

ANCS Elementary: Parent Snack Tips

Thanks to our wonderful parents, ANCS Elementary students are provided with a healthy afternoon snack to keep their brains and bodies energized for the remainder of the school day. Parents volunteer to bring snacks for the classroom based on a schedule coordinated by your teachers or a snack coordinator parent.

Our Favorite Snacks

Based on teacher feedback, these are some of the most popular snacks among our students:

- | | | |
|--|---------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Fruit | 4. Gold Fish | 9. Yogurt “squeezers” |
| ❖ Pre-washed and cut-up (if needed) | 5. Graham Crackers | 10. Mini Sandwiches |
| 2. String Cheese | 6. Carrot / Celery Sticks | ❖ Cream cheese & Jelly |
| 3. Crackers | 7. Applesauce | ❖ Turkey & Cheese |
| | 8. Mini Bagels | ❖ Cucumber & Cheese |

The best snacks have simple, recognizable ingredients. Whenever possible please try to avoid artificial colors and sweeteners, high fructose corn syrup, and partially hydrogenated oils. You may also super-charge your snacks by combining a protein with a complex carbohydrate. Combinations such as cheese and whole grain crackers, mini sandwiches, graham crackers and nut butter (providing the class has no nut allergies), or fruit or veggies with a dairy-based dip or hummus can provide a great source of balanced nutrition and sustained energy. Your teachers may provide you with additional snack ideas based on class preferences.

Convenience!

Convenience is very important to our teachers. **Snacks should be easy to serve and quick to clean-up.** For this reason teachers commonly use school-supplied coffee filters to distribute snacks. For snacks that require the use of plates, bowls or utensils (such as dips, yogurt, cottage cheese, etc.), or anything that needs additional prep before serving, ask your teachers ahead of time if they can accommodate. Students love creative snacks, but we want to be sure that it can work based on the available time and resources in the classroom.

Serving Size

School-aged children require **100-200 calories per snack.** You may refer to the **Nutrition Facts** on a packaged item for serving size and caloric information. For produce, the typical serving is a **small piece of fruit** (such as a small apple or pear) or a **half-cup of a cut-up fruit or vegetable** (carrots, pineapple, or melon, for example). There really is no one-size-fits-all rule for serving size so we leave it to you to use your best judgment. Your teachers will ensure that the snack is distributed to the class based on the quantity provided.

Preparation and Storage

Fresh fruits and vegetables should be thoroughly washed. Ideally, anything requiring a knife to portion should be cut-up in advance. Some of our classrooms have a mini-refrigerator, but all teachers have access to refrigeration and can keep **1-2 days of fresh items stored.** For pantry items, available storage space can vary in the classroom. **Please speak to your teachers if you would like to store more than 2 days of snacks.**

Allergies and Special Dietary Considerations

Allergies and special dietary considerations vary by classroom. **You will be notified if there are any ingredients to avoid entirely due to food allergies.** Depending on the allergy, food sensitivity or special diet, some parents may choose to provide their own snack or a backup snack for their student on a daily basis. Please follow the allergy guidelines set up for your classroom.

ANCS Elementary: Parent Snack Tips

Helpful Links

The ANCS Health and Wellness Committee offers the following links for those interested in exploring nutrition topics:

1. Selecting local, seasonal produce as a cost effective way to bring fresh fruit and veggies for snack time:
 - http://www.gfb.org/commodities/cfm/harvest_calendar.html
 - <http://www.epicurious.com/articlesguides/seasonalcooking/farmtotable/seasonalingredientmap>
2. Limiting exposure to pesticides in conventionally grown produce:
 - <http://www.organic.org/articles/showarticle/article-214>
3. Food allergy information and common childhood food allergies:
 - <http://www.foodallergy.org/about-food-allergies>
 - http://kidshealth.org/parent/growth/feeding/food_allergies.html#
4. Sizing up carbohydrates and sugars:
 - <http://kidshealth.org/parent/growth/feeding/sugar.html#>
5. Protein requirements for kids:
 - http://kidshealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/food/protein.html#
6. Artificial coloring and artificial sweeteners in processed foods and other food additives:
 - <http://cspinet.org/new/pdf/food-dyes-rainbow-of-risks.pdf>
 - <http://www.cspinet.org/reports/chemcuisine.htm>