



Once school starts, does this picture sum up your kids' menu?

Yummy, fast and easy – that's for sure! However, if this burger represents **most** of your kids' weekly meal plan, there may be important food groups missing from their nutritional lives!



There's no doubt that hectic work and school schedules make it challenging for harried parents to be sure that their kids have healthy diets. **Here are some ideas that may help:**

- **Talk to your kids about smart food choices.** Parents are the most important teachers – and role models – for healthy habits. Teach your kids (and, more importantly, **show by your example**) how important good food is for succeeding at work and school, at sports and play, and for feeling and staying healthy.
- **Try to avoid labeling certain foods "bad" and others "good."** Use a positive attitude to influence your kids toward healthy eating, and try to avoid placing guilt, worry or punishment on them regarding their food choices. Eating disorders like anorexia or bulimia can be attributed in part to putting too much pressure on food issues. Rather, try to teach your kids that every food has its place **in moderation**.
- **Keep healthy food handy.** Stock your kitchen with nutritious foods that are easy and "ready-to-go" like fruits, vegetables, milk and whole-grain snacks instead of high-fat, high-sugar snacks.
- **Get your kids involved.** When possible take your kids food shopping with you, teach them to read labels, and let them help make food choices. Get them to pitch in on meal preparation too. These can all be positive, fun opportunities to "bond" while also getting chores done.

Exercise complements good eating! Obesity – including childhood obesity – has been in the news quite a bit lately. It poses a major problem in our country, and is seen as a culprit in health issues including diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and other problems.

Getting our kids to eat well and exercise enough can be a big challenge for today's busy, working parents. Call WFB for additional resources or visit our web site, **My Life Values**, to read articles and view videos on these important topics.