

Stand up for True Food

by Nina Gelman-Gans

Tu B'Shevat is an awesome time to reinforce and teach great nutritional eating habits. Recently, I've learned to read ingredient labels, reject products with high fructose corn syrup or food additives, and emphasize vegetables, vegetables, vegetables. This can certainly be a challenge with kids, so here are a few tips that have worked for us.

1. When the kids come home from school, have a "snacking plate" of veggies ready for easy consumption.
2. Can't get your children to eat their vegetables? Serve vegetables first. The rest of the meal follows when veggies are safely in tummies.
3. Make a green smoothie. A well-placed handful of frozen blueberries will turn your shake purple, and mask the taste of green vegetables.
4. Promote TRUE fast food: fruits and veggies. Children are exposed to so many fast food images, why not provide healthy ones? Go to any stock photo web site and print up yummy food photos. Post these around school and at home. It will help create a craving for real foods! It's a great way to energize, hydrate and feed our bodies.

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Start a Green Smoothie Habit!

Making your own smoothies is a great way to concentrate nutrients into a tasty charge of energy.

1. Pour $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of liquid in the bottom of your blender. Options include yogurt, soy or rice milk, herbal tea, juice, or water.
2. Wash and cut 1 cup greens. Add to blender. Choose between collard greens, spinach, broccoli, or swiss chard. Vary your selections.
3. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cut banana.
4. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup frozen blueberries.
5. Blend thoroughly, serve, enjoy!

Blended smoothies ease digestion, provide dietary fiber, and slow the absorption of fruit sugars. They provide a great delivery system for eating more greens.

AND MORE...

Speaking of Tu B'Shevat, sprouts are a great way to demonstrate the growing process of a seed. My favorite flavors include sprouts from lentils, broccoli seeds, or green peas. Just soak 1 T. seeds 6-12 hours, rinse and put in a glass jar. Use a cheesecloth and rubber band over the top of the jar to rinse sprouts twice a day. You'll see shoots develop in 1-2 days. Make observations, and conduct a taste test comparison!

