



A Family Life and Resource Management  
Newsletter

Season's Cleaning!

Winter 2006

During the holidays, your desire for a clean home is usually at odds with a busy schedule of shopping and socializing. A thorough cleaning before the season begins will give you a head start. Then follow up with keep-on-top-of-it tips.

- ▲ **Take inventory.** Make sure you're well-stocked with cleaning supplies. Store most frequently used items in containers that are easy to carry from room-to-room.
- ▲ **Double up.** A full set of cleaning supplies on each floor of your home makes for easy spot cleaning.
- ▲ **Wipe Down.** Disposable wipes are easy to use. Keep containers of pop-up disinfectant wipes handy, so everyone can use them. Stash dry, disposable electrostatic wipes around the house, so it's easy to make dust disappear.

- ▲ **Spray Away.** Use a daily shower cleaner to keep shower and tub surfaces free of soap scum, mildew and hard-water deposits. Mist the surfaces right after showering, while the walls are still wet and warm.
- ▲ **Freshen up.** A spray-on fabric refresher helps to remove odors, including those from cigarette smoke, cooking, and perfume on soft, hard-to-wash surfaces, such as carpets, upholstery, and curtains. It's great to use pre- and post-party!
- ▲ **Carpet call.** Place rugs or mats at all entrances to catch dirt and grit that family and guests track in. Frequent vacuuming helps keep your wall-to-wall and area carpets in shape!
- ▲ **Collect coasters.** Keep them ready and available for family and guests. Use them under beverage glasses and cups to prevent rings and water spots on your wood surfaces.

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*Quotable Quote*

"The Greatest gift at Christmastime is one we all may give —

A friendly smile that helps to make life easier to live."

Chatting with Kathy

Hello! If you are a long time recipient of this newsletter, you'll notice a name change. The change from "Managing Your Life" to "Solutions For Your Life", is an attempt to more closely reflect the content of this newsletter. We're hoping the articles will help you find solutions to some of the every day issues you encounter.

Seasons Greetings! As you make preparations for this holiday season, I hope you take time to enjoy the little things. Take each day one at a time and live it not as if it was your last, but as if it's your first, your best, your only day. We've witnessed much tragedy in our world, but we must remember the list of things to be thankful for is still very long. So love generously, give generously to others, and count your blessings daily.



*Kathy M. Bryant*

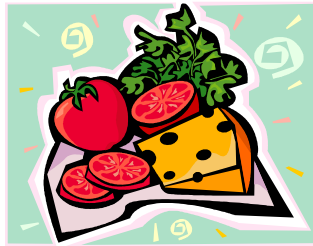
Extension Agent  
Family & Consumer Sciences

## Healthy Snacks for Children

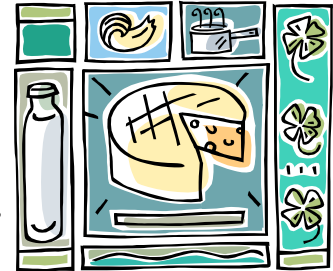
Serving healthy snacks to our children is important to providing good nutrition for growth and development, supporting lifelong healthy eating habits, and preventing costly and potentially-disabling diseases, like heart disease, cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure, and obesity.

Snacks are a bigger part of kids' diets than in the past. Snacks can make positive or negative contributions depending on the choices we offer. Below are ideas of healthy snacks for teachers, caregivers, children's programs, and parents to serve to children in the classroom, in after-school programs, at soccer games, home, and elsewhere.

- ▲ **Fruits and Vegetables**—Almost all of the snacks served to children should be fruits or vegetables. Do taste tests or let kids choose (or vote for) new fruits and vegetables to try. Fruit can be served whole, sliced, cut in half, cubed, or in wedges. Canned, frozen, and dried fruits are easy and usually need little preparation. Healthy options include: fresh fruits and vegetables; frozen fruit; applesauce, fruit cups or canned fruit (in juice or light syrup); dried fruit and fruit leathers (without added sugars); fruit salad; fruit juice popsicles; and home-made smoothies. Vegetables can be served with dips like hummus, bean dip, or salad dressing. They can also be served in salads or as veggie pockets in whole wheat pita bread.



- ▲ **Healthy Grains** (whole grains low in fats and sugars) - Serve mostly whole grains; they provide more fiber, vitamins, and minerals than refined grains. Whole wheat (or other whole grain) should be the first ingredient listed. Healthy whole grain options can include: English muffins, pitas, or tortillas; breakfast cereal; crackers; rice cakes; popcorn; tortilla chips; granola; cereal bars; breadsticks; or flatbreads. Refined grains, such as pretzels and goldfish crackers, should not be everyday offerings. Be sure to read nutrition labels to pick options that are low in sugars, saturated fat, and trans fat.
- ▲ **Low-Fat Dairy Foods**—To protect children's bones and hearts, make sure all dairy foods are low-fat or fat-free, such as yogurt and low-fat pudding. Since cheese is the #2 source of heart-damaging saturated fat in children's diets, choose lower-fat cheeses, serve small portions, and serve cheese with other foods like fruit, vegetables, or whole grain crackers.
- ▲ **Nuts and Trail Mix**—Since nuts are high in calories, it is best to serve small portions (a small handful) and serve them along with another snack, such as fruit.



