

AUGUST 2009

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI
Extension
Live. And Learn.

Kindred *Spirits*

Start the day with breakfast

Boost learning power

Alternative menus

Breakfast doesn't have to be traditional fare. Try these kid pleasers:

- Cheese melted on whole-wheat toast with apple slices
- Tortilla filled with scrambled eggs and salsa
- Wake Up Shake with a bran muffin

Wake Up Shake
1 small, ripe banana
¾ cup skim milk
1 cup nonfat fruit yogurt
¼ cup orange juice

Blend all the ingredients until smooth. Yield: 2 cups (2 servings)

Published in partnership with the Family Friends Program, Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics.

MU Extension contributors: Dr. Nina Chen, Saralee Bury Jamieson, Kris Jenkins, Lynda Johnson, Glenda Kinder, Susan Mills-Gray, Diana Milne and Lisa Wallace.

To help make this the best school year ever, be sure children begin their day with a healthy breakfast. "A well-nourished child is ready to learn," says Lynda Johnson, M.S., R.D., University of Missouri Extension nutrition specialist.

Teachers report it's obvious when children skip breakfast. Breakfast eaters have higher school attendance, less tardiness and fewer stomachaches. Children who eat breakfast have better test scores, solve problems more easily and have better muscle coordination.

The overall impact of on-going poor nutrition can have a lasting, negative effect on a child's achievement and performance in school. This is the reason why schools have opted to offer the breakfast program in addition to school lunch.

Traditional breakfast fare like bacon, sausage, doughnuts and pastries are high in fat, and should be served infrequently. A fast-food cheese Danish can contain more calories and twice the fat as a fast-food hamburger.

Many highly advertised breakfast cereals and toaster pastries are extremely high in sugar. If

children insist on sugary cereals, there is a way to compromise. Sprinkle the sugary cereal over a low-sugar alternative or whole grain cereal such as bran flakes.

Children who learn to eat breakfast when young will continue to eat breakfast as adults. Another reason to eat breakfast is to help maintain a healthy weight, important for children and adults alike. Skipping breakfast will not help with weight loss; it works just the opposite.

Generally, skippers end up starved and stuff themselves later, or snack on high-calorie foods from vending machines. One habit of people who lost weight and kept it off, was eating breakfast.

Breakfast skippers may say, "I'm not hungry in the morning." In actuality, their bodies are conditioned over time not to be hungry; or they may eat a lot late at night.

To help children build up an appetite for breakfast, start slowly by offering them a glass of milk or juice, then add a piece of toast or fruit to the routine, later add cereal.

Enrolling your child in school

Prepare to help children succeed in the classroom

Labor Day weekend once signaled the end of summer vacation for school-age children - not anymore! Many school districts now begin the school year in mid- to late August.

“Gearing up for a new school year can be exciting, but it can also be hectic,” says Diana Milne, MU Extension human development specialist. “If you’re a grandparent or other relative raising a child, you know that helping children succeed in school is one of your most important tasks. If the child is just starting in school or transferring to

a new school because he has recently come to live with you, there are issues you need to consider.”

First, find out what the enrollment requirements are in your school district. Some school districts will not allow grandparents or other relatives to enroll children in school unless they are the child’s legal guardians. Don’t wait until the first day of school to determine the documents you will need; contact the school district’s office now and ask what information they will need from you for enrollment purposes.

Many local schools sponsor back-to-school nights before classes

begin or during the first week of school.

Plan to attend these special events to get acquainted with the principal, teachers and the school building. Introduce yourself and ask teachers to give you ideas to help your child succeed in school.

Children being raised by grandparents or other relatives often need extra help adjusting to new routines and expectations—both at home and at school. Don’t hesitate to ask about special services such as counseling, tutoring and support groups. Schools can be great resources for you and your grandfamily.

University of Missouri Extension

Bates County

1 N. Delaware, Butler, MO 64730
660.679.4167

Cass County

302 S. Main St., Harrisonville, MO 64701
816.380.8460

Clay County

1901 NE 48th St., Kansas City, MO 64118
816.407.3490

Henry County

100 W. Franklin, Rm 16, Clinton, MO 64735
660.885.5556

Jackson County

1106 W. Main St.
Blue Springs, MO 64015
816.252.5051
2700 E. 18th St., Suite 240
Kansas City, MO 64127
816.482.5850

Lafayette County

14 E. 19th St., Suite 102
Higginsville, MO 64037
660.584.3658

St. Clair County

655 2nd St., Osceola, MO 64776
417.646.2419

extension.missouri.edu

equal opportunity/ADA institution

Get the benefits you need

Across the country, more than six million children—approximately 1 in 12 children—are living in households headed by grandparents or other relatives. In Missouri, 78,000 kids live with their grandparents.

“Most of these grandparents were living on limited incomes before the children came to live with them,” says Kris Jenkins, MU Extension human development specialist. “The addition of children increases household expenses, making it difficult to make ends meet.”

The good news for grandfamilies is that financial help, including cash assistance and tax credits, is available for food and home energy bills, disability relief, foster care, health care and prescription drugs. You just need to know where to find the aid programs, says Jenkins.

BenefitsCheckUp (<http://www.benefitscheckup.org>) offers an easy-to-use Web site, which is a service of the National Council on Aging. In 20 minutes, you can find and enroll in federal, state, local and private assistance programs.