

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 133 935

EC 092 721

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 TITLE Snacks for Young Children. Volume II, No. 4. The Staff Training Monograph Series.  
 INSTITUTION Texas Univ., Austin. Dept. of Special Education.  
 SPONS AGENCY Bureau of Education for the Handicapped (DHEW/OE), Washington, D.C.  
 PUB DATE [73]  
 GRANT OEG-0-9-531306(031)  
 NOTE 20p.; For other reports in the series, see EC 092 720 and EC 092 722

EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.83 HC-\$1.67 Plus Postage.  
 DESCRIPTORS Dietetics; \*Early Childhood Education; \*Food; \*Nutrition; Staff Improvement

ABSTRACT

Presented in another of the staff training monograph series from the University of Texas at Austin is information on planning, purchasing and serving snacks to young children. Nutritional and developmental aspects in planning snacks are reviewed, and factors in shopping for food and selecting equipment are discussed. Sample menus are provided for settings with and without kitchen facilities. (CI)

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P R E S E N T S

THE STAFF TRAINING MONOGRAPH SERIES

SNACKS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

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Vol. II No. 4

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EC092721

The project presented or reported herein was performed pursuant to a Grant from the U. S. Office of Education, and Welfare. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U. S. Office of Education, and no official endorsement by the U. S. Office of Education should be inferred.

## BULLETIN ON SNACKS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

Sound nutritional practices are essential in every program for young children. Food gives pleasure and provides the basic nutrients for good health and development. In addition, food and nutrition provide unique opportunities for learning experiences for children and offer lines of communication through which parental involvement in the program can be initiated and strengthened.

This booklet presents material concerning snacks that may be served to young children. The organization of the booklet is as follows:

1. Factors to consider in planning snacks for young children
2. Guides for purchasing food for snacks
3. Selection of serving equipment and utensils
4. Serving snacks
5. Sample menus
6. Food selection chart
7. Evaluation form
8. Suggested references

FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN PLANNING SNACKS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

1. One selection from each of the three groups below each day gives a nutritionally balanced snack.
  - a) meat, fish, poultry, milk or cheese
  - b) fruit or vegetable
  - c) bread product
2. Vary the colors, textures and shapes of the foods within each menu.
3. Take advantage of foods in season to save on food costs.
4. If kitchen facilities are not available, a toaster, electric skillet, hot plate and ice chest will allow greater variety in foods selected to serve.
5. Consider preparation time and staff availability.
6. Young children prefer food at room temperature.
7. Consider the age of the children and amounts of food they can be expected to eat.
8. Have food prepared in finger-sized pieces for easy handling, while still retaining the identifying characteristics of each food served. It is best to serve small amounts and have the child request seconds than to have the child confronted with adult size servings he cannot eat. Children take great pleasure when they can "eat it all" and ask for more. Some examples of child size servings include:
  - juice or milk - glass  $\frac{1}{2}$  full
  - bread slices or sandwiches - regular slice of bread quartered
  - toast strips - one slice of bread cut lengthwise into three strips
  - carrots, celery, cheese strips - small lengthwise strips approximately 3" x  $\frac{1}{4}$ "

meat (liver, tongue, beef strips)

apples, oranges, bananas - quartered. For younger children, oranges and apples may be cut into eighths. Depending on the ability of the child, oranges and bananas may or may not be peeled.

other foods - 1 Tsp - 1 T average serving

9. Accidents and spills are normal and should be treated with as little fuss as possible. It is a good idea to keep a pan of water and/or a damp sponge available to wipe up spills. The child often likes to assist in cleaning up the juice or milk.
10. Children have better appetites when they are not fatigued or over-stimulated. If snack follows an active period of play, the teacher could plan a transition period such as rest, stories or quiet music activities.
11. Introduce foods which might be new to children one at a time and along with familiar foods. The child's first response to a new food may be to explore the food with his senses. He may smell, touch, and manipulate the food before tasting it. Insisting that a child eat the new food the first time it is served may develop more unfavorable attitudes than favorable ones.
12. Family eating patterns and the cultural background of the children should be considered. Not all children enjoy the same foods. Food likes and dislikes may be related to family likes and dislikes and to past experiences with food. It is normal for children to prefer some foods over other foods. A wise teacher accepts these likes and dislikes and avoids insisting that the child eat everything served for snacks.

