

A Mom-Tastic Resource
Provided to The Business of Motherhood
By Guest Author Karen Schachter, MSW LLC and Mom Since 2001 (MS'01)
www.BusinessofMotherhood.com

Eat Your Breakfast!

Throw out the fruit loops!

We've heard it a million times before: breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Yet, if you are like many of my clients, your mornings are so rushed that you barely have time to gulp down a cup of coffee and grab a quick bite before running out the door. By 10am you're starving or exhausted, and find yourself reaching for a quick snack like a bagel and coffee. You feel great until the coffee wears off, at which time you notice you're craving another quick pick-me-up. A mediocre breakfast (or no breakfast at all) can lead to mindless snacking and cravings throughout the day, while a substantial breakfast can help stop this pattern in its tracks. It's true: if we do not get enough of our nutrients (like fat, carbohydrates and protein) in the first half of our day, our bodies will make up for it later (think: those late night bowls of ice cream, or devouring the box of crackers while watching tv).

And we all know that a good breakfast is equally as important for our children, setting the stage for a healthy mind and body as they go off to work and play. Unfortunately many children are not getting the nutrients they need, either at breakfast or throughout the day. The food industry has figured out how to capitalize on our busy lives and our children's imagination by making junk food look "kid-friendly." But those brightly colored cereal boxes and fancy yogurt containers with favorite characters on them, as appealing as they look, are the opposite of growing foods. Most of them are filled with sugars, chemicals, additives and dyes. The negative effects of these "fake foods" are numerous, including their affect on behavior, learning capacity and health. ([For an interesting discussion on NPR of the importance of a good breakfast on children's learning, click here -- www.npr.org/templates/story/story.pho?storyId=5738848](http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.pho?storyId=5738848))

For the next month, experiment with breakfast. If you're not ready to throw out your bagel and coffee, and you know you'd have a full scale rebellion on your hands if you tossed that box of Captain Crunch, try adding a "real food" to your breakfast and your child's breakfast. An egg, a bowl of oatmeal, some organic yogurt, whole grain bread, muffin or cereal, fresh or dried fruit, for example. Mix and match to see which works best for you and your child. You may be surprised to find that as you start adding in these real foods, you will "crowd out" the others, and your body will thank you for it.

Recipe of the month

Granola

My kids and I just made this delicious granola together over the weekend. It's simple enough for kids to take an active role without making an enormous mess (although somehow we managed to do that anyway). We devoured it all that morning! This recipe is adapted from a book called, [A Banquet of Health](#), by Penny Block.

- 2 c. old-fashioned rolled oats (not instant)
- 1/2 c. slivered almonds or toasted sesame seeds*
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp sea salt
- 1/2 c. brown rice syrup (can be found at Whole Foods)
- 1/4 c. coconut oil (melted)
- 1 Tbsp. maple syrup
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1/4 c. raisins (optional)

Preheat oven to 325. Lightly oil a large cookie sheet. In a large bowl, combine dry ingredients (except raisins). In a small bowl, mix rice syrup, oil, maple syrup, and vanilla thoroughly; pour over oat mixture. Combine well. Spread mixture evenly on prepared cookie sheet; bake 20 minutes. Stir in raisins and bake for 10 more minutes. Remove to wire rack; lightly separate with fork. Granola will become crispy as it cools. ENJOY!

* For those children who have allergies to nuts or seeds, you may replace with any dried food - dried fruit, dried coconut, or more oatmeal.

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