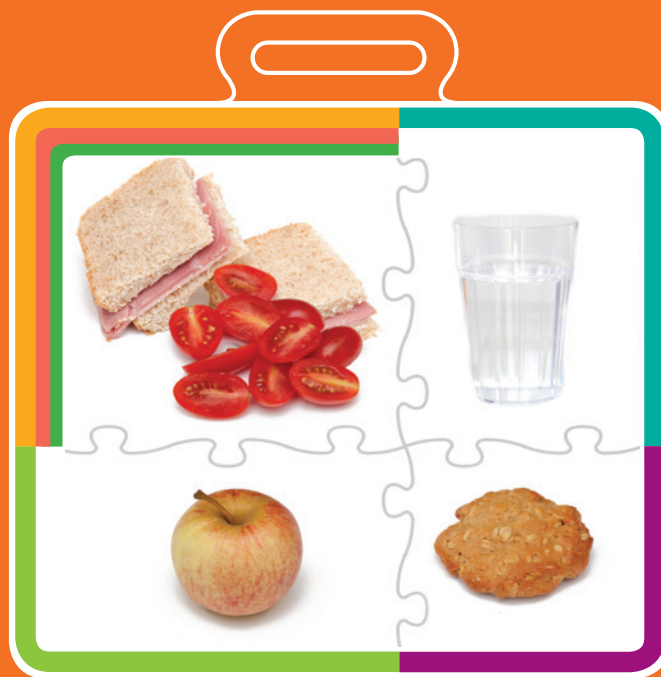
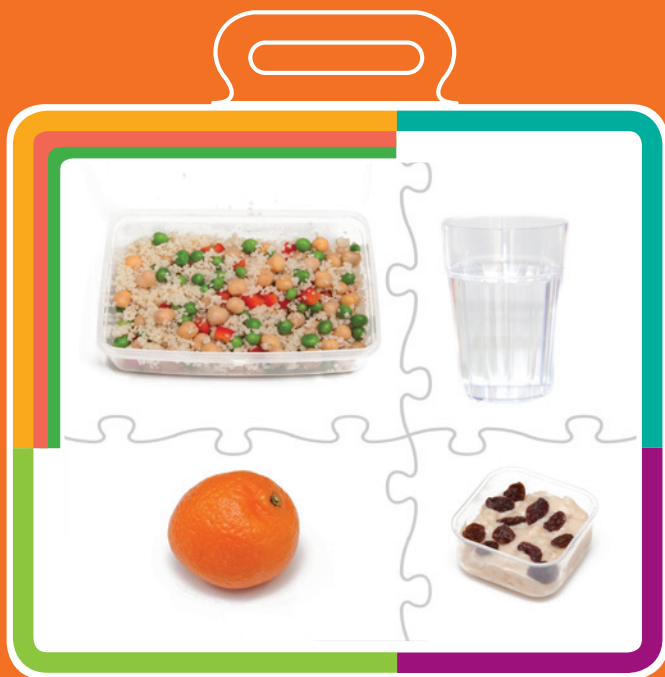


# Mix Up and Munch

Making packed lunches or teas  
for children aged 1 - 4 years



## Making packed lunches and teas for children aged 1-4 years

Children aged 1-4 years are growing quickly and have high energy and nutrient requirements for their size. They also eat smaller amounts than older children and adults, so it is important that their meals and snacks contain all the nutrients they need in appropriate portion sizes. You can do this by providing a variety of food from each of the following four food groups over the day:

- **Starchy food such as bread, potatoes, rice, pasta**
- **Meat, fish, eggs, beans, lentils**
- **Vegetables and fruit**
- **Milk and dairy foods**

Early years settings provide an ideal opportunity to help children to eat well. Your setting may ask you to provide a packed lunch or tea for your child whilst they are here. Mix Up and Munch is a guide to putting together tasty packed meals that are healthy, balanced and nutritious.



Starting with the main part of the meal, include foods from the following three groups:

- **Starchy food such as bread, potatoes, rice, pasta**
- **Meat, fish, eggs, beans, lentils**
- **Vegetables and fruit**

You could serve them individually or combined, for example:

- **Ham and tomato roll**
- **Houmous wrap and cucumber sticks**
- **Tuna and sweetcorn pasta salad**

Then turn the leaflet over to see ideas for including **fruit**, a **dessert** and a **drink**.

Children need three portions of **milk and dairy foods** everyday. You could include one in a packed meal if not provided at other times.

### Getting children involved

Let your child help to wash and prepare food for their packed meal. Involve your child in deciding which foods to put in, giving them choices within the food groups. For example, a roll or wrap? Banana or apple?

### Food allergies and intolerances

If your child has a food allergy or intolerance inform your setting.

