

# News Notes To Parents

Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service of Wells County

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## Breakfast: Key to Growing Healthy

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Breakfast is an important meal for growing children. Studies show that breakfast eaters tend to have higher school attendance, less tardiness and fewer hunger-induced stomach aches in the morning. Their overall test scores are higher, they concentrate better, solve problems more

easily and have better muscle coordination.

Children who eat breakfast also are more likely to maintain a healthy weight and get enough calcium, too. Whether your children eat at home or at school, be sure they eat a nutritious breakfast every day.

Start your child's day in a healthful direction with a breakfast that incorporates a variety of healthy foods.

Try some of these quick options:

- Peanut butter spread on whole-grain toast
- Iron-fortified cereal topped with fruit and milk
- Instant oatmeal topped with chopped walnuts and blueberries
- Smoothie including milk/juice/water, fruit, spinach, frozen banana and nut butter
- Parfait with layers of yogurt, whole-grain granola and berries

### Make a Breakfast Bar

Let your kids build their own breakfast with a breakfast bar. Similar to a salad bar, a breakfast bar includes a variety of foods to mix and match. Little ones love to create unusual combinations by mixing, stacking and organizing ingredients. Use peanut butter to glue the berries to a waffle. No matter

what nutritious combinations they create, they will love the sense of control a breakfast bar offers.

Here are some ideas:

- Whole-grain cereals, waffles, tortillas, bread or English muffins
- Peanut butter
- Low-fat or fat-free yogurt
- Cottage cheese
- Variety of sliced fruit such as bananas, strawberries, peaches
- Cheese slices and hard-boiled eggs
- Raisins and dried cranberries



If eating breakfast at home simply isn't an option for your child, find out if school breakfast is available. Or pack them a breakfast-to-go that they can eat on the bus or when they get to school. You will not only be encouraging your children to eat nutritiously but fueling their growing bodies and minds for success.

Source: <https://www.eatright.org/food/planning/meals-and-snacks/breakfast-key-to-growing-healthy>

# Sleep and Health

Adequate sleep contributes to a student's overall health and well-being. Students should get the proper amount of sleep at night to help stay focused, improve concentration, and improve academic performance. Children and adolescents who do not get enough sleep have a higher risk for many health problems, including obesity, type 2 diabetes, poor mental health, and injuries.<sup>1-4</sup> They are also more likely to have attention and behavior problems, which can contribute to poor academic performance in school.<sup>1,2</sup>



## What Parents Can Do

- Model and encourage habits that help promote good sleep. Setting a regular bedtime and rise time, including on weekends, is recommended for everyone—children, adolescents, and adults alike. Adolescents with parent-set bedtimes usually get more sleep than those whose parents do not set bedtimes.
- Dim lighting. Adolescents who are exposed to more light (such as room lighting or from electronics) in the evening are less likely to get enough sleep.
- Implement a media curfew. Technology use (computers, video gaming, or mobile phones) may also contribute to late bedtimes. Parents should consider banning technology use after a certain time or removing these technologies from the bedroom.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/sleep.htm>

## Oat-Banana Breakfast Cookies

What kid doesn't want cookies for breakfast? These cookies combine fiber and fruit to result in a great portable kick start for the day.

### Ingredients

3 bananas, peeled  
¼ cup coconut oil, melted  
1 tablespoon maple syrup  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1 ½ cups rolled oats (gluten-free, if needed)  
1 tablespoon golden flaxmeal  
½ teaspoon salt  
¼ cup mini chocolate chips

### Directions

*Before you begin: Wash your hands.*

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (176°C).
2. Place bananas in a medium bowl and mash well. Add remaining ingredients to mashed banana; stir well.
3. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Press 2 tablespoons mixture into a 2 ½-inch cookie cutter. Remove cutter to create a round shape. Repeat with remaining mixture.
4. Bake for 22 to 25 minutes or until cookies are golden and set. Allow to cool before serving.

Source: <https://www.eatright.org/recipes/breakfast/oat-banana-breakfast-cookies>



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