Garden Fresh Ideas
GEF’s Seasonal Guide to Healthy Kids’ Snacks

Year Round Healthy Snacks

* Whole wheat crackers with cheddar cheese chunks

* Graham crackers with peanut butter (all natural, even better!)

* Low fat yogurt (purchase large containers of healthy low fat versions of strawberry or vanilla and pack just the right amount for your child)

* Whole wheat pretzels

* Popcorn (light or even better homemade)

* Baby carrots with hummus or ranch dressing

* Celery with peanut butter and raisins (ants on a log!)

* Salsa and whole grain chips

Edamame Soybeans

This simple snack provides a good source of protein and is low in fat as well. The beans come in a pod, found in a bag in your grocer’s frozen vegetable section. Once defrosted, they can be eaten right out of the pod, or heated up in a microwave, following the directions on the package. One bag will most likely provide up to 10 snack sized portions for a low cost per serving. Don’t be surprised if this satisfying bean soon becomes a requested item in your child’s snack box.

* Have a simple practice trial to ensure that your child can open the pod and knows not to consume it.
**Summer Snacks from the Garden**

**Fruit Kabobs:** Seasonal berries (blueberries, strawberries, blackberries) make a colorful and fun to eat snack! Arrange the fruit on the kebob, add blocks of cheese or refreshing vegetables (i.e. cucumber slices) for even more variety and health benefits!

**Freezer Pops:** make your own version of the store-bought popsicles by blending fruits (peaches, berries, bananas) and pouring the liquid into a popsicle mold or ice tray with wooden popsicle sticks.

* vitamins & minerals  
* great summer snack  
* no added sugar

**Pears & Cheese:** Wash and slice pears. Slice thin layers of cheese and wrap pear slices with cheese.

**Frozen Grapes:** Wash grapes and take off stems. Place grapes on a plate and put in freezer. You can also stick toothpicks in the grapes before putting into the freezer to make mini popsicles.

**Sunburst Melon:** Cut melon into 4 quarters and scoop out seeds. Fill the inside “cup” with fruit salad or tuna salad (mix canned tuna with celery and yogurt). Serve in a bowl with a spoon to scoop out the filling and melon!

**Pomegranate Yogurt Dip:** Cut pomegranate and place seeds in a separate bowl. Mix 2 cups of low fat vanilla yogurt with 1/4 cup pomegranate juice, then stir in pomegranate seeds. Dip fruit slices, carrots or pretzel sticks in the dip!
**Fall Snacks From the Garden**

**Applesauce with a Cinnamon Swirl:** Buy the large jars of applesauce instead of the individually packaged ones. Look for jars that say “no added sugar” and just add ground cinnamon for added sweetness! (Applesauce also makes a great no fat substitute for oils when baking!) Once the large jars are empty, you can use them for food leftovers, desk storage for pencils and pens, or many other art projects for the kids!

- vitamins & minerals
- cinnamon = great antioxidants
- sweet potato chips
- no fat

**Apple Dunks (in Yogurt):** Wash apples and slice into 8-10 slices depending on the size of the fruit. Place around edges of a plate with a large scoop of yogurt in the middle. Kids can add raisins, nuts, whole grain cereal, oats, or cinnamon to the yogurt for more variation.

- vitamins & minerals
- calcium
- low fat

**Sweet Potato Chips:** Pre-heat oven to 450° and wash potatoes while oven is heating. Keep the skins on the potatoes for added nutrition (many of the vitamins and minerals are located here) so wash them thoroughly. Cut the potatoes into thin slices about 1/4” thick. Arrange slices on a cookie sheet and spray with cooking oil. You can lightly season the chips with salt and pepper, or leave them natural. Cook chips for about 10 minutes, then flip them and cook for 10 more minutes. Take them out when they are crispy, let them cool, then they are ready to eat!

- vitamin A
- low fat

**Pumpkin Seeds & Spices:** After you’re done carving a pumpkin for Halloween, you don’t have to throw out all the gook that was inside--you can eat some of it! The seeds inside a pumpkin and other squash can be baked, and they are full of nutrients and healthy fats. Once the stringy insides of the pumpkin have been removed, fish out the seeds and place in a bowl. Wash off the excess slime and spread out the seeds on a cookie sheet. pre-heat the oven to 350° and spray the seeds with cooking oil. Put the seeds in the oven for 15 minutes, turning them over once to make sure they cook evenly. Take out the seed when they are starting to turn brown and crunchy. Wait for the seeds to cool, then serve!

- vitamin A
- low fat