

BREAK FOR BREAKFAST

Breakfast really is the most important meal of the day. Research has shown that kids who eat breakfast get better grades, pay more attention in class, and behave better. Eating a healthy, nutritious breakfast provides the nutrients and energy (fuel) kids need to concentrate in school. Research has also shown that 25% of middle school students do not eat breakfast.

Excuses for not eating: Got up late, can't eat before exercising (athletics), tired of eating the same thing. All of these are common excuses but not reasonable ones. If it is hard for you to manage getting yourself and your kids ready in the morning, try these ideas:

1. Set the alarm to allow 10-15 unhurried minutes for breakfast
2. Breakfast bars, granola or cereal bars are easy to eat in the car
3. Frozen waffles or pancakes are quick and easy to toast. Add peanut butter or cheese for added protein.
4. Schools provide breakfast at a low cost
5. If your child cannot eat before exercise such as athletics, give them a breakfast bar, granola or cereal bar to eat after athletics is over.
6. Ask your kids to help you decide what breakfast foods to buy that they will eat. Take them to the store with you. Give them guidelines about what to choose. Avoid high sugar items such as donuts and cereals with added sugar.

Carbohydrates boost energy and help your child jump-start the day. Proteins keep the body going strong until lunch time. Give your child a mix of proteins and carbohydrates for breakfast. Good sources of protein are milk, yogurt, cottage cheese, eggs, cheese and meat. Good carbohydrate sources are whole-grain cereals, fruit and whole wheat bread.

Older children & teens are capable of fixing their own breakfast. If you have to leave your house before your children do, put out the breakfast items they can safely fix. This simple step will help prevent the excuses often heard at school: "There wasn't any food", "I did not know where to find the food" or "My parents were not home".

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