

## Making Quick and Healthy Kid-approved Meals

*"We don't have time to eat healthy."* Sound familiar? Preparing healthy meals doesn't have to take a lot of time or cost a lot of money. Try these quick and easy ways to make these kid-approved meals a little healthier.

- ◆ **Macaroni and cheese:** Make a box of macaroni and cheese according to the package directions except use half the butter or margarine required and use skim or 1 percent milk instead of whole milk or 2 percent. Stir in one cup of your child's favorite cooked vegetable, such as broccoli, cauliflower, carrots or peas.
- ◆ **Spaghetti:** Add one bag of frozen mixed vegetables to a jar of prepared or leftover spaghetti sauce and cook in a pot until vegetables are heated through. Serve over pasta. Try a new kind of pasta such as spinach, vegetable or whole wheat, or treat your kids to a fun new pasta shape such as shells, spirals or wheels.
- ◆ **Pizza:** Order a cheese-only pizza from your favorite take-out place. Separate the slices at home and invite your kids to create their own pizza using low-fat toppings you have on hand, such as extra pineapple chunks, olives, tomatoes, low-fat deli meats, peppers, onions, etc. Reheat in the oven until hot.
- ◆ **Peanut butter surprise:** Peanut butter sandwiches are not just for lunch. Invite children to make their own PB and J special by adding other healthy ingredients, such as sliced banana, apple or

-more-

### FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

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*Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) program staff at MSU Extension can answer questions or help you learn more about money management, parent, food, nutrition and health issues. MSU Extension educators integrate university and community resources to provide tools that help families succeed. For more information on FCS programs in Michigan, call your county MSU Extension office. Check the government pages of your phone book for contact information.*

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pear, raisins, dried apricots, shredded carrots and more. Serve with a bowl of vegetable soup and a glass of milk.

- ◆ **Sundae dinner:** *No time to cook?* Why not surprise your kids with a sundae dinner they're sure to love? Give each child 1/2 to 1 cup of vanilla yogurt or frozen yogurt in a bowl or coffee cup. Put healthy toppings such as sliced banana, fresh berries, crushed pineapple, fruit cocktail, dried fruit, crumbled graham crackers, broken fig bars, nuts and dry cereal in bowls and invite children to create their own sundaes.
- ◆ **Soup and muffins:** Boost the nutrition content of any kind of canned soup by adding more vegetables. Stir in a can of corn or green beans, a few handfuls of frozen veggies, or a cup or two of fresh cut vegetables from your refrigerator. To make packaged muffin mixes healthier, prepare the batter according to the directions on the box or envelope. Add 1/2 to 1 cup of fresh, frozen or dried fruit, such as raisins, dried cherries, chopped apple or frozen berries, or grated carrot. Bake according to package directions.

*Wondering what to do with the time you save?* Spend the extra time being active with your kids. Take a walk outside, ride bikes, play a game of catch, shoot baskets, dance or engage in any other activity that you and your kids enjoy doing together.

Your children want to be like you. If you choose to stay active and eat healthy foods, your kids will too. Eating healthy begins in the home with the foods you buy, prepare and enjoy together.

For more information on these and other food, nutrition, health, family and parenting, and money management topics, contact the MSU Extension office. MSU Extension Family and Consumer Sciences educators are located in all 83 Michigan counties to integrate university and community resources to help families succeed.

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