

Is the Lunch Box Going to Win Over the Lunch Line?

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Can we honestly say we are providing our children nutrition to support their growth and development? Would you eat the food that is served in the school lunch line? Can you really say the children will feel healthy and ready to sit still for 3 more hours learning math, history, and science? Are we going to leave it to others to come up with a nutrition plan for our children with obesity, diabetes, and allergies on the rise? Michelle Obama is pushing to improve school lunches and the conservatives are saying we don't need legislation telling us what to eat, let parents do what they know is best to make the right decisions. With or without legislation we all need more information for the future and

health of our country's children.

Reviewing the January lunch menus at local elementary schools most of the choices are either processed foods (hot dog, chicken



nuggets) or dairy and gluten (pretzel with cheese cup, cheese pizza). I challenge families and schools to focus more on fruits and vegetables, healthy meats for higher nutrient content rather than the "empty" calories found in processed foods high in fats, sugar and salt, low in vitamin, minerals and fatty acids a.k.a healthy Fats.

After reading a recent article in the New York Times about school lunches, one solution to save money and provide healthier and better tasting foods is to team up with local culinary schools for recipes and services for developing healthier choices. Even teaming up with local naturopaths and nutritionists to help with menu and educational programs.

Example lunch easily carries in an insulated thermos:

- Turkey and lima bean chili
- Local green beans sautéed in garlic and butter
- Fresh apple wedges with almond butter spread

Here is an example of advice formulated by the National Dairy Board and National Fluid Milk Board in 1985, which has been rolled into our routine that we have not questioned. "Drink milk it does your body good". Is dairy the only way to avoid osteoporosis and tooth decay? According to the statistics of the RDA of calcium found in other foods dairy is not the leader in calcium absorption and has been known to be one of the top foods found to be an allergen and cause inflammation.

Note, 2/3 cup of oatmeal (24% of RDA of calcium) in the morning, that ½ cup of steamed broccoli has (24% of the RDA), ½ cup of kale steamed at dinner (24% of

calcium) just with that your 72% of your calcium intake for one day. The absorption of the calcium from the dark leafy greens (rate of 40.9%) is more than from cow's milk (32.1%)¹ Our intestinal tract has a hard time digesting the proteins of milk, which then creates additional mucus and inflammation. The added inflammation and mucus decreases proper absorption of our nutrients.

Our bodies naturally want to be healthy and in balance. If we provide our bodies with the proper nutrition, rest and exercise we have a winning chance at living a better, healthier and more rewarding life. If you are interested in discussing your family's nutrition consider visiting one of the doctors at True Health Medicine, where we can get to the core of your health issues.

I would recommend the www.thesneakychef.com for great children recipes.

<http://www.wellnessintheschools.org>

1. (American Journal of Clinical Nutrition 51:656-657, 1990)



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