13. Perhaps the most important factor in creating a relaxed atmosphere is the attitude of the teacher. If the teacher enjoys new foods and is able to relax and share in the conversation and activities of snack time, children will respond in the same manner.
14. Utilize snack time to enhance learning through experiences with food (preparation of food; sensory pleasure; concept development such as color, size, measuring; motor coordination; language).
15. Special occasions (e.g., picnics, holidays) offer opportunities for serving surprise foods.
16. Keep records which may assist in future planning. These might include:
  - a) foods which are managed easily by the children
  - b) food likes and dislikes of individual children
  - c) combinations of food that are especially good and those that are rejected by many
  - d) other reactions to food served
  - e) a suggested form for evaluating snacks (see page 15)

### PURCHASING FOOD FOR SNACKS

1. Purchase staple commodities in as large quantities as storage space will allow. Wholesale buying may be possible. This will save time and money.
2. Take advantage of sales and foods in season.
3. Decide on how often purchasing of food will be necessary and desirable. This depends on storage space, keeping quality of food, delivery dates. For example, staple foods such as canned foods, crackers, peanut butter, and jelly may be purchased once a month; perishables may be bought once a week or daily.
4. Make out market orders based on:
  - a) food on hand
  - b) menus for the week
  - c) recipes being used
  - d) number of children and adults to be served
5. Utilize comparative shopping. Food may be purchased in several forms; for example, fresh, canned, dried, frozen, packaged. The form selected will be determined by such factors as cost, ease of preparation, time and equipment needed, storage facilities, and quality and use of food. For instance, dried milk may be preferred for cooking while whole milk may be preferred for drinking.
6. Keep records on foods purchased and consumed and adjust purchases to eliminate waste.



## SELECTION OF SERVING EQUIPMENT AND UTENSILS

Equipment and utensils should be suited to the child's size and his ability to feed himself.

Chairs and tables should be low enough so the child can sit comfortably with his feet touching the floor and arms resting on the table.

Glasses or paper cups for juice should be small enough to permit the child to hold with one hand. The 4 oz. glass or cup is satisfactory. The base of the glass should sit firmly on the table to help eliminate spills. Children can drink better from glasses with straight sides. If glasses are used, select a material which is non-breakable and dishwasher-proof.

Utensils. Forks and spoons should be child size. Most children under three, developmentally, prefer a spoon. The spoon can be either a small teaspoon or a child's spoon with a wide shallow bowl and handle which is easy to grasp. A short handled fork can be introduced as the child progresses.

Plates or bowls. Most snacks can be served on napkins without the use of plates or bowls. To reduce food costs, napkins can be cut in half before they are used. Some foods (custard, ice cream, beans, pudding, soup) will require bowls or paper cups for service. If bowls are used, select ones with rounded edges and fairly straight sides.

Pitchers. Children enjoy pouring "seconds" of juice. Non-breakable cream sized pitchers are easy for the child to manage. The pitcher should be well-balanced to prevent tip overs and should have a spout to direct the flow of the liquid. It would be desirable for the spout to be partially covered to control the amount of liquid to be poured at one time.

Coverings. Some children who are beginning to feed themselves may require aprons. Suggested fabrics which require little care include terry cloth, perma press, plastic and water proof crib sheetings.

## SERVING SNACKS

How to serve the snack is dependent on the number of adults, types of facilities, and the abilities of the children. A valuable learning experience for children is to assist, according to their capabilities, in such things as wiping off tables and putting out napkins and juice glasses. They can also assist in putting away their napkins and glasses when finished.

One adult at a table with 4-5 children permits the adult to attend to the needs of each child and helps eliminate some problems which may develop due to the child's limited ability to feed himself. In some situations, even smaller groups may be necessary.

Snacks may be served from trays or food carts prepared in the kitchen prior to serving. The snack materials are brought into the room and the adults and/or children serve from the tray or cart. When finished the snack materials are returned to the kitchen.

Sometimes snacks are prepared in the classroom. Some foods children can assist in preparing include:

sandwiches	cookies	churned butter
jello	fruit juice popsicles	
carrot strips	baked bread	
stew	ice cream	
nachos	scrambled eggs	

SAMPLE MENU:

The nutritionally balanced menus on the following pages may be used as shown or similar combinations may be chosen from the Food Selection Chart (see page 13). Some foods which might ordinarily be prepared on the premises if many were being served, could be purchased as prepared foods, such as cookies, cakes, canned chicken cut into cubes, tuna chunks, lunch meat, muffins, and so forth.

