

Packing My Own Picnic

You're spreading it well.

Invite your child to pack a special picnic lunch and decide what to include.

Packing a picnic allows your child to act independently and learn from his choices.



Why this is important

Your child probably likes to complete tasks on his own. In this activity he can work independently and his mistakes will have minimal consequences. An important thing for him to learn about independence is that sometimes things do not go as planned. Handling the problems of a poorly packed lunch is a gentle introduction to the risks of problems with later responsibilities, such as getting school supplies together in a backpack.

What you do

- Invite your child to join you on a picnic. Suggest that he first pack a lunch to take with him.
- Go with him to the kitchen and point out available items for packing.
- Talk about where he will be eating, such as in the backyard or at the park, and what foods might be convenient to eat there.
- Lay out the food items as you talk, along with several sandwich bags for him to use. Help him remember where to find his lunchbox or a paper bag.
- Stay in the kitchen while he works, but help only if asked. *I'll be here in the kitchen for a few minutes. Let me know if you need some help.*
- Remember that this is an exercise in independence but you can control his diet by limiting his food choices to healthy items only.

Another idea

When you repeat this game, it might help your child if you remind him of the outcome of the previous picnic: *Last time the pudding leaked out, remember?* He still may make a few poor choices, but you can remind him of what he learned from his prior experiences.

Let's read together!

Hungry Harry
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