



Taste-testing kids at Temple Israel Preschool in Tallahassee gave their faves a big thumbs-up.

2011 Parents 25 BEST SNACKS



Celeste, 2, and Julian, 4, went back for seconds on the chips and guacamole.



Emily, 2, was so into snack-tasting that she wouldn't stop to let her dad wipe her face.



Three-year-old Adira closely guarded that yogurt pop from her dad, Michael Kress.

All-Star Snacks

Our staffers' kids, their friends, and an entire preschool have been nibbling their way through the newest and most nutritious supermarket munchies. We asked these 200 helpers, ages 11 months to 11 years, to tell us whether the snacks tasted good and polled parents on which were convenient and easy to eat on the go. We tested only packaged products—pretzels, whole-grain crackers, yogurts, and even some savory options like dumplings—that got the green light from four nutrition experts who are parents themselves. They looked over the ingredients and amount of calories, fat, sugar, salt, and vitamins to make sure all our choices were healthy. From the 50 snacks the kids tried, they chose 20 as their absolute faves. Moms picked another five snacks they wanted to keep all to themselves. In addition, our experts told us which classic between-meal bites have long been in their own kitchen. Let the munching begin!

WIN!
these munchies and a Wii for your kid. Go to parents.com/winsnacks for entry details. See rules, page 163.

Grainy Goodness

All of our selections (even the cookie) give kids some fiber.



Late July Organic Dude Ranch Multigrain Snack Chips

120 cal, 5g fat for 13
Made in a nut-free facility with whole grains like quinoa and amaranth, these chips pack omega-3 fatty acids and fiber. Some profits go to summer-camp scholarships. (latejuly.com)

Goldfish Colors Neon

70 cal, 3g fat for 28
These cheesy crackers reel in vibrant hues from juices rather than artificial dyes. Raves a 5-year-old Goldfish fan: "They taste just like the kind we have at home, but some of them are purple—my favorite color." (pepperidgefarm.com)

Cascadian Farm Organic Oatmeal Raisin Kid-Sized Bars

70 cal, 2g fat each
These small, fiber-rich granola bars are the ideal no-mess, stash-in-your purse snack for toddlers and preschoolers. "They're soft like a cookie," says one 4-year-old taster. (cascadianfarm.com)

Bachman Gluten-Free Pretzel Puzzle

120 cal, 3g fat for 16
Made with potato and rice flours, these pretzels are a thoughtful school snack—even kids without food allergies described them as yummy. Five percent of the profits go to Autism Speaks. (bachmanco.com)



Tate's Bake Shop Whole Wheat Dark Chocolate Cookies

80 cal, 4g fat each
Every kid and parent raved about Tate's treats, made with healthy whole-grain flour and dark-chocolate chips. At 2 inches, the cookie's size is just right. (tatesbakeshop.com)

Thomas' 100% Whole Wheat Bagel Thins

110 cal, 1g fat each
About half as thick as a typical supermarket bagel, they're the perfect portion for kids and conveniently presliced. Their 5 grams of fiber will help fill kids up. Smear 'em with PB. (thomasenglishmuffins.com)

Classic Choices

Our experts let you in on their longtime family faves.

Smuckers Simply Fruit

"It's sweetened with fruit juices, not sugar, and has fewer calories than typical jam." Victoria Shanta Retelny, R.D., Chicago dietitian and mom of Grant, 5, and Samantha, 3



Muir Glen Organic Mild Salsa

"We buy this brand because it doesn't have any added sugar and tastes delicious." David Katz, M.D., Director of the Yale Prevention Research Center and dad of five kids ages 11 to 21



Triscuit Reduced-Fat

"They taste amazing and have just three ingredients: whole-grain wheat, oil, and salt." Elisa Zied, R.D., Parents magazine advisor and mom of Spencer, 12, and Eli, 8



Dr. Praeger's Gluten Free Spinach Littles

"These star-and-dinosaur munchies are loaded with iron and vitamin A." Dana Klein Davis, R.D., founder of DKD Nutrition, in New York City, and mom of Olivia, 21 months



My cookie was really crunchy and so chocolaty!

Jane, 5



“My kids sucked up four applesauce squeezies and pleaded for more.”
 Chandra Turner, mom of Grant, 2, and Madelyn, 4

Fruits & Veggies

You don't have to beg your kid to try these convenient products. Even picky eaters dove in with gusto.

Mom Munchies

Your kids might like these snacks, but they've got major grown-up appeal too.

