



Big Brothers Big Sisters
of Central Carolinas

Nutrition

National Nutrition Month

Food helps us grow, maintain vital life processes in our bodies, and gives us energy to power through our day. Simply put, food is to the human body what gasoline is to an automobile – fuel. This month’s M.Ed.S. is packed with information on balanced diets, nutrition labels, healthy recipes, and more. What healthy recipes will you try with your child/Little this month?

***Please be sure to consult with your doctor before starting any diet.**

BUZZ

Gluten: group of proteins found in wheat, barley, rye, and other grains.

Give your daily diet a make-over with these quick and easy changes:

- ✓ Replace sugary drinks with fruit-infused water
- ✓ Use [smoothies](#) to help meet your daily servings of fruits and veggies
- ✓ Measure out one serving instead of sitting down with the whole bag of chips or pint of ice cream
- ✓ Up your veggie intake with these [40 sneaky tricks](#) from Greatist.com
- ✓ Eat the chocolate! Completely restricting yourself from foods you love can do more harm than good. Just remember [moderation is key](#).
- ✓ Make sure you are [getting enough calories](#) for your age, weight, gender, and activity level. Too many calories leads to weight gain and too little can lead to serious health consequences like slowing or damaging your metabolism.
- ✓ Use an app to track your nutrients and calories

Check out [KidsHealth.org](#) for more info and for answers to common food/fitness questions from kids and teens!



BALANCING ACT

We hear it all the time – “make sure you eat a balanced diet”. But what does that actually mean? The components of a balanced diet include different sources of proteins, fats, carbohydrates, and an assortment of fruits and vegetables. You want to select a variety of foods to ensure you meet your recommended daily amounts of vitamins, minerals, calories, and macromolecules (proteins, carbs, fats) by exposing our bodies to different types of foods and different sources of nutrients. For example, bread, potatoes, and rice are all carbohydrates, but they each have different and unique nutritional values. Check out [MyPlate.gov](#) for more nutrition information and kid-friendly educational materials.

WHAT’S THE VALUE?

[Nutrition labels](#) are little information-filled charts on food packages that tell us what is in the food we are about to eat. They tell us the appropriate serving size for that food as well as how many servings are in the package. They also tell us the nutritional value (amount of nutrients present) of the food which helps us determine if the food is nutritionally dense (high in nutrients and relatively low in calories) or just empty calories (food with little-to-no nutrients). Food labels can be intimidating at first, but the [FDA](#) has a helpful guide on how to read and understand them. After you get comfortable with nutrition labels, play the [What’s In It? game](#) from Baylor College of Medicine with your child/Little and help them learn about it, too!

Eating a healthy diet doesn’t have to break the bank. Check out Leanna Brown’s [Good and Cheap Cookbook](#) for healthy budget-friendly meal ideas.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)	
Servings Per Container 2	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 250	Calories from Fat 110
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
Trans Fat 3g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 470mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	

BUZZ

Organic: USDA certified organic foods must be grown and processed in adherence to federal guidelines that address soil quality, animal raising, pesticides and fertilizers, and additives.

LOVING ME, LOVING FOOD

When things like cheeseburgers and cookies exist eating healthy can be challenging. That’s why it’s important to build and maintain a [positive relationship with food](#), especially during childhood and teen years. Eating healthy the majority of the time is a good place to start. When you do indulge in unhealthy foods, don’t obsess over it and most importantly **don’t punish yourself!** You can help your child/Little develop a healthy relationship with food by avoiding discussing “diets” and weight with or in front of them, educating them on nutrition, letting them select healthy foods [at the store](#), and inviting them to help you in the kitchen.

Thank you for taking the time to be part of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Carolinas. Keep an eye out for next month’s topic: Alcohol Awareness

Food Help Resources:
[Mecklenburg County](#)
[Cabarrus County](#)