live by October 1st.

**Look for Savvy Kids at the Supermarket**

Starting in October SUPERMARKET SAVVY is partnering with Cindy to launch fun, interactive teaching tools for kids, parents, and health educators. **Savvy Kids at the Supermarket** will include –

- **Educational Mini-Kits** such as **Power Breakfast for School Success, Sugar Buster Snacks, and Simply Satisfying Family Dinners**.

- **Party Planners** for a **Pizza Party, a Picnic Party,** and a **Sleep Over Party**.

- **Activity Tip Cards** on topics such as **Choosing the Tastiest Apple, Picking Vegetables for Soup,** or **Growing a Supermarket Garden**.

These downloadable products will focus on topics of interest to kids, their parents and nutrition educators. Each kit will include savvy shopping tips, simple recipes with suggestions on how kids can help in the kitchen, and ready-to-use kids’ activity sheets, planning forms, and/or tip cards. **Look for Savvy Kids at the Supermarket** in October. We will let you know when it is launched.

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