

## MyPyramid for Preschoolers –

### A helpful nutrition resource for caregivers

Research shows that caregivers want to know more about nutrition for their preschool children. On Oct. 26th, 2008, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) launched a new Web site called MyPyramid for Preschoolers, designed specifically for parents and caregivers. This interactive Web site provides unique, individualized nutrition guidance to meet the needs of preschoolers two to five years of age.

#### Did you know?

The MyPyramid for preschoolers helps you explore ways to help preschoolers:

- Grow up healthy
- Develop healthy eating habits
- Try new foods
- Play active every day
- Follow food safety rules
- Find sample meal patterns, meals, and snacks
- Plan kitchen activities for preschoolers and more



#### Customized for the individual child

The MyPyramid for Preschoolers Web site provides the option to enter the child's height, weight, and age to obtain a customized Body Mass Index and Height-for-Age chart. The charts can be selected, viewed, and printed.

Parents and caregivers can also enter a child's age, gender, and activity level to get a customized MyPyramid eating plan, which serves as a guide for what and how much to offer from the food groups each day. Each plan, based on calorie level, has two different sample Meal and Snack Patterns. The MyPyramid for Preschoolers states that you don't have to be exact in these amounts every day. A preschooler's food needs depend on how fast they are growing and other factors. A child's doctor can help identify any specific needs.

# MyPyramid Snack Ideas:

## Choose smart, fun snacks! Try these:

### Frozen bananas

Put a wooden stick into a peeled banana. Cut large bananas in half first. Wrap in plastic wrap and freeze. Once frozen, peel off the plastic and enjoy.

### Frozen graham cracker sandwiches

Mix mashed bananas and peanut butter, spread between graham crackers, and freeze.

### Bagel snake

Split mini bagels in half. Cut each half into half circles. Spread the halves with toppings like tuna salad, egg salad, or peanut butter. Decorate with sliced cherry tomatoes or banana slices. Arrange the half circles to form the body of a snake. Use olives or raisins for the eyes.

### Smiley sandwiches

Top a slice of bread with peanut butter and use an apple slice for a smile and raisins for eyes.

### Potato pal

Top half a small baked potato with eyes, ears, and a smile. Try peas for eyes, a halved cherry tomato for a nose, and a low-fat cheese wedge as a smile.

## Snack ideas that combine two or more food groups:

- Yogurt topped with diced peaches or berries
- Whole grain bread spread with peanut butter and sliced bananas
- Graham crackers to dip in yogurt

### Caution:

When offering foods to young children, be aware of choking hazards such as nuts, popcorn, raw vegetables, and hot dogs; do not give these to infants. Closely supervise young children when they eat.



For more information and tips from MyPyramid for Preschoolers, visit <http://www.mypyramid.gov/preschoolers/index.html>

Resource: [www.MyPyramid.gov](http://www.MyPyramid.gov)

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