Many families are starting to think about back-to-school and the many unknowns that will come along with that this fall. Whatever the school year looks like for you and your family, this is a good time to start adding in healthy habits.

We are constantly seeing messages telling us to try a diet, lose weight, avoid certain foods, be skinnier, and be healthier. Our kids see those messages too.

Here are some tips for leading your kids towards healthy habits:

- Avoid describing foods as ‘bad’ or saying you feel guilty for eating something.
- Similarly, you don’t need to set strict rules about not eating ‘junk’ food. Occasional treats are important for moderation.
- Promote healthier food by making fruits and vegetables available for kids to fill up on. Be a role model and eat them too.
- Try cooking with your kids. Kids who help cook, cut, or decide on the meal they are eating are more likely to try new foods.
- Don’t tease your kids about their weight. Weight comments promote negative self-image and do little to manage their weight.
- Try saying positive things about what your body (or theirs) can do. For example, if your kid is worried about their skinny arms, remind them how good those arms are at their favorite activity.
- Many kids need repeat exposure before they like a new food.
- Kids will eat when they are hungry. Don’t force them to finish the food on their plate—but if they aren’t hungry enough to eat dinner, they aren’t hungry for dessert.

Bacteria can multiply rapidly if food is left at room temperature or in the “Danger Zone” between 40°F and 140°F.

Never leave perishable food out for more than 2 hours (or 1 hour if it’s hotter than 90°F outside).
Summer Farro Salad with Grilled Steak

Ingredients

- 1 cup farro
- 2 bell peppers, seeded and quartered
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 pound lean boneless steaks
- 1 1/2 cup corn
- 4 cup kale leaves, chopped with ribs removed
- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- pepper

Directions

1. Cook farro as label directs.
2. Toss bell peppers with 1 tablespoon olive oil. Season beef steaks with 1/2 teaspoon salt.
3. Heat grill to medium-high.
4. Grill steak and peppers, covered, 2 to 4 minutes per side or until steak is cooked to desired doneness and peppers are charred. Chop peppers.
5. Toss farro with peppers, corn, kale leaves, balsamic vinegar, 2 tablespoons olive oil and pepper. Thinly slice steak; serve over farro.

Makes 6 servings

Recipe and photo from Good Housekeeping

Nutritional Facts

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<th>Ingredient</th>
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*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.
What Can You Do With … Zucchini?

Choosing: Choose zucchini that are firm without any soft spots. Zucchini come in a variety of shapes and colors including solid yellow and green with yellow ridges. Very large zucchini are often less tasty and are better used for baking.

Storing: Store in an open plastic bag in the fridge. For best taste, use before they become soft or wrinkly (usually about 3 days).

Preparing: Scrub the skin of zucchini to remove dirt. Cut the ends off of each side. Typically the skin is left on.

Cooking: Zucchini can be eaten raw or cooked in a variety of ways. Grilled, sautéed, and spiralized zucchini are delicious switches from the old standby of steaming. Zucchini can become watery if overcooked.

Uses: Try swapping spiralized zucchini for 1/3 of your linguine or spaghetti to add extra veggies to pasta dinner. If you don’t have a spiralizer, use a vegetable peeler and make zucchini ribbons instead. Shred zucchini and add into omelets or baked goods. Zucchini takes flavor well so you can toss it into stir fry or pasta dishes without impacting the flavor.

Roasted Zucchini and Shallot Salad with Fresh Herbs

Ingredients
- 4 shallots (or 1 large white onion)
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 2 zucchini
- 3 sprigs fresh thyme (or 1 tsp dried)
- 3 sprigs fresh oregano (or 1 tsp dried)
- 1 tsp Italian seasoning
- 2 tsp minced garlic
- 2 tbsp white wine vinegar

Directions
1. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Peel the shallots and halve the larger ones. Toss with 2 tbsp olive oil in a small bowl. Season with salt and pepper, and stir to combine.
2. Set the shallots on a foil-lined baking sheet and roast, 20 min.
3. Meanwhile quarter the zucchini lengthwise and cut into 1½-inch chunks. Roughly chop the thyme and oregano.
4. Toss zucchini with the thyme, oregano, remaining olive oil, Italian seasoning, garlic, and white wine vinegar.
5. After 10 min., add zucchini to the shallots and roast together for the remaining 10 min. Remove from oven and allow to cool slightly before seasoning with salt and pepper to taste.

Serves 4
DIY Trail Mix

Many commercial trail mixes can be full of sugar or salt. Balanced snacks should have a few food groups and provide a source of fat, carbohydrate, and protein. Here’s how to make a filling, easy grab and go trail mix without the extra sugar.

1. Start with nuts. Nuts have protein and healthy fats which help to keep people full. Eating a small amount of nuts each day is linked to many long-term health benefits including heart and brain health. Nuts are often expensive so try to buy in bulk if you can. Use either large bags or self-serve options at the store. Store extras in the freezer so they don’t go bad. Great options include walnuts, peanuts, and almonds.

2. Add some fiber and flavor. Add in dried fruit for a good source of antioxidants and fiber. Look for packages without added sugar. Easy to find options include raisins, cranberries, and apricots.

3. Add in a treat. Try adding in broken up dark chocolate or some of your favorite cereal. This makes the trail mix a bit tastier without turning it into eating candy.

Everyone has a role in ending hunger in our community.