

# An easy recipe for healthier back-to-school lunches

August 28 2019, by Len Canter

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Getting kids to eat right can be a challenge, but an easy place to start is

with the lunch they bring to school. Make the contents of their lunchbox more fun, and they'll be more likely to eat what you pack. These creative tips will make this meal more nutritious, too.

Begin with a [sandwich](#) makeover. Use a soft whole-wheat bread, or a gluten-free whole-grain bread if needed, instead of white. Fill the sandwich with high-quality protein like slices of roast chicken or turkey. Instead of a traditional spread like mayonnaise, try a [thin layer](#) of finely mashed avocado to add more fiber to their diet along with nutrients like vitamin E and other antioxidants. Just mash half of a ripe avocado with a squeeze of lime and a pinch of salt and spread it on the bread. To make sandwiches more enticing, use a cookie cutter to turn them into fun shapes.

Vegetables, crucial to your child's growth and overall health, seem to be the toughest foods to get kids to eat. One easy way to pique their appetites is to turn the veggies into mini kabobs. Children can feel overwhelmed by large chunks of food, but will eat them if they're in bite-sized pieces. Cut steamed broccoli and cauliflower into small florets and thread them onto skewers along with grape tomatoes. Fill a small container with a tasty dip, like a low-fat blue cheese dressing, BBQ sauce, low-sugar ketchup or a homemade no-fat honey mustard—just mix equal amounts of honey and the mustard of your choice.

For dessert, berries are super healthy. Since they're already bite-sized, add interest by packing them in a cute, small container.

Engage your kids with small tasks like wrapping up their sandwich or choosing a healthy drink. When kids pack their lunch, they're also more likely to eat it.

**More information:** The U.S. Department of Agriculture has more [healthy lunch](#) ideas to help cut fat and calories.

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