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## BEST SNACKS - Tuesday 17 February 2009

by [the Extra Team](#)

We all know that healthy eating habits begin at home but if they are to continue in the school playground, then your child's lunchbox needs to contain the right nutritional balance.

Given that one in four Australian children is overweight or obese, many parents are becoming aware of the need to pay greater attention to what their kids take to school in their lunchbox.

Dietician and author of Portion Perfection, Amanda Clark says that parents concerned about their child's well being should follow some basic lunchbox guidelines.

As most of us lead fast-paced lives these days, it's tempting to take the easy road and throw in pre-packaged foods.

And our dietician says that's perfectly OK - you just need to make the right choices.

"It's a matter of just looking at which packaged foods you buy because you need to know what is the right portion size and which ones have the right nutritional content", says Amanda.

To help parents pack a healthy lunch, she's picked out her top snacks divided into groups.

Her benchmark is 100 calories per snack.

First up fruit - and while fresh is best, you can mix it up.

"Fresh bananas are great and Heinz "Splat" is a great fruit puree and a nice easy thing to just pull out of the freezer and just put in the lunch box", says Amanda.

Then there are dairy-based products, such as cheese and crackers or yoghurt.

"These are a great choice because we know that dairy products help to keep you satisfied through the day really good for focussing attention", says Amanda.

And finally, she recommends grain-based products like plain muesli bars and these fruit sliced biscuits.

"Even something like some carrot and celery sticks and a dip and you can get nice little containers to put the dip in so nothing spills in the lunchbox", says Amanda.

While these are Amanda's pick of the snacks, there are other treats she says kids can eat moderately.

The secret here is to go with the mini-size - and make sure they eat just one and not six of them!

Amanda Clark




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