



## Focus on Health Nutrition, and Physical Activity Information for Parents

F.S. 381.0056

St. Johns County School District, Health Services Dept.  
School Year 2026-27



### Nutrition for kids: Guidelines for a Healthy Diet

Source: Mayo Clinic—Dietary Guidelines by age can be found at

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/childrens-health/in-depth/nutrition-for-kids/art-20049335>

Food packed with nutrients — with no or limited sugar, saturated fat, or salt added to it — is considered nutrient dense. Focusing on nutrient-dense foods helps kids get the nutrients they need while limiting overall calories. Consider these nutrient-dense foods:

- **Protein.** Choose seafood, lean meat and poultry, eggs, beans, peas, soy products, and unsalted nuts and seeds.
- **Fruits.** Encourage your child to eat a variety of fresh, canned, frozen or dried fruits. Look for canned fruit that says it's light or packed in its own juice. This means it's low in added sugar. Keep in mind that 1/4 cup of dried fruit counts as one serving of fruit.
- **Vegetables.** Serve a variety of fresh, canned, frozen or dried vegetables. Choose peas or beans, along with colorful vegetables each week. When selecting canned or frozen vegetables, look for ones that are lower in sodium.
- **Grains.** Choose whole grains, such as whole-wheat bread or pasta, oatmeal, popcorn, quinoa, or brown or wild rice.
- **Dairy.** Encourage your child to eat and drink fat-free or low-fat dairy products, such as milk, yogurt and cheese. Fortified soy beverages also count as dairy.

Aim to limit your child's calories from:

- **Added sugar.** Naturally occurring sugars, such as those in fruit and milk, aren't added sugars. Examples of added sugars include brown sugar, corn sweetener, corn syrup and honey. To avoid added sugar, check nutrition labels. Choose cereals with minimal added sugars. Avoid sodas and other drinks with added sugars. Limit juice food, such as red meat, hot dogs, poultry, butter and other full-fat dairy products. Pizza, sandwiches, burgers and burritos are a common source of saturated fat. Desserts such as cakes and ice cream are another common source of saturated fat. When cooking, look for ways to replace saturated fats with vegetable and nut oils, which provide essential fatty acids and vitamin E.
- **Salt.** Most children in the United States have too much salt in their daily diets. Another name for salt is sodium. Salt can hide in sandwiches, where the sodium in bread, meat, condiments and toppings adds up. Processed foods, such as pizza, pasta dishes and soup, often have high amounts of salt. Encourage snacking on fruits and vegetables instead of chips and cookies. Check nutrition labels and look for products low in sodium.



### Making Healthy Snacks—Energy Bites

Source: The Kitchen

#### Directions

- Microwave nut butter and honey until warm (about 30 seconds). Stir in vanilla extract if using and kosher salt until combined.
- Stir in old-fashioned rolled oats, finely chopped roasted nuts, and mini chocolate chips until combined.
- Scoop the mixture out in 1 1/2 tablespoon portions and place on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Roll each portion into a ball (lightly coat your hands with vegetable oil if the mixture is sticky). Refrigerate until firm, about 45 minutes.

**Note:** You can make energy bite mixture up to one day in advance. Cover and refrigerate and then let come to room temperature before rolling into balls the next day.

The energy bites can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to one week or frozen for up to three months.

#### Ingredients

- 3/4 cup smooth nut butter
- 1/3 cup honey
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract (optional)
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 1/2 cups old-fashioned rolled oats
- 1/4 cup finely chopped roasted nuts
- 1/4 cup mini chocolate chips



### School-Aged Children and Adolescents Physical Activity Recommendations

Source: CDC Healthy Schools

<https://www.cdc.gov/physical-activity-education/guidelines/index.html>

Children and adolescents aged 6–17 years should do 60 minutes (one hour) or more of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity daily. Include activities that make their hearts beat faster, build muscles and strengthen bones.

It is important to offer young people options and encouragement to participate in physical activities. The activities should be varied, age appropriate, and enjoyable.

**Aerobic:** Most of the 60 minutes or more per day should be either moderate- or vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity. There should include vigorous-intensity physical activity on at least 3 days a week. This includes brisk walking, running, bicycling, swimming, soccer, basketball.

**Muscle-strengthening:** Children and adolescents should do muscle-strengthening physical activity at least 3 days a week. This includes games such as tug of war, push-ups, some forms of yoga, climbing and swinging on playground equipment.

**Bone-strengthening:** Children and adolescents should include bone-strengthening physical activity at least 3 days a week. This includes hopping, skipping, jump roping, dancing, and gymnastics.