

Suggestions for Healthy Food Choices at Early Learning Sponsored Events

The following are lists of recommended food choices for Early Learning Program sponsored events to provide culturally appropriate, healthier foods and beverage choices for breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks and receptions.

Food suggestions for breakfast

- Fresh fruit
- Low-fat breakfast burrito
- Yogurt - low or non-fat
- Hard cooked eggs
- Whole wheat or multi-grain mini bagels (or cut regular bagels in half)
- Small muffins (2-1/2" or smaller) - bran, oatmeal, or multi-grain (large muffins can be cut into smaller portion sizes)
- Fruit quick breads (i.e., oatmeal, banana, pumpkin) - cut into small pieces
- Whole grain toast or English muffins
- Offer low-fat (LF) cheese, LF cream cheese, peanut butter, jam or jelly
- Granola bars - low fat (5 grams of fat or less/bar)
- Low-fat granola
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice (4 - 6 ounce portions)
- Water -- plain, sparkling or flavored with no added sugar
- Coffee, tea (offer decaf) - served with nonfat or 1% milk

Food suggestions for lunch and dinner

- Leaf lettuce or vegetable salad with low-fat dressing on the side
- Soups - vegetarian broth based, or skim milk based (not cream)
- Pasta, bean, rice or quinoa salad with vegetables and low-fat dressing
- Sandwiches made with whole grain breads or wraps made with lean meats, sliced cheese, lettuce, tomato, avocado
- 2-3 ounce serving - lean meats, poultry, (3 grams fat/oz) or hummus/bean dip
- Steamed vegetables with herbs/lemon
- Whole grain rolls
- Fresh fruit, canned fruit in fruit juice or light syrup
- Vegetable - fresh or cooked
- Baked potatoes with low fat toppings (low-fat sour cream, low-fat plain yogurt, or salsa)
- Angel food cake (2" square) with fresh fruit topping, low-fat ice cream or frozen yogurt. When serving desserts, offer small serving sizes.
- Boxed lunches/dinners - whole grain or pita bread or wraps prepared with low-fat mayonnaise; meats, poultry or marinated tofu
- low-fat cheese (low-fat = 3 g fat/oz), fruit or veggies instead of chips or, if including chips, request pretzels or baked chips (7 g fat or less/oz).
- Water - plain, sparkling or flavored with no added sugar
- Coffee, tea (offer decaf) - served with nonfat or 1% milk

Food suggestions for snacks (AM or PM):

Consider whether it is necessary to provide food at group/parent meetings, especially mid-morning and mid-afternoon. Sometimes water and tea is enough.

- Fresh fruit plates or small whole fruit
- Raw vegetables - if providing, choose non-fat, low-fat dips or salsa
- Pretzels, hot pretzels cut in pieces or baked chips (7 grams of fat or less/ounce)
- Seltzer water with lemon and lime or pitchers of ice water flavored with cucumber
- Low fat cheese, string cheese
- Granola bars - low fat (5 grams of fat or less/bar)
- "Lite" popcorn (lightly salted)
- Whole grain crackers
- Trail Mix made with dried fruit, pumpkin/sunflower seed and sesame sticks, Chex cereals
- Dried fruit
- Corn chips and salsa
- Coffee, tea (offer decaf) - served with nonfat or 1% milk

Food suggestions for receptions

- Fresh fruit - cut up and offered with low-fat yogurt dip
- Raw vegetable salads marinated in Italian dressing or Lite Ranch dressing
- Vegetable sushi rolls
- Cheese slices, small cubes, sticks
- Herbed low-fat cream cheese spread
- Plain or flavored Hummus
- Whole grain crackers, pita bread, tiny bagels,
- Lean beef or turkey - 1 ounce slices
- Miniature meatballs in tomato or teriyaki sauce
- Mushroom caps with low-fat cheese stuffing
- Miniature pizzas made with English muffins, tomato sauce, mozzarella cheese, and mushrooms
- Trail Mix made with dried fruit, pumpkin/sunflower seed and sesame sticks, Chex cereals

Adopted from Public Health Seattle King County, Healthy Food Choices for Meetings,
<http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/nutrition/meetings.aspx>, June 10, 2014