



# Dear Parents...

**Little kids love to act like animals. And like animals, kids need energy to help them run, roar, pounce, and play. Try these good-for-you, high-energy snacks to pump your little animal full of fuel!**

## Panther Pops

Makes 12 popsicles

Source: *Tickle Your Appetite, USDA Team Nutrition (Strawberry Popsicles).*

- |                                     |                     |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 2 cups fresh or frozen strawberries | 12 small paper cups |
| 2 cups low-fat vanilla yogurt       | 12 wooden sticks    |
1. Combine yogurt and strawberries. Mix well.
  2. Fill cups with mixture. Cover cups with plastic wrap or tin foil
  3. Insert a stick through the plastic wrap or foil.
  4. Freeze popsicles until firm.
  5. Gently, tear away paper cup from yogurt pop before eating.

*\*Supervise children while eating popsicles. Throw away sticks after eating.*

## Gorilla Granola

Makes 16 one-half cup servings

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|--|---|
| 4 cups granola cereal or other cereal      | 1 cup raisins                                       |
| 1 cup dried apricots                       | 1 cup peanuts                                       |
| 1/4 to 1/2 cup shredded coconut (optional) | 1/2 to 3/4 cup chocolate covered candies (optional) |
1. Mix together in a large bowl.
  2. Store in an airtight container to keep fresh.

**There are lots of great books that can motivate your kids to be physically active. Check out these books from your school or local library:**

***Pretend You're a Cat*** by Jean Marzollo

***Shimmy Shake Earth Quake: Don't Forget to Dance Poems*** by Cynthia Jabar

***Let the Games Begin!*** By Maya Ajmera and Michael J. Regan

Family and Consumer Sciences program staff at MSU Extension can answer questions or help you learn more about money management, parenting, and food, nutrition and health issues. Michigan State University Extension educators integrate university and community resources to provide tools that help families succeed. For more information on Family and Consumer Sciences programs in Michigan call your county MSU Extension office. Check the government section of your phone book for contact information for your local Extension office.

# Raising a Reader



## A is for Apple, B is for Banana, C is for Carrots.....

Probably one of the first books you ever bought or received as a gift for your child was an alphabet book. **That's great.** Kids love the simple text and bold illustrations that are often present in alphabet books. And, reading alphabet books to or with your child is a great way to spend quality

time together, while beginning to teach him or her how to read and enjoy books.

*Did you know you that you can teach your child the alphabet, letter sounds, and simple words while teaching him to choose and eat healthy foods and to be physically active at the same time? **It's easy!***

Encourage your child to check out one of these deliciously appealing alphabet books from school or the local library, then follow the steps below. Your child's mind *and* body will thank you for it!

***Animal Action ABC*** by Karen Pandell

***Eating the Alphabet: Fruits and Vegetables from A to Z*** by Lois Ehlert

***Alligator Arrived with Apples: A Potluck Alphabet Feast***

by Crescent Dragonwagon

***Alphabet Soup: A Feast of Letters*** by Scott Gustafson

***An Edible Alphabet*** by Bonnie Christensen

***Potluck*** by Anne Shelby



## Reading and Eating the Alphabet: It's as easy as ABC!

1. Choose an alphabet book from the list above and find a quiet comfortable place to read with your child.
2. On each page ask your child:
  - Where is the A, B, C, D...?
  - What object on this page begins with that letter?
  - Can you think of other foods that begin with this letter?
  - What Food Group does the food on this page belong in?
  - Have you ever eaten the food pictured before? Would you ever try this food?
3. Talk to your child about trying new foods. Trying new foods is a great way to learn to eat new and different foods from all of the Food Groups.

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