

Grade Schoolers 6-12 Years



Building Healthy Habits to Last a Lifetime



Elementary school years are filled with activity. To keep pace with packed schedules, fuel learning and play, build bone mass and support unique developmental needs at this life stage, high-quality nutrition – like the nutrients provided by dairy foods – is especially important. However, dairy consumption starts to slip below recommended levels before children start elementary school, with the gap widening as they enter school and become more independent.¹ This means school-aged children are at risk of under consuming three key nutrients that dairy foods provide: potassium, calcium and vitamin D.



Dairy's Unique Contributions



Dairy's calcium, vitamin D, protein and phosphorus can help support bone mass, which may reduce risk for osteoporosis later in life. Osteoporosis may seem a long way off for kids, but building bone density early in life is vitally important.



Dairy foods like milk also provide essential nutrients that support the immune system, including high-quality protein, vitamins A and D, zinc and selenium.²



Did You Know?



School meals are healthy and can go a long way in helping make every bite and sip count and ensuring well-rounded and nutrient-rich meals are within reach.

Special Considerations



Drinking low-fat or fat-free plain or flavored milk helps kids get their recommended servings of dairy.^{1,3} Whether plain or flavored, milk is a nutrient-rich and delicious option. Plus, flavored milk is low in added sugars compared to sugar-sweetened beverages and only contributes about 4% of added sugars in kids' diets.⁴

Recommended Daily Dairy Servings^{1,5}

6-8 years old



 2½ cups

9-12 years old

 3 cups

See backside for what counts as a serving of dairy. There are a variety of ways to enjoy milk, cheese and yogurt to meet the recommended daily servings.





Try this Recipe



Berry Dairy Delicious Smoothie

Ingredients:

- 2 cups frozen strawberries
- ½ cup frozen cauliflower
- 1⅓ cup low-fat or 2% milk
- ½ cup low-fat vanilla yogurt
- 2 tbsp honey (optional)
- Fresh strawberries (optional)

Instructions:

- Place all ingredients into a blender and puree until smooth.
- Pour smoothie into a glass and top with strawberries.



Make Every Bite & Sip Count



It's ok to have fun with food. Decorating a smoothie bowl is one way to bring excitement to mealtimes. Let kids add their favorite smoothie ingredients like milk, yogurt and berries then give it a whirl, pour into a bowl and decorate with fruit, nuts or seeds.



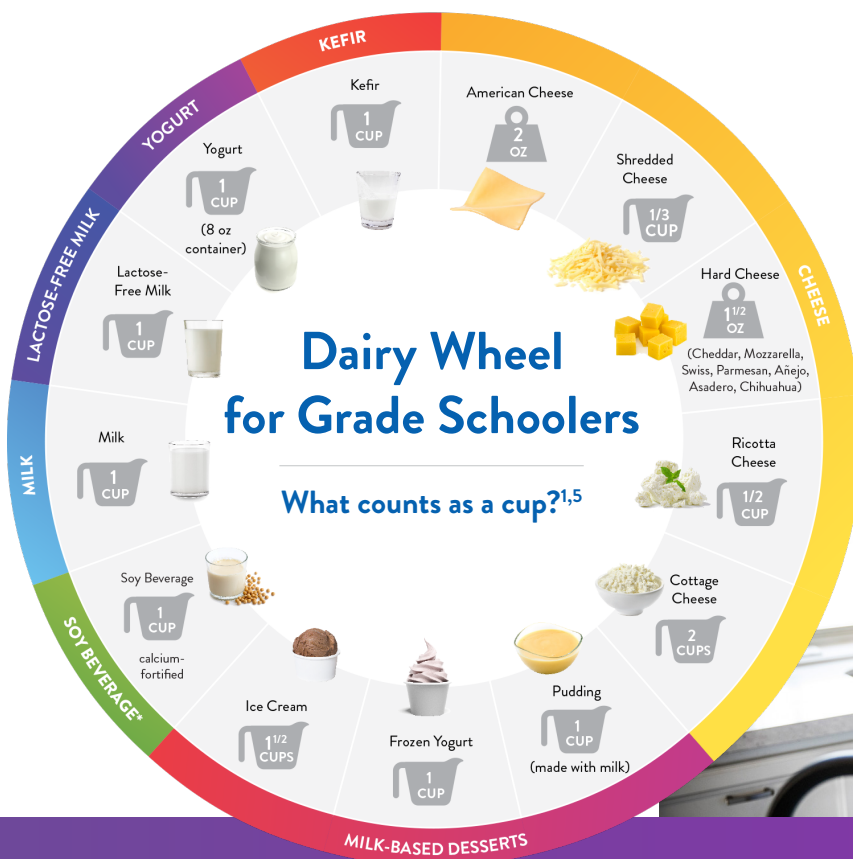
Kids love to dip. Serving a dip alongside veggies encourages kids to try them. Try blending your favorite herbs and spices with Greek yogurt or cottage cheese for an easy kid-friendly dip.



Teach kids where their food comes from. The more involved a child is in growing and preparing foods, the more likely they are to be engaged around food and try something new. Let kids tend to their own herb pots, take them on a field trip to a local dairy farm or ask them to pick out produce at the farmers market.

Sources

1. U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025. 9th Edition. December 2020. Accessed at https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/sites/default/files/2020-12/Dietary_Guidelines_for_Americans_2020-2025.pdf.
2. Weaver CM, Gordon CM, Janz KF, et al. The National Osteoporosis Foundation's position statement on peak bone mass development and lifestyle factors: A systematic review and implementation recommendations. *Osteoporos Int.* 2016;27(4):1281-1386. doi:10.1007/s00198-015-3440-3.
3. Greer FR, Krebs NF, American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Nutrition. Optimizing bone health and calcium intakes of infants, children and adolescents. *Pediatrics.* 2006; 117(2):578-585. doi: 10.1542/peds.2005-2822.
4. National Dairy Council. NHANES 2015-2018. Data Source: Centers for Disease control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey Data. Hyattsville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhanes.htm>.
5. U.S. Department of Agriculture. MyPlate. What foods are included in the Dairy Group? 2020. Accessed at <https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/dairy>.



Milk, yogurt and cheese are foundational foods that help nourish people throughout life. Dairy foods, including lactose-free varieties, are highly nutritious and accessible options that help fill nutrient gaps and contribute to healthy eating patterns. To learn more about how dairy foods help people thrive across the lifespan, visit USDairy.com.

