

BETTER LUNCHES

~by Katherine Biederman, CWS Parent

One of the ways we can reduce our consumption, save money, eat better, and keep our campus cleaner is by packing nutritious lunches in reusable containers. The next several issues of Inreach will feature excerpts from a flyer from the company Laptop Lunches. Our family was introduced to Laptop Lunches in first grade by teacher Kyle Arthur. The founders, Amy Hemmert and Tammy Pelstring, are 2 California moms concerned about the poor nutrition and wasteful packaging seen in many lunches brought from home. They started a company whose mission is to help parents pack wholesome, low-waste lunches by providing them with a lunch system that is not only convenient and economical, but also appealing to kids. Their website has lots of information and ideas that are valuable to anyone packing a lunch!

MAKING LUNCH? MAKE IT NUTRITIOUS! MAKE IT WASTE-FREE!

~by Amy Hemmert and Tammy Pelstring

If you're like us, you start the school year with enthusiastic plans to send your kids to school with lunches that are nutritious, affordable, and easy to make. You promise that you'll plan ahead. You'll put more effort into it. You'll cut out the junk. But somehow mid-year finds us settled once again into our old lunch-making routine, frustrated and in search of fresh ideas. But do not despair...making fresh lunches may not be as difficult as you think. Try some of these ideas:

- Pack lunches the night before and store them in the refrigerator overnight.
- Maximize leftovers. Prepare extra servings at dinnertime for the next day's lunches. Pack the leftovers in lunchboxes in the evening when you're doing your regular dinner clean up.
- Elicit the help of your children. Teach them how to make nutritious, waste-free lunches. Even a small child can help put carrots into a container or fill a water bottle. As they grow, give them more responsibility.
- Keep fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and other nutritious foods on hand.
- Keep nuts (for older children) and dried fruit on hand for emergencies.
- Buy from bulk bins to reduce your costs. (Read ingredient labels carefully!)
- Make sure you have a set of containers that your child likes and can open easily.
- Write your child's name on all containers before they leave the house.

For more information on packing nutritious lunches, tips for picky eaters, nutritional requirements and more, visit www.laptoplunches.com.

MAKING LUNCH? MAKE IT NUTRITIOUS!

–by Amy Hemmert and Tammy Pelstring (of Laptop Lunches)

What to Pack!

- ✓ Fresh fruits and vegetables. Make sure your child eats at least 2-3 servings of dark green, red, and orange vegetables daily. Purchase organic locally grown produce whenever possible. Fresh fruits and vegetables provide fiber and a variety of vitamins & minerals and help reduce the risk of diabetes, constipation, and some types of cancer; and they can lower blood cholesterol. And, people who eat high-fiber foods are less likely to overeat.
- ✓ Whole-grain breads, crackers, bagels, muffins, pita, lavash, tortillas, rice, pasta, and cereal instead of white varieties. Whole-grains provide vitamins and minerals, fiber, and protein.
- ✓ Beans, nuts, and whole grains for protein instead of meat, eggs, and whole-milk dairy products. They contain more fiber, less fat, and fewer preservatives. Avoid the milk and meat from animals that have been treated with hormones and antibiotics.
- ✓ Water instead of juice, fruit-flavored drinks, fruit punch, or soda. Water is what our bodies need. When children fill up on sugary drinks, they may not have room for more nutritious choices, and sodas deplete the body of much needed calcium.
- ✓ Limit fats, especially hydrogenated and partially hydrogenated oils.
- ✓ Limit sweets. In addition to the increased risk of obesity, excess sugar consumption is thought to depress immunity. It has been linked to diabetes and heart disease and may increase the risk of cancer. Sugar consumption can also increase the incidence of tooth decay.
- ✓ Limit sodium. Sodium increases the risk of high blood pressure and stroke.

These may sound like big changes, but taking one step at a time makes it manageable. After all, children who eat well tend to have lower obesity rates and are less likely to suffer from diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease—and they tend to concentrate better in school!

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