Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Welcome to the start of the new school year with the Backpack Nutrition newsletter. We’ll be sending this newsletter home in your child’s backpack once a month. We hope you find the newsletter a useful source of information about healthy eating and physical activity for your whole family.

Our topic this month is “Healthier Choices Made Easier” using MyPlate. What’s MyPlate? In a nutshell, it’s a guide to eating healthy foods. Visit www.ChooseMyPlate.gov for more information. Meanwhile, here are some tips from MyPlate for families with school-age children:

**Make half your plate fruits and vegetables — on a budget**

- Fresh, frozen, and canned fruits and vegetables are all smart choices for getting essential nutrients in your diet. Look for sales and buy fruits and vegetables in all three forms.

- Choose frozen vegetables that do not have added fat, salt, or sugar.

- Buy canned fruits packed in “100% juice” or water.

- Look for canned vegetables that say, “No added salt.”

**Start every day the whole-grain way**

- Serve whole-grain versions of cereal, bread, or pancakes at breakfast.

- Whole grains have more fiber than refined grains and will help your kids feel fuller longer so they stay alert in school.

- Choose foods with “100% whole wheat” or “100% whole grains” on the label, and/or choose foods in which the first (grain) item on the ingredients list includes the word “whole.”

**Milk matters**

- Children of every age, and adults, need the calcium, protein, and vitamin D found in milk for strong bones, teeth, and muscles.

- Drink fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk at meals.

- If you are lactose intolerant, try lactose-free or lactose-reduced milk or calcium-fortified soy beverages.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture (n.d.); What is MyPlate?, retrieved from http://www.choosemyplate.gov/MyPlate

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**3 CAN CHILI**

**Ingredients**

- 1 can beans, low-sodium, do not drain (pinto, kidney, red, or black; 15 ounce)
- 1 can corn, drained (15 ounce, or 10-ounce package of frozen corn)
- 1 can crushed tomatoes, low-sodium, do not drain (15 ounce)

**Directions**

1) Place the contents of all 3 cans into a sauce pan.
2) Add chili powder to taste.
3) Stir to mix.
4) Continue to stir over medium heat until thoroughly warm.
5) Refrigerate leftovers.


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**Physical Activity Corner**

Did you know that kids should get at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day? To grow up strong and healthy, children need to walk, run, jump, throw, and use their muscles daily. Kids don't have to get their hour of exercise all at once — they can move around for 10 minutes at a time, six times a day.