

# Teen FOOD & FITNESS

Healthy Ideas for Middle and High School Students

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Walker County School District  
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## FAST TAKES

### Hungry...or bored?

Boredom can lead to mindless snacking. Before your tween reaches for a snack, encourage her to check in with her body. Is her stomach growling? How would she rate her hunger on a scale of 1–10? If she decides she's just bored, she might go for a run or do a craft instead.

### Choose active extracurriculars

Give your teen a way to stay fit and get involved in student life by encouraging him to put fitness-related extracurriculars on his schedule this year. He could try out for one sport each season. Or he might join a club that meets all year, such as the Ultimate Frisbee or outdoor adventure club.

### Did You Know?

Mushrooms are a good source of three different B vitamins. Plus, their hearty flavor makes them an ideal meat alternative



in dishes like stroganoff, lasagna, or sloppy joes. Simply replace half (or all) the meat with finely chopped

mushrooms, and cook as usual.

### Just for fun

**Q:** Why did the coach want the kangaroo on the basketball team?

**A:** Because he was good at jump shots.



## Back to school with healthy habits

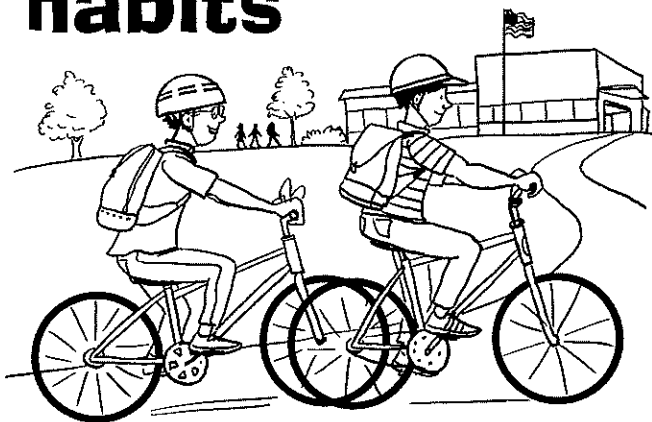
Eating right and getting enough exercise and sleep will make your tween or teen healthier—and help him do better in school. Share these tips for starting the new year with healthy routines.

### Make breakfast ahead of time

A nutritious breakfast will help your teen focus in class. If busy mornings cause him to skip breakfast, suggest that he prep food the night before. He might hard-boil eggs to eat with whole-grain toast. Or he could layer nonfat yogurt and fresh or frozen fruit in a glass, cover his “parfait” with foil, and refrigerate overnight.

### Get outside daily

Kids who spend time outdoors tend to be more fit. Offer to play catch with your tween after work. Or encourage him to start or join pickup games at the local



basketball court. *Idea:* For a surefire way to get outdoors five days a week, your teen could walk or bike to and from school with friends, if possible.

### Sleep for success

With enough sleep (at least 8–10 hours each night), your teenager will have more energy for learning and physical activity. Have him establish a relaxing routine that helps him get to sleep around the same time each night. For instance, he could put away screens an hour before bed and listen to music or read. ♡

## Motivated to move

Is your teen getting at least 60 minutes of exercise each day? Help her find the motivation to get or stay active with these strategies.

● **Buddy up.** Planning physical activity with friends can keep your teenager accountable. Plus, shared workouts are an excellent time to catch up in real life (rather than by text or on social media). She and a friend might make up dance routines or practice soccer drills.

● **Perfect the playlist.** Why watch the clock when she can work out with a musical “timer”? Your teen could make a playlist to match the length of her workout. Suggest that she put slower songs at the beginning and end for warming up and cooling down, then pack the middle with upbeat songs to get her heart pumping! ♡



## FEDERAL INCOME GUIDELINES FREE OR REDUCED PRICED MEALS

Remember at any time during the school year if your family situation changes your children may qualify for the free or reduced meal program if your household income falls at or below the limits of this chart.

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Household size	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly
1	23,107	1,926	445
2	31,284	2,607	602
3	39,461	3,289	759
4	47,638	3,970	917
5	55,815	4,652	1,074
6	63,992	5,333	1,231
7	72,169	6,015	1,388
8	80,346	6,696	1,546
Each additional person:	+8,177	+682	+158

### PARENT TO PARENT

## Excited about school lunch

My daughter Tara started a new school this year, and she wanted to pack lunch to make sure she'd have food she liked. I'd rather she get lunch at school, since it will be healthier—and certainly more convenient.

I suggested that we look at the cafeteria menu to check out the choices. Tara found lots of options that sounded good to her like chicken wraps and vegetable lo mein. The menu also included unfamiliar but interesting foods, such as broccoli and cheese nuggets and bean empanadas. Best of all in her eyes, there was a salad bar.

Tara is realizing that cafeteria meals give her a bigger variety of healthy options than packing—and getting lunch in school sure makes mornings easier. ●

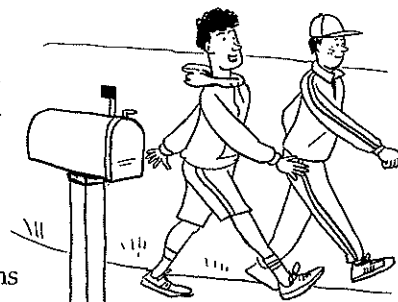


### ACTIVITY CORNER

## Step it up

Everyday activities like enjoying a good book and checking the mail are great opportunities for your teen to get in more steps. Share these suggestions.

- **Listen and learn.** Your teenager can walk around a track or on a safe trail while he listens to an audiobook or an interesting podcast.
- **Take study breaks.** Between subjects or chapters, your teen could walk up and down the stairs of your home or apartment building.
- **Head to the mailbox.** Put your teenager in charge of checking the mail, and suggest that he take a loop around the block while he's at it. Also, instead of emailing friends or relatives, he could write actual letters—then take another trip to the mailbox to send them. ●



### In the Kitchen

## Lettuce-less salads

Inspire your teen to explore vegetables other than lettuce as the star of his next salad.

### Corn, avocado, and tomato

**Dressing:** 2 tbsp. olive oil,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup lime juice, salt, pepper

**Salad:** 1 cup corn (fresh or frozen), 1 pint cherry tomatoes (halved), 1 small diced avocado, 2 tbsp. crumbled feta cheese

### Brussels sprouts and apple

**Dressing:**  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup olive oil,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup fresh lemon juice, 1 tbsp. honey, salt, pepper

**Salad:** 1 lb. thinly sliced

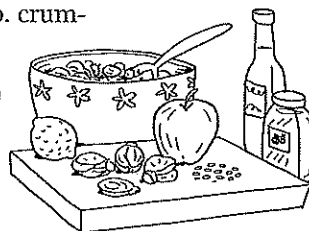
brussels sprouts, 1 thinly sliced Fuji apple,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sunflower seeds

### Roasted carrot and parsnip

**Dressing:** 1 tbsp. olive oil,  $\frac{1}{2}$  tbsp. apple cider vinegar

**Salad:** 4 roasted carrots, 4 roasted parsnips, 4 cups raw spinach, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup chopped walnuts. (To roast, peel and

cut carrots and parsnips into 1-inch pieces. Toss with 2 tbsp. olive oil and a pinch of salt and pepper, and bake 35 minutes at 425°.) ●



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