Young athletes must eat right to perform their best, grow and recover. Food is fuel, and proper nutrition will keep kids feeling fit and strong throughout the day!

**KICK-START THE DAY WITH BREAKFAST**

**Recommendations:**
- Start your day with a healthy meal. A missed morning meal can deprive kids of crucial nutrients and leave them with low energy levels later in the day.

**FUEL ON THE GO:**
- Cinnamon-raisin bagel with cream cheese
- Banana with peanut butter
- Low-fat yogurt with fruit

**SNACK TO AVOID THE AFTERNOON SLUMP**

**Recommendations:**
- Prepare snacks ahead of time to have ready when kids arrive home hungry after a practice or game!

**RECOVER RIGHT POST-GAME**

**Recommendations:**
- Choose a meal rich in protein, carbohydrates and healthy fats.

**Key Nutrients for a Strong Body**

- **Protein**: Children should build muscle with protein from food — not dietary supplements. Incorporate protein into every meal.
  - Lean chicken or turkey
  - Peanut or almond butter
  - Eggs
  - Fish
  - Low-fat milk, cheese or yogurt

- **Carbohydrates**: Carbohydrates are stored inside the body as fuel for activities. They also aid in muscle recovery.
  - Before practice or a game:
    - Light carbohydrate-based snack, such as half a sandwich
  - After practice or a game:
    - Smoothie
    - Sliced banana (lengthwise) with peanut butter sandwiched in the middle

- **Hydration**: Hydration helps maintain body temperature, transport nutrients and oxygen to cells, carry waste away from cells and lubricate joints.
  - Water is the best choice.
  - For 1+ hours of activity, replenish electrolytes lost through heavy sweating.

**Drinks 6-8 glasses per day**

*Along with small amounts during physical activity

**Sources:**
- Kids Eat Right: www.kidseatright.org
- Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: www.eatright.org

*Cook for Kids*