

# Snacks can be fun and nutritious

BY SUZANNE KEENE

**LANCASTER** — With summer vacation rapidly approaching, now is a good time to start planning some nutritious snacks for those hot, sticky afternoons when your child comes to you with a hungry tummy.

While serving traditional junk foods might be the quickest and easiest way of satisfying your child's cries for a snack, it probably isn't the best way.

Before you reach in the refrigerator and pull out a soda or serve your little ones candy bars and cookies, stop to think about their daily nutritional needs and the damage that sugar can do to their teeth.

Your child needs a varied diet with foods from each of the four food groups: Meat, fish, poultry eggs or other protein equivalents; Milk and dairy products; Fruits and vegetables; and Breads and cereals. There's no need to give your child empty calories - calories that contain little or no food value - at snack time. You can serve a variety of tasty snacks that will contribute essential vitamins and minerals to his diet.

A quick look inside your pantry and refrigerator will probably yield most of the ingredients you need to prepare a quick, nutritious snack. Peanut butter, dried milk, and fresh fruits and vegetables are some, but certainly not all, of the things you can use.

Just because the snack is a nutritious one, doesn't mean that it won't taste good or that it won't be fun to prepare. A child can help prepare the snacks listed below that were designed with kids in mind. The next time your child comes to you for a snack, try one of the following recipes from 4-H.

## BUGS ON A LOG

- 3 stalks celery
- 1 grated carrot
- 2 tablespoons peanut butter
- 1 tablespoon nonfat dry milk
- 24 raisins

Wash the celery and cut into 3-inch sections. Scrub and grate the carrot. Mix the peanut butter, dry milk and carrot in a small bowl. Use a knife to stuff celery with mixture. Place two raisins on top. Serve with a glass of milk.

## SUPER APPLE SANDWICH

- 1 apple, sliced and cored
- 1 tablespoon nonfat dry milk
- 2 tablespoons peanut butter

Wash the apple. Mix dry milk and peanut butter in a small bowl. Slice the apple into four sections. Remove the core. Spread mixture over one slice and top with another. Makes two sandwiches. Serve with a glass of milk.

## A NEST OF GOLD

- 2 cups finely grated carrots
- ¼ cup raisins plumped in lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- ¼ cup salad dressing or mayonnaise
- 3 or 4 grapes, berries, peanuts or cottage cheese
- 4 crisp lettuce leaves

Combine raisins and lemon juice in a small dish. Wash, scrub and carefully grate carrots. Combine carrots, raisins and dressing in a bowl and chill. Place ½ cup of the carrot mixture on a crisp lettuce leaf on a plate. Shape the carrots into little nests. Wash grapes or berries, shell peanuts or shape cottage cheese with a small spoon. Put "eggs" into the nests. Serve with crackers and a drink.

## STRAWBERRY FLOAT

- ½ cup strawberries, fresh or frozen
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1½ cup milk
- 2 scoops ice cream

Place strawberries into a mixing bowl and mash. Add sugar and stir until dissolved. Put mixture into jar. Add milk and close the lid tightly. Shake until foamy. Pour half of the mixture into each glass. Top with a scoop of ice cream. A banana float is just as good. Use a small banana.



Two-year-old Carolyn Koser puts the finishing touches on her "Bugs on a Log" snack. Her snack also includes two apple sandwiches and a glass of cold milk.

A child can easily prepare many of these recipes, but before he begins his project, make sure he's familiar with the following list of cooking tips for kids from Betty Crocker.

- Wear an apron and wash your hands.
- Read the recipe all the way through.
- Take out all the pans and utensils you will need.
- Take out all ingredients and measure them.

- Be sure your mother is in the kitchen when you cook.
- Ask your mother to help you use sharp knives, can opener, electric mixer or broiler.
- Ask her to measure and pour very hot liquids for you.
- When you pare vegetables, always point the sharp edge of the knife away from your hands.
- When you chop or slice foods, use a wooden cutting board.

