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**Snack Ideas for Kids That Won't Wreck Mom's Diet**

**By Kim Beardsmore**

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If you are a mom at home on a diet, you will probably related to a frequent situation I encounter as a weight loss consultant. Many of my clients with children are able to keep to a healthy eating plan through most circumstances except two. It all starts to go astray when the kids come home from school, or when they are preparing school lunches. If you are a mom at home on a diet, you will probably related to a frequent situation I encounter as a weight loss consultant. Many of my clients with children are able to keep to a healthy eating plan through most circumstances except two. It all starts to go astray when the kids come home from school, or when they are preparing school lunches.

It's no surprise really. Kids love snacks we buy from the supermarket, and parents love them because they are quick and easy to throw into the lunchbox or for kids to grab from the shelves in the pantry. Small bags of chips, tasty bite size crackers, sodas and the like. No problem. Except when it comes to mom's weight loss program. Mom loves them too!

These products are high in fat, high in energy and high in refined sugars. And after one, two or three nibbles it is possible to wrack up an unwanted 500 calories. This single act will probably stall your weight loss or even worse!

To stop your kids from sabotaging your weight loss efforts, here are 20 snack ideas for kids that will do far less damage to your weight loss program if mom nibbles (just a little).

1. Chop up ½ tinned pear or other fruit in natural juice and set in 200mls of low calorie jelly. Make up into individual disposable plastic containers with lids.

2. Cut up crisp vegetable sticks with dipping sauce – ranch, peanut (satay), sweet chili or tomato.

3. Cut celery sticks 6–8 cm, fill with cottage cheese and top with sultanas or chopped nuts.

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4. Combine a mixture of low fat hard cheese cubes, nuts and dried fruits in plastic wrap or a lunch bag.
5. Roll up thin slices of carrot and celery with grated cheese in a slice of cold meat. Secure with toothpick. Slice the carrot and celery with a vegetable peeler for really thin slices.
6. Cut oranges into quarters and freeze on trays. Put into plastic bags for a fruity ice block.
7. Meatball surprise. Next time you are making meatloaf, double the quantity and make a batch of meatballs. These are great in lunchboxes cold. Add a slice of pineapple with a toothpick to each meatball. Add dipping tomato sauce if required.
8. Mini quiches....make a batch of crust-less quiche and cook in muffin tray. Each 'muffin' will be a wonderful healthy snack for kids.
9. Chilled fruit surprise – slice a combination of strawberries, bananas, kiwi fruit, watermelon, grapes or in season fruit. Place in small resealable plastic container. Top with apple juice; do not overfill. Seal, freeze. When packed in lunchbox, will keep sandwiches cool and prove a refreshing treat on a hot day.
10. Rice cakes spread with mashed avocado, mashed banana and cinnamon, or try mashed avocado, sliced tomato and sprouts.
11. Chopped hard-boiled egg served with low fat mayo, salt, pepper on a crisp bread.
12. Leaf wrappers: wrap a cheese finger, celery stick and carrot stick in a lettuce leaf. Wrap in foil and place in lunchbox. Contents will be kept moist.
13. Yoghurt tub.
14. Baby Bell Cheese and low fat cracker.
15. Creamy dates: slice dates lengthways, remove stone. Fill with Philadelphia cream cheese (low fat).
16. Quick sausage rolls: wrap a skinned (good quality) sausage in several sheets of filo pastry. Brush pastry with beat egg to glaze. Cut into desired lengths. Bake in moderately hot oven for 15–20 minutes. Rolls can be frozen.
17. Same as above but use fresh chicken breast strips and cut to 2" – use tomato or favorite dipping sauce
18. After school hot snack attack: Spread a round of pita bread with tomato paste and herbs. Top with tomato, ham, mortadella, add onion, sliced mushrooms or pineapple. Sprinkle grated low fat hard cheese over pita bread. Grill to make a tasty pizza. If no pita bread is available, substitute a crisp bread.
19. Fruity kebabs: place bite size pieces of fruit in season on kebab skewers.

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20. Pop top sandwich tuna tin, crisp bread, sachet of mayonnaise. Kids can put their snack together at school so that it doesn't go soggy.

Remember fresh is best both for yourself and your children. By substituting these ideas for some of the prepackaged snack food and cookies your kids eat you will be doing both them and yourself a favor.

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### **Dr. Seuss Inspired Recipes - Your Kids Will Love These**

**By Susanne Myers**

What child doesn't grow up with Dr. Seuss books? We have quite a few of them lying around the house. The kids love the silly characters and the rhymes. The Dr. Seuss inspired recipes that I'm about to share with you have been a great hit in my house. Of course the famous green eggs and ham are included, but there are also quite a few other snack and meal ideas. Create a fun Dr. Seuss inspired afternoon with some of these recipes and of course don't forget to read a few of the books with your kids. (If you don't own any, enjoy a trip to your local library.) Green Eggs and Ham This has to be the most famous Dr. Seuss inspired dish. Scramble a few eggs, add a couple of drops of blue food coloring to the mixture and cook as usual. You can serve a warmed up slice of ham with it, and if you want to go all out, brush the ham with a little green food coloring.

My kids love either biscuits, or mashed potatoes with this dish. Add a little food coloring (either green, or a complimentary color like red) to the biscuit dough or the finished mashed potatoes for even more fun.

Cat in The Hat Snack Make the Cat's Hat for a fun snack. All you need is a few Ritz crackers, gummy lifesavers (preferably in white/clear and red) and a little vanilla frosting. Put the Ritz cracker on a plate. Use a little bit of vanilla frosting to glue the first lifesaver on the cracker. "Glue" more lifesavers on top of the first one alternating between red and white. These snacks are so cute; you may want to take a picture of your child's creation before it is devoured.

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**Wiggly Fish** This snack was inspired by "One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish". Prepare several different colors of Jello according to package directions and pour each flavor into a shallow pan. Use a fish shaped cookie cutter to cut the Jello into fish shapes. (If you don't have a fish shaped cookie cutter you could also just cut fish shapes with a knife.) You can also add small pieces of fruit to the Jello mixture before it cools. This is a great way to sneak an extra serving of fruit into your child's diet.

### Pink Ink for The Yink

The Yink in "One Fish, Two Fish" love to drink pink ink. Make your own version by combining a few strawberries (either fresh, or frozen and thawed) and some milk in a blender. Add a few drops of red food coloring if the "ink" isn't pink enough.

### A Fruity Hat For The Cat

How about this for a fun Sunday breakfast? Whip up a batch of silver dollar pancakes and cut up some fresh strawberries. Grab some whipped cream and let the kids assemble the Cat's hat by stacking pancakes, and strawberries on top of each other using the whipped cream as "glue".

Enjoy a few of these Dr. Seuss inspired snacks and meals with your family, or invite a few neighbor kids over for a Dr. Seuss party. Either way they are a lot of fun and a great way to bring some of the Seuss stories to life.

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