### Health Visitor or Doctor

If you have any concerns about your child's appetite or diet please contact your Health Visitor or Doctor.

### Sustainability

Reduce packaging by using containers and cutlery that can be washed and used again.

### Food Safety

- Warm conditions can encourage growth of harmful bacteria so it is important to keep packed meals cold – pack food in an insulated cool bag or box with an ice pack



- Meals prepared the night before must be stored in the fridge overnight
- Food brought into the setting cannot be reheated

### Food Pictures

- These show average servings for a child aged 1 to 4 years. They are suitable for most children although some will need more and some will need less

#### Milk and dairy foods

- The foods in this group can provide: **Energy, Protein, Calcium, Vitamin A**
- Children under 2 years should only have full fat milk and dairy foods
- Semi-skimmed milk can be introduced from 2 years if they are growing well
- Milk and dairy foods can be included in a packed meal, examples are highlighted with a blue box

## Bread, potatoes, rice and pasta

- The foods in this group can provide: **Energy, Fibre and Vitamin B**
- Include one serving of starchy food in each packed meal
- Try to include different foods from this group over the week

### Good practice

Include wholegrain starchy foods at least once a week at lunch and at tea.



Bagel



Baguette



Roll / Bap



Bread



Tortilla Wrap



Pitta



Naan



Chapati



Potato



Pasta



Rice



Couscous

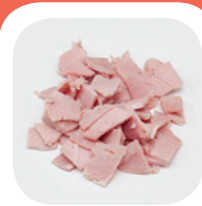
## Meat, fish, eggs, beans and lentils

- The foods in this group can provide: **Protein, Zinc and Iron**
- Include one serving from this group in each packed meal, try to use a variety of foods across the week
- Try and include a meat alternative once a week, for example, houmous, egg, butter beans, lentils, Quorn™

### Food safety

Do not include whole nuts for 1-4 year olds as they can cause choking.

\*Be allergy aware: check with your setting before including nuts in a packed meal.



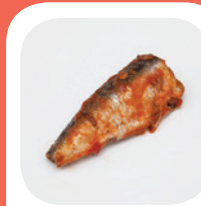
Ham



Chicken



Beef



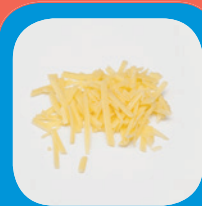
Sardine



Tuna



Egg



Cheese



Soft Cheese



Quorn™



Dahl



Houmous



\*Peanut Butter

## Vegetables

- The foods in this group can provide: **Vitamins, Zinc, Iron and Fibre**
- Include one serving of vegetables in each packed meal for crunch and colour
- Vegetables can be either fresh, frozen or canned in water
- Include as part of a salad or sandwich or serve separately

### Food safety

Remember to wash vegetables, remove any stones or pips and halve small vegetables such as tomatoes.



**Cucumber**



**Carrot**



**Tomatoes**



**Pepper**



**Baby Sweetcorn**



**Mixed Salad**



**Green Beans**



**Sugar Snap Peas**



**Sweetcorn**



**Peas**



**Broccoli**



**Mixed Vegetables**



## Fruit

- The foods in this group can provide: **Vitamins, Zinc, Iron and Fibre**
- Include one serving of fruit in each packed lunch or tea for crunch and colour
- Fruit can be either fresh, frozen, dried or canned in juice

### Food safety

Remember to wash fruit, remove any stones or pips and halve small fruit such as grapes and strawberries.



Apple



Pear



Banana



Clementine



Strawberries



Grapes



Mango



Kiwi



Melon



Pineapple



Raisins



Fruit in Juice

## Desserts, puddings, cakes

- Children aged 1-4 years need more energy dense food than older children and adults because they have high energy requirements for their size
- Desserts, puddings and cakes can be included as part of a nutritious packed lunch or tea
- Your setting will encourage children to eat these foods after they have eaten the main part of their meal

### Good practice

Try to include different foods from this group over the week.



Cake



Malt loaf



Flapjack



Scone



Rice Pudding



Fromage Frais



Pancake



Biscuit



Fruit Muffin



Fruit in Jelly



Yoghurt



Fruit in Custard

## Drinks

- Children must have access to drinking water throughout the day
- Your setting may provide a drink for your child at meal times but if not include one
- Water and milk are the best drinks for children aged under 5 years
- An open cup is best to use for children's teeth, avoid valved cups and sport top bottles



**Open Cup**



**Lidded Cup**



**Water**



**Milk**

### Drinks guidance

Avoid squash, fizzy drinks, energy drinks and flavoured water even if labelled 'sugar free', 'no added sugar' or 'reduced sugar'. These can contribute to tooth decay and have little nutritional value.

