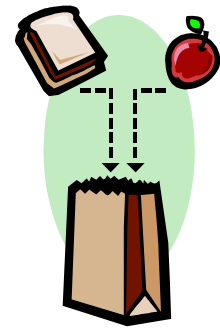




Kendall County Health Department
811 West John Street, Yorkville, IL 60560
(630)553-8026



PACK A SAFE LUNCH

Quick Tips to Packing a Safe School Lunch

- Start with clean hands, food preparation surfaces and utensils. Wash your hands with hot soapy water for 15 seconds and dry them with a paper towel or a fresh cloth (since cloths used for multiple days can harbor bacteria that can make you sick). Teach your children to wash their hands before they eat. Also, wash fruits and vegetables before packing them in your child's lunch.
- Be sure to keep **hot** foods such as soup, chili or stew **hot** by using an insulated bottle. Fill the bottle with boiling water and let it stand for a few minutes. Empty the bottle and then fill it with piping **hot** food. Have your children keep the bottle closed until lunchtime.
- **Cold** foods must stay **cold**, so invest in a few freezer gel packs (available in supermarkets) and an insulated lunch box. Freezer gel packs will keep foods **cold** until lunchtime, but are not recommended for all-day storage. Freeze single-sized juice packs overnight for an additional cold source. The juice will thaw by lunchtime, but it will still be cold. Any potentially hazardous food (i.e. meat, poultry, or egg sandwiches) not eaten at lunch should be discarded.
- If you use brown paper bags for your children's lunches, it is especially important to include a **cold** source as mentioned above. Because brown paper bags tend to become soggy or leak as **cold** foods thaw, use an extra paper bag to create a double layer which will also help insulate the food better.
- Tell your children to use the refrigerator at school, if one is available. If not, make sure they keep their lunch out of direct sunlight and away from radiators, baseboards and other heat sources in the classroom.
- Keep a supply of shelf-stable foods for easy packing. These include fresh fruits and vegetables, crackers, peanut butter sandwiches, packaged pudding and canned fruits or meats. Refrigerating the pudding, fruit, or meat will add **cold** sources to the lunch to keep any potentially hazardous food safe.
- If you make sandwiches the night before, keep them in the refrigerator until packing up to go in the morning.