Terra Thai Basil Curry Exotic Vegetable Chips

90 cal, 8g fat for 15

Flavorful but not overpowering, these curry-seasoned sweet potatoes, Japanese squash, and taro chips count as a serving of veggies. (terrachips.com)



YoGreek Yogurt + Crunch

140 cal, 1g fat each

For a snack with substance, try this yogurt-and-granola combo. It's got 11 grams of protein (about twice as much as regular yogurt) and whole grains that will help fill you up. (yogreekyogurt.com)



Seaport Edamame Soybeans in Pods

90 cal, 3g fat each

Microwave these single-serve packets for three minutes, and you have a hot snack loaded with protein, iron, and zinc. (seapointfarms.com)



Wholly Guacamole 100-Calorie Snack Packs

100 cal, 8g fat each

Creamy, delicious guac comes in a single-serve squeeze packet for freshness and portion control. Go for the original or spicy flavor. (eatwholly.com)



34° Whole Grain Crispbread

65 cal, 0 fat for 8

This low-calorie, diet-friendly choice with a slightly cheesy flavor "totally rocks," says one mom. (34-degrees.com)



Dole Ready-Cut Fruit Strawberries, Peaches & Bananas

70 cal, 0 fat per ½ cup

Stash this flavorful medley in your freezer for when you unexpectedly run out of fresh fruit. Our tasters loved it whipped into a frothy smoothie or stirred into low-fat yogurt. (dole.com)



Funky Monkey Applemon

40 cal, 0 fat per pack

Although these mini bags of freeze-dried fruit pieces aren't sweetened, kids treated them like candy. Reports one mom: "My picky 3-year-old polished off the entire bag in less than five minutes." (funkymonkeysnacks.com)



Del Monte Pineapple Wedges

50 cal, 0 fat each

Kids ate this vitamin C-rich pineapple just like a push-pop—and there was no mess because the wrapper catches the juice. Ideal for soccer practice and other times your child can't (or won't!) sit down for a snack. (delmonte.com)



Tang's Natural Vegetable Whole Wheat Dumpling

110 cal, 3g fat for 3

Kids didn't even notice that these were made from whole-wheat dough or stuffed with cabbage, scallions, and carrots. They were so popular that we had to quickly microwave a second batch. (twinmarquis.com)



GoGo Squeeze Applesauce

50 cal, 0 fat each

Open, squeeze, and slurp—that's how kids polished off these portable applesauce packets. Of the five flavors, they preferred the two that aren't sweetened with juice or sugar—Apple Apple and Apple Cinnamon. (materne.us)



Alexia Waffle Cut Sweet Potato Fries With Seasoned Salt

115 cal, 7g fat per ½ cup

French fries as a snack? You betcha if they're made from vitamin A-rich spuds. Kids raved about the checkerboard shape, while moms liked the slightly spicy kick. (alexiafoods.com)

Dairy Smarts

Especially for kids who aren't milk drinkers, these low-fat snacks supply much-needed nutrients.



Frigo Cheese Heads Fit & Fun Lovers Natural Cheese
60–70 cal,
3–5g fat each

Let your child choose which high-calcium, reduced-fat string cheese she wants from this pack: the white mozzarella or the speckled Colby Jack. (frigocheese.com)



Jamba Yogurt & Sorbet bars
80–90 cal,
1–2g fat each

Sold in supermarkets by smoothie chain Jamba Juice, the pops have probiotics to help aid digestion. Says one mom: "I tried to get a lick, and my 2-year-old shouted, 'Don't eat my ice cream!'" (jambajuice.com)



Yoplait Splitz Rainbow Sherbet
90 cal, 1g fat each

You can stick this tri-layered yogurt in the fridge or freezer; our tasters were split on which way they preferred. It's naturally colored and gives 4- to 8-year-olds one fifth of the vitamin D and calcium they need daily. (yoplait.com)

Meat, Nuts, & Beans

Serve up energy-boosting protein, iron, or both with these choices.



Jif Natural Peanut Butter Spread
80 cal, 8g fat for 1 Tbs.

If your kid thinks it's gross when natural PB separates, try this trans-fat-free spread. It contains a small amount of palm oil, so you never need to stir. Both the creamy and crunchy versions (5 calories extra) were hits. (jif.com)



Earth's Best Kidz Baked Popcorn Chicken
120 cal, 3g fat for 8

The coating is whole grain, the chicken breast is antibiotic-free, and "they're fun to pop in your mouth," according to one 8-year-old snacker. Tasty from the oven or the microwave. (earthsbest.com)



Kozy Shack Cowrageous! Pudding
100 cal, 1g fat each

Thanks to low-fat milk and a smidge of sugar, this kid version is 40 calories lighter than some packaged puddings. All three flavors (chocolate, vanilla, and strawberry) are fortified with vitamins A and D and pack 3 grams of fiber. (kozyshack.com)



Bear Naked Peak Energy Trail Mix Cranberry Almond
70 cal, 4g fat for 4 Tbs.

Besides the berries, it's packed with raisins, walnuts, oats, almonds, and seeds. One-quarter cup provides 4- to 8-year-olds with 20 percent of the iron they need for the day. (bearnaked.com)



Tribe Origins Hummus Tomato & Veggie
70 cal, 6g fat for 2 Tbs.

We accidentally had this flavor—packed with dried bell peppers and carrots—sent to our preschool tasters rather than the plain version. But much to our surprise, they loved dipping pretzels in it. (tribehummus.com)

The vanilla pudding was my favorite. But my little sister, Lila, got to eat two of the chocolate ones.

Julia, 5

Reported by Karen Cicero, Amy Gorin, Cheryl Lock, and Caitlin Ultimo