



SERVE SMART APPETIZERS!

If the only kind of “app” your kid knows is available on a cell phone, it’s time to re-familiarize them with the ritual of appetizers, which can also help foster healthy habits.

ENCOURAGE HEALTHY APPETITES WITH APPS

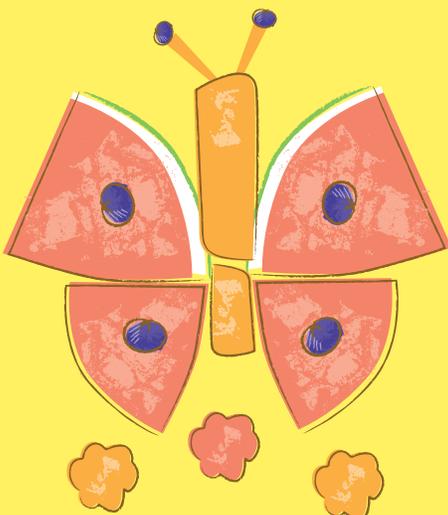
For many families, dinnertime is the day’s final push for productivity—and it can be a challenging time. People may be hungry, exhausted, rushing, stressed, impatient or all of the above. Set out healthy nibbles for your family to share while you prepare the evening meal.

BENEFITS

- Serving healthy veggies and fruits when kids are hungriest means **they’re more likely to eat them.**
- A healthy appetizer **can ease the pressure** and bring back fun and conversation to this time of day and create extra time together as a family.
- While kids nibble, they can set the table, **talk about their day, finish or get help with homework**, or simply observe what you’re doing and learn about the food.



HANDS-ON ACTIVITY Melon Butterfly Appetizer



What you’ll need: watermelon + honeydew, cantaloupe or pineapple + grapes or blueberries + 2 toothpicks

Step 1

With adult help, cut the watermelon into approx. 1” thick slices. Then cut one of the slices crosswise into four quarters to make 4 triangles for the wings of your butterfly.

Step 2

Slice your choice of cantaloupe, honeydew or pineapple to make a long body for your butterfly.

Step 3

Arrange the fruit on a plate to design your butterfly. Use the grapes or blueberries to decorate the wings and stick one on the end of each toothpick to make antennae.

Step 4

Enjoy it as an appetizer!

GO A STEP FURTHER

- Skip the fried chips. Use crunchy whole grain dippers or vegetable dippers (read the “Dip Into Something Healthy” edition of *Better Bites* for ideas). Choose organic and locally grown produce when possible.
- Invite kids to help prepare the appetizer. As they help peel, chop and taste, talk about each food and its nutrition benefits. Begin teaching basic kitchen safety.
- Appetizers can help you “eat a rainbow” of foods every day, which is one way to ensure a wide range of nutrients.

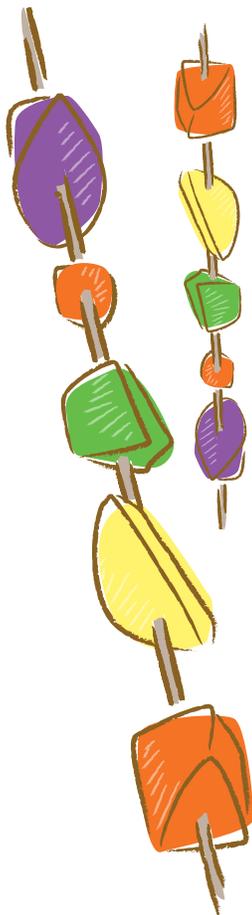


TIPS FOR PARENTS

- Stick to appetizers that are raw and quick (5 minutes or less to prep). Besides being easy to fix, eating raw foods also has other benefits (read the “Eat Something Raw” edition of *Better Bites* to learn more).
- Make simple appetizers exciting by putting them in a fun arrangement or container: in ice cube trays or egg cartons or in a rainbow design on a big platter.
- Let kids use tiny utensils or sticks: little tongs, forks, skewers, chopsticks.
- Let them handle the food, dip it or make something with it (faces, sculptures, animals).

RECIPES

Let kids help with washing, peeling, tearing, arranging and serving these fun and quick appetizers.



FRUIT KABOBS WITH YOGURT

Cut your family’s favorite fruits into approx. 1” chunks and let kids pick which ones they want to thread onto wooden skewers. Encourage them to make a rainbow. Serve it with yogurt as a dip (optional).

BEAN DIP PLATTER

Arrange hummus on a platter with pita bread, cucumber slices, assorted olives, sliced bell peppers and tomatoes, crumbled feta, parsley and pickles. Or serve pinto or black bean dip with whole grain tortillas, diced tomatoes, black olives, shredded lettuce, guacamole and salsa.

ROLL-YOUR-OWN SPRING ROLLS

Set out pre-cut vegetable fixings for spring rolls and let each child roll their own: rice paper wrappers (follow package directions: each wrapper gets soaked in a bowl of warm water one minute before rolling), grated carrots, bean sprouts, cubed tofu, crushed peanuts, sliced bell peppers and/or jalapeños, lettuce, basil, mint, cilantro. Serve it with soy, peanut or hoisin sauces.

GREEN PEA GUACAMOLE

Purée the following ingredients together in a blender and serve with whole grain pita triangles and carrot sticks for dipping: ½ cup roughly chopped cilantro, 16 oz. thawed frozen peas, 1 avocado (peeled and pitted), 4 green onions, 3 garlic cloves and 4 tablespoons lime juice.

LETTUCE WRAPS

In a bowl, stir together 1 can corn kernels (drained), 1 can black beans (drained), 1 large chopped tomato, juice of one lime, a dash of chili powder, salt and pepper to taste. Separate, wash and dry Romaine lettuce or Swiss Chard leaves. Let kids spoon the mixture into individual lettuce leaves and eat it like a taco.

EASY APPLE APPS

Core and slice apples. Set them out next to a plate with a large dollop of nut butter and a bowl of granola. Let kids roll the apple in the nut butter, then in the granola to coat it.

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