• When you're through cooking, wash your dishes, put them away, wash the counters and leave the kitchen clean and neat. Make sure the range and the oven are turned off.

These are just a few suggestions for nutritious snacks that kids can make. With a little thought, you'll probably be able to invent some new ones of your own.

# BACK HOME

By Michelle S. Rodgers

Lancaster Extension Home Economist



## Strawberries and Readiness

It's soon the time of year to put on your shorts or an old pair of jeans, find those little wooden boxes and head for the garden. It's strawberry picking time.

Picking strawberries wasn't always my favorite job. However, as I've gotten older I seem to appreciate the rich Lancaster County earth, full of healthy growing things (weeds included).

One thing I learned early was that you pick only the ripe strawberries — the "ready" ones. You never pick the green and white ones. You always keep them attached to the vine until they're ready. That's the way nature works! The first strawberries always are delectable, but it doesn't mean they are always better. They are just ready sooner.

You can't rush growth, strawberries need the gift of time.

It is fairly easy to understand readiness when we are talking strawberries. It is always harder to understand readiness when we think about children. As children grow and develop the readiness questions change from: When is the right time to expect my child to walk, talk, read or be toilet trained? Older children bring questions such as, when is my child ready to handle certain responsibilities, to date, to drive? Maybe understand readiness in children is more difficult to understand because we are emotionally involved. We are not emotionally involved with strawberries.

New experiences can contribute to building confidence and security in a child. Exposing children to new experiences prepares a child for new growth and new abilities. Having new experiences such as going to nursery school, visiting a grocery store, or trying a new game will help a child develop more confidence. This is true if we accept and respect the child's level of readiness for each experience. The need to understand and accept your child's readiness for an experience is as important with everyday experiences as with new experiences.

Children can't be ready before they're ready. It is just another law of nature.

Children and strawberries may

# Today's family is changing, but not falling apart

**ITHACA, NY** — Many people point to the divorce rate in this country and the number of women working outside the home, and conclude that the American family is falling apart.

In fact, though, a smaller proportion of today's children live in single-parent homes than in the past, and the number of marriages being disrupted actually has declined, according to Edward Kain, an assistant professor of human development and family studies at Cornell University.

Rather than concluding that current trends signal a demise of the American family, Kain is more positive. He views family changes in a context that includes the past.

"We live in a world of rapid change. It is not surprising that families have been changing in response to the world around them," Kain says. "To understand problems that face families in contemporary America, it's important to understand families in the past."

The divorce rate, for example, has increased, but the mortality rate of middle-aged parents has decreased. In 1900, one in four children had a parent die before the child reached 15 years of age; in 1976, only one in 20 children experienced the death of a parent before reaching the same age.

"While increases in the divorce

rate have indeed meant that more children live in families of divorce, a smaller proportion of today's children live with one parent because mortality rates have declined so drastically," Kain explains.

Similarly, although more couples divorce today, fewer spouses actually experience disrupted marriages, also due to the declining mortality rate. In 1900, seven out of every 10 marriages were interrupted by death or divorce within the first 40 years of marriage. In 1976, despite the large increases in the divorce rate, only six in 10 marriages were disrupted.

"Thus, there actually has been a decline in the number of people who suffer the trauma of marital disruption," Kain states. "The difference today is that marriages are much more likely to end in divorce than in death of one of the partners."

The entire context of marriages has also changed, Kain says. A woman born in 1786 spent about seven married years with no children in the household. A woman born in 1890 spent about 18 child-free years of marriage. A typical woman today, however, can expect more than 30 years of marriage with no children in the household.

"Marriage clearly means something different today," Kain says. "It involves much more time spent in an interpersonal relationship with only one other person. Thus, the meaning of divorce is very different than it was in the past."

Some people claim that American families are in trouble because they no longer hold the traditional family values of the past. Kain believes that this is an unrealistic representation of the past.

"Our image of families in the past often is based upon myth; we tend to idealize yesteryear's

(Turn to Page B15)