SAMPLE MENUS - 2 ITEMS PER DAY  
NO KITCHEN FACILITIES REQUIRED

MONDAY

Saltines  
Apple juice

TUESDAY

Lunch meat  
Tomato juice

WEDNESDAY

Peanut butter sandwiches  
Chocolate milk

THURSDAY

Orange sections  
Milk

FRIDAY

Carrot strips  
Orange juice

MONDAY

Hi Ho crackers with  
peanut butter  
Apple juice

TUESDAY

Graham crackers  
Egg nog

WEDNESDAY

Canned chicken cut in  
chunks  
Orange juice

THURSDAY

Apple slices and  
butter sandwiches  
Milk

FRIDAY

Cheese strips  
Pineapple juice

MONDAY

Celery strips  
Tomato juice

TUESDAY

Cheese spread on bread  
Pineapple juice

WEDNESDAY

Instant Vanilla pudding  
Milk

THURSDAY

Apple slices  
Milk

FRIDAY

Spam slices  
Orange juice

MONDAY

Hi Ho crackers  
Orange juice

TUESDAY

Cheese cubes  
Milk

WEDNESDAY

Carrot strips  
Apple juice

THURSDAY

Tuna fish chunks  
Pineapple juice

FRIDAY

Chocolate ice cream  
Milk

MONDAY

Graham crackers  
Pineapple juice

TUESDAY

Meat spread on bread  
Milk

WEDNESDAY

Lettuce pieces  
Orange juice

THURSDAY

Cheese and crackers  
Milk

FRIDAY

Raisins  
Apple juice

SAMPLE MENU - 3 ITEMS PER DAY  
KITCHEN FACILITIES MAY BE REQUIRED

MONDAY

Peanut butter on bread  
Raisins  
Pineapple juice

TUESDAY

Orange quarters  
Hi Ho crackers  
Milk

WEDNESDAY

Pound cake  
Carrot strips  
Milk

THURSDAY

Toast sticks  
Cheese strips  
Apple juice

FRIDAY

Hard cooked egg halves  
Saltines  
Orange juice

MONDAY

Tortillas  
Lettuce pieces or  
other greens  
Milk

TUESDAY

Hamburger patties  
Bread and butter  
Tomato juice

WEDNESDAY

Carrot strips  
Toast sticks  
Milk

THURSDAY

Apple slices  
Graham crackers  
Chocolate milk

FRIDAY

Fish sticks  
Hi Ho crackers  
Pineapple juice

MONDAY

Cheese strips  
Saltines  
Tomato juice

TUESDAY

Peanut butter and jelly  
sandwiches  
Lettuce pieces  
Milk

WEDNESDAY

Liver strips  
Toast sticks  
Orange juice

THURSDAY

Orange sections  
Cornbread sticks  
Milk

FRIDAY

Banana halves  
Graham crackers  
Milk

MONDAY

Butter and honey on  
bread  
Celery strips  
Pineapple juice

TUESDAY

Apple slices  
Oatmeal cookies  
Milk

WEDNESDAY

Chicken Rice soup  
Carrot strips  
Saltines

THURSDAY

Hard cooked eggs  
Toast sticks  
Tomato juice

FRIDAY

Cream cheese on crackers  
Raisins  
Apple juice

SAMPLE MENUS - 3 ITEMS PER DAY  
KITCHEN FACILITIES MAY BE REQUIRED

MONDAY

Cream cheese on  
on bread  
Raisins  
Tomato juice

TUESDAY

Apple slices  
Graham crackers  
Milk

WEDNESDAY

Frankfurter chunks  
Toast sticks  
Pineapple juice

THURSDAY

Carrot strips  
Nachos  
Milk

FRIDAY

Apple sauce  
Hi Ho crackers  
Milk

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## FOOD SELECTION CHART

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY/CHILD	MARKET ORDER FOR 10 CHILDREN AND 2 ADULTS
<b>Meats</b>			
Liver strips	Fresh	2 strips	1/4 lb.
Hamburger patties	Fresh	2 sm. round	1 lb.
Fish sticks (in quarters)	Frozen (heat & serve)	2 quarters	1 pkg.
Tongue cubes	Fresh	3-4 cubes	1 sm. tongue
Chicken chunks	Canned or fresh	3-4 chunks	1 can
Frankfurters (in quarters)	Packaged	2-3 quarters	1 pkg.
Lunch meat slices	Packaged (prepared)	1/4-1/2 slice	1-2 pkgs.
Tuna	Canned (prepared)	1-2 Tablespoons	2-3 7 oz. cans
Tamales	Prepared or homemade	1/2-1	6-14
