

# HEALTHY SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER - Spring 2010

**Happy Spring to everyone in the Milverton School community! As we head into the term break and look forward to longer and warmer days, it seems a good time to update you with the latest news from the Healthy Schools Working Party.**

Milverton Primary



## FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD

Many thanks to all the families who took the time to fill in our **Food Questionnaire** last autumn. You provided valuable feedback about the provision of food at Milverton, as well as some thoughtful ideas to consider as we continue to investigate how to improve our nutritional offerings. Here are a couple of issues that the survey highlighted, as well as an advance announcement of a future, food-focused event!

### Birthday Treats

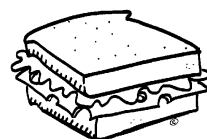
A number of respondents brought up concerns about the tradition of handing out sweets to celebrate children's birthdays. As a Healthy School, Milverton is striving to reduce the amount of sweets and highly processed foods to which students are exposed during school time. Please consider other options to mark your child's special day. Suggestions included:

- offering homemade nut-free goodies (that is, if you have the time and inclination! - your child might even help to make them).
- handing out stickers or other small, inexpensive, non-food items.
- sharing a book or other special thing. Have your child bring in a beloved story that can be read to the class to celebrate their birthday.

Of course, you may decide to do nothing, as many parents already do.

### Beating the Lunch Box Blues

Ham sandwiches – again?! Almost everyone who fills a child's lunch box on a regular basis periodically runs out of inspiration. Kids are finicky, time is short, ideas seem limited. Here are a few suggestions for shaking things up:



- Pasta for dinner? Cook some extra, rinse under cold water, and add a little olive oil. Mix with child-friendly additions for a delicious pasta salad. Try cubes of feta cheese, cucumber and cherry tomatoes. Add some olives if you like them. How about cubes of ham, sweet corn, and peas – or cold chicken and some pesto sauce? The possibilities are almost endless.
- Swap plain, old white bread for something new and unexpected: bagels, pitta, wraps, rye or whole wheat breads. Carbohydrates come in all shapes, colors, and sizes - branch out!
- For a twist on fruit, consider offering some stewed apple or fruit compote. Mix it with natural yogurt and you'll be providing a nutritious and delicious treat.
- Kids may be keener to eat what's in their box if they've helped to create it. Get them to make sandwiches, cut carrots or grate cheese. Give them choices and help them take ownership of their eating.

## WALK YOUR WAY

The Milverton Travel Plan emphasizes safe, sustainable and healthy modes of travel to and from school. Students are encouraged to walk, cycle, or park and stride. We are looking forward to the annual springtime **Walk to School Day**, to be held on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> May, to highlight these goals. The theme this year is “Walk Your Way,” encouraging children and parents to explore the way-finding and independence benefits of walking to school.



Like so many aspects of child-raising, the road to independence is paved with incremental steps. Walking to school is a great opportunity for children to gain confidence and self-reliance. Prepare your children by making them take the lead on their walk to school. Instead of telling them when to cross the street, for instance, wait and watch your child do it. You'll hone their decision-making and personal safety skills.

## PARK AND STRIDE

For those who must use a car to transport children to school, escape the congestion by parking a little bit further away and walking the last few minutes to the school gates. Try St. Mark's Road, Northumberland Road, or Lillington Avenue.

Would you be interested in participating in a mass Park and Stride? We are looking into the feasibility of having parents drop children off near the playing fields on Lillington Avenue and taking turns escorting them to school. Be on the look out for a questionnaire about this and other transportation ideas. What are your thoughts?

## Looking Ahead...

We are beginning to develop plans for a school-wide “**Healthy Eating Day**” next autumn, when students will have opportunities to explore new and exciting foods, to grow their own produce, and to get their creative juices flowing!

Keep an eye out for small packages! We'll be sending seeds home during the summer term for children to grow their own vegetables over the summer holidays. The home-grown produce will then be brought to school in the autumn for a wonderful Harvest celebration. We are hoping to provide a few exciting cooking experiences for the children to turn their delicious veggies into soup!

If you have any thoughts or ideas, please contact us through the school office at: [admin2606@we-learn.com](mailto:admin2606@we-learn.com).

### Cooking with Kids!

#### Apple Coconut Cookies

- 4oz unsalted butter
- 3oz caster sugar
- 2 tbsp golden syrup
- 2 eating apples, cored and grated
- 4oz wholemeal self-raising flour
- 3 tbsp desiccated coconut
- 4oz porridge oats

Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F/gas4 and grease two large baking sheets. Put butter, sugar and syrup in a small saucepan, heat gently until butter melts and sugar dissolves. Place grated apple, flour, coconut and oats in a large bowl. Add the syrup mixture. Mix with a wooden spoon to form a sticky dough. Place desert-spoonfuls of the mixture onto the baking trays to make 12 cookies. Leave space around each one, as they will spread. Bake for 15 minutes, or until golden. Cool on a wire rack & store in an airtight container.

**More fantastic recipe ideas can be found at:**  
[www.coolit.e2bn.org](http://www.coolit.e2bn.org)