## Exercise Habits Should Start Early

When children are young, parents have a great opportunity to harness the natural energy children have and instill lifelong habits which will keep them active as they grow older. Regular exercise is as important for children as it is for adults because the problem of obesity affects both groups. In the 1970s, only about five percent of children were overweight. Today, at least 15 percent of children are overweight.

By encouraging children to be active, parents can help prevent health risks associated with childhood obesity. Children who are overweight have measurable differences in blood pressure and cholesterol levels compared to children with a healthy weight. The rise in childhood diabetes is almost certainly linked to being overweight and/or inactivity. An obese child is more likely to become an obese adult and suffer from heart disease, stroke, arthritis and some cancers.

**Be Your Child's Role Model:**

The federal government's dietary guidelines suggest that children and adolescents should be physically active for at least 60 minutes on most days, if not every day. Parents can encourage children to meet this goal more effectively by setting a good example, rather than telling children what to do. If parents want to give a reason for why people should be active, they should focus on the need to feel good and stay healthy, instead of drawing attention to a child's image. There are many ways parents can model good health behaviors and get some healthy benefits, too.

Some ideas are:

- ▲ Put your very young child in a stroller and go for a walk. Or strap your child into a bicycle carrier with a helmet and go for a ride.
- ▲ If your child can ride a bicycle, jog alongside or get on your own bicycle.
- ▲ Limit the amount of time you watch television. By doing this, you will find it easier to limit the amount of time your child watches TV, movies, or video and computer games. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends a maximum of two hours of viewing time for children each day.
- ▲ Stretch or exercise while watching TV.
- ▲ Engage the whole family in physical activities, like Frisbee, playing catch, hiking, gardening, swimming or rollerblading.
- ▲ Sign up for exercise classes like kickboxing or join a sports team. Then sign your children up for classes or team sports.
- ▲ Give children rewards, such as a basketball, that encourage them to be more active.



## Keeping Colds and Flu Away

Holiday activities can often leave everyone over-stressed, under-rested and exposed to a lot of germs! Colds and flu seem to be an inescapable part of the season. But, the good news is there are simple lines of defense against these illnesses.

Hands are the most common spreaders of germs. Often warm and moist, they provide the perfect place for germs to live. And, because they're constantly touching things, hands pick up germs easily. The number one deterrent to spreading germs from your hands is washing them regularly and thoroughly with warm water and soap. Be sure to wash hands before and after food preparation, as well as after coughing or sneezing, using the bathroom, changing diapers and playing with pets.



To encourage frequent hand washing among family and guests, place hand soap, clean cloth towels or paper towels within easy reach at every sink in your home. Also, place tissue boxes and bottles of antibacterial gels or disposable, antimicrobial wipes throughout your home. Install them in bathrooms, powder rooms, bedrooms, family rooms, and next to the kitchen sink. Easy-to-find wastebaskets will make it easy for everyone to properly dispose of germ-laden tissues and wipes.

Germs on your hands can also make their way to surfaces, such as light switches, doorknobs, refrigerator handles, faucet handles, remote controls, telephone and computer keyboards. Clean these surfaces regularly with disinfectant wipes or sprays. If using a spray, apply the product to a paper towel first, then wipe the surface.

Additional ways to help prevent colds and flu include: eating a balanced diet, getting enough sleep, and exercising regularly. These activities can help your immune system better fight off the germs that cause illness.

**VOLUSIA COUNTY  
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA  
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE**

3100 E New York Avenue  
DeLand, Florida 32724

386-257-6012 - Daytona Beach  
386-822-5778 - DeLand  
386-423-3368 - New Smyrna Beach



*Volusia County/University of Florida Extension gives leadership to family-focused informal education through the Family and Consumer Sciences program. Dedicated to strengthening families through education, we believe the family is the most effective unit for building strong communities. The family has the right to meet basic needs and to make choices about its future, and is inter-dependent within communities and their environment. Extension strives to achieve this through a variety of formats, including:*

- *Workshops & presentations*
- *Newsletters and fact sheets*
- *Telephone consultations*
- *Learn-by mail correspondence courses*



**Cleaning Cutting Boards**

**Q: I just used my cutting board to prepare raw meat for a holiday feast. How should I clean the cutting board to help prevent food borne illnesses?**

**A.** Raw meat, poultry, and seafood contain harmful bacteria. To help prevent the spread of bacteria, you should thoroughly wash the cutting board and any other dishes and utensils that came in contact with these raw foods. Use soap and hot water. You can also disinfect the cutting board using chlorine bleach.



**Avian Influenza/Bird Flu**

**Q: Is it safe to eat poultry and poultry products?**

**A:** Avian Influenza is not transmitted through cooked food. To date, no evidence indicates that anyone has become infected following the consumption of properly cooked poultry or poultry products, even when these foods were contaminated with the H5N1 virus. Good food handling practices and procedures in place to control Salmonella are also effective in controlling Avian Influenza.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), poultry and poultry products are safe to eat. In areas free of the disease, such as in the United States, poultry and poultry products can be prepared and consumed as usual, following good hygienic practices and proper cooking, with no fear of acquiring infection with the H5N1 virus.