

Bring a healthy plate



As a parent, you may often be asked to bring a plate of food for a school, playgroup or sporting event. Taking a healthy plate is a good way to enjoy food as part of a celebration and a great chance for children to try new foods.

Try to include **‘everyday’** foods such as fruit, vegetables, dairy foods, breads and cereals and meat and meat alternatives (e.g. eggs).

‘Occasional’ foods such as biscuits, lollies and chips should be kept for special occasions at home and are not encouraged at social events. Try some of the following ideas:

Simple but tasty:

- Sliced melon – try watermelon, rockmelon or honeydew melon.
- A large bunch of grapes.
- Wholemeal or multigrain crackers and dip e.g. hommus or salsa.
- Fruit bread or fruit bun fingers.
- Celery boats – fill celery sticks with cottage cheese and dot with sultanas.

When you have more time:

- Mini pizzas – top wholemeal English muffins with tomato paste, grated cheese and vegetables. Try tomato, pineapple, spinach, mushrooms, capsicum and onion.
- Fruit or vegetable pikelets, scones or mini muffins.
- Vegetable sticks and dip. Try snow peas, baby carrots, capsicum, cucumber, celery and cherry tomatoes.
- Tiger sandwiches – layer different types of bread e.g. wholemeal, multigrain, rye and white bread and fill with salad fillings.

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- Traffic lights – thread cherry tomatoes, cheese cubes and cucumber slices onto kebab sticks.
- Pita chips – cut pita bread into triangles, sprinkle with grated cheese and bake in a moderate oven until crispy. Serve with dip.
- Fruit kebabs – thread soft fruit onto kebab or icy pole sticks. Try kiwi fruit, strawberries, grapes, melon, orange and banana.
- Mini vegetable frittatas. Add lots of vegetables such as tomato, mushrooms, spinach, capsicum, sweet potato, onion and corn.
- Savoury toast – use wholemeal or wholegrain bread and add lots of vegetables.
- Nibble plate – try cheese cubes, vegetable sticks, fresh or dried fruit, boiled eggs, mini meatballs, wholemeal or wholegrain crackers and dip.
- Survival pack – fill individual bags with plain popcorn, dried fruit and breakfast cereal e.g. Mini-wheats®.

To drink:

- Make sure there is plenty of cold water to drink.

Remember food safety:

- Wash fresh vegetables and fruits well before using.
- Take care with foods like dips, chicken, meat and egg which can allow fast bacterial growth.
- Chill food well before packing. Do not transport food if it has just been cooked or is still warm.
- Use a frozen ice brick and insulated cooler bag to transport food.
- Cover all ready to eat food well.