Enchiladas	Prepared or homemade	1/2-1	6-14
Spam slices	Canned (prepared)	1/4-1/2 slice	1 can
Meat spreads	Canned (prepared)	1-2 tsp.	4-6 oz.
<b>Meat substitutes</b>			
Cheese strips	Mild	3 strips	1/4-1/2 lb.
Hard cooked egg halves	Fresh	1 half	1/2 doz.
Cheese spreads	Prepared	1-2 tsp.	4-6 oz.
Beans	Packaged	1-2 Tablespoons	
<b>Fruit</b>			
Seedless green grapes	Fresh	5-6	2-3 lbs.
Banana halves	Fresh	1 half	6
Orange sections	Fresh	1-2	4-6
Apple slices	Fresh	1/4 apple	3-4
Raisins	Packaged	2 Tablespoons	1 box
Applesauce	Canned	2-3 Tablespoons	2-3 303 cans
Pineapple chunks	Canned or Fresh	3-4 chunks	"
Pear slices	Fresh or Canned	1/4 (sm. slices)	"
Dried fruit	Packaged	2-3 pieces	1-2 packages
Cantaloupe chunks	Fresh	3-4 chunks	1 small
Canned fruit	Canned	2 Tablespoons	2-3 cans
<b>Vegetables</b>			
Carrot strips 3"x 1/4"	Fresh	3 strips	4-5
Celery strips	Fresh	3 strips	2-3 sticks
Lettuce pieces	Fresh	2-3 pieces	1 head
Spinach pieces	Fresh	2-3 pieces	1 sm. bunch
Or other greens (poke, turnip)	Fresh	2-3 pieces	1 bunch
Other raw vegetables (parsnips)	Fresh	2-3 pieces	
<b>Beverages</b>			
Grape juice	Canned	1/4-1/2 c	1 46 oz. can
Apple juice	"	"	"
Tomato juice	"	"	"
Pineapple juice	"	"	"
Orange juice	"	"	"
Orange-Pineapple juice	"	"	"
Cherry juice	"	"	"
Cranberry juice	"	"	"
Lemonade	"	"	"
Milk	Fresh	"	1/2 gallon
Chocolate milk	Fresh	"	"
Egg nog	Fresh	"	"



ITEM	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY/CHILD	MARKET ORDER FOR 10 CHILDREN AND 2 ADULTS
<b>Breads</b>			
Sandwiches - may be served as open face sandwich quarters (1 slice bread cut into quarters) or as a regular sandwich divided into quarters			
Peanut butter	whole wheat thin sliced	1-2 quarters	7-8 slices or 14-16 slices
Peanut butter & jelly	"	"	"
Butter on bread	"	"	"
Butter and lettuce	"	"	"
Butter & honey on bread	"	"	"
Applebutter	"	"	"
Apple slices & butter	"	"	"
Shredded carrots	"	"	"
Cream cheese	"	"	"
Cheese spreads	"	"	"
Meat spreads	"	"	"
Lunch meat	"	"	"
<b>Muffins</b>			
Cornbread, bran, blueberry, etc.	Prepared, mix or homemade	1-2 halves	12-14
Gingerbread	Mix or homemade	1-2 2" squares	1 ready mix pkg.
Sweet rolls	Prepared	1/2 roll	12-14 rolls
<b>Tortillas</b>			
Tortillas with butter	Prepared	1-2	6-12
Nachos	Prepared	1-2	6-12
<b>Toast-(strips are made from one slice bread cut into thirds)</b>			
Toast strips with butter	Whole wheat thin slices	2-3 strips	8-9 slices
Toast strips with peanut butter	"	"	"
Toast strips with cream cheese	"	"	"
<b>Crackers</b>			
Hi Ho crackers		2-3	24-36
Crackers & cream cheese		"	24-36
Crackers & peanut butter		"	24-36
Graham crackers (or with butter or peanut butter)		"	24-36
Saltines and butter		"	24-36
<b>Miscellaneous</b>			
Apple Tapioca	Ready to cook	2-3 Tablespoons	2 sm. boxes
Jello with fruit	Packaged	"	"
Jello without fruit	Packaged	"	"
Custard	Ready to cook	"	"
Soups: Chicken & rice, Tomato, Chicken noodle, etc.	Canned	1/4 cup	2 cans
Storebought cookies		1-2	2 1/2 doz.
Storebought doughnuts	Cut in sm. pieces	2-3 pieces	1/2 doz.
Puddings	Instant	2-3 Tablespoons	2 sm. boxes
Ice Cream	Prepared	2-3 Tablespoons	1 qt.
Pound Cake	Prepared	1/2 slice	1 cake

SNACK EVALUATION FORM

Menu

Date Used

Remarks

Children's reactions and comments

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