



BLT News Line

September 2014

"Celebrate Family Mealtime"

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EXTENSION

September is upon us and children are returning back to school. Not only does returning to school affect students, it also affects many parents as they prepare their children for the new school year while trying to stay within their budgets. For children who would rather take their lunch, below are some tips for packing a nutritious school lunch that fits within your budget:

- * Prepare lunches at home instead of buying pre-packaged meals. Select items that have lower fat, sodium, and sugar content.
- * Include at least one serving of fruit in the lunch.
- * Choose lean meats such as chicken, turkey, or tuna packed in water.
- * Use 100% whole wheat bread instead of white bread or try a bread that has a mixture of white and wheat flour and gradually make the change to whole wheat bread.
- * Use vegetables creatively, such as using spinach instead of iceberg lettuce on sandwiches.
- * Limit candy, potato chips, and other snack foods that are high in sugar and saturated fats. Unbuttered popcorn, whole grain crackers, and pretzels are tasty alternatives.
- * Avoid sodas and juice drinks.
- * Involve your child in preparing his/her lunch. It's a good time to have fun while teaching basic nutrition concepts to your youngster.



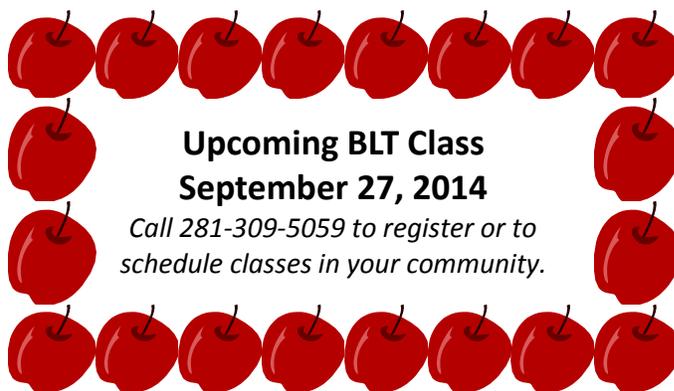
September is also a great time to plan family meals together. **Keep it fun! Keep it simple!**



Family mealtime is much more than just eating. It nourishes the body, mind and soul. Studies show that people eat more balanced meals and a variety of foods when they eat with family or friends. Family mealtime improves family communication. It is a time to share ideas, thoughts and feelings. Family mealtime can make a big difference for a child's self-image, sense of security, self-esteem, and overall sense of happiness.

When planning family mealtimes, try the following tips:

- * Ask family members for their ideas.
- * Turn off the television and all mobile devices.
- * Plan ahead every week.
- * Plan simple and quick meals.



Upcoming BLT Class September 27, 2014

Call 281-309-5059 to register or to schedule classes in your community.

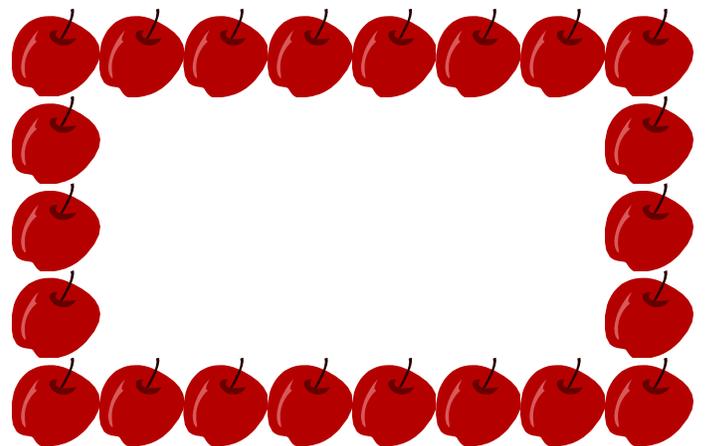
Sources: Excerpts taken from Jon Perrott, Program Coordinator, Better Living for Texans, University of Michigan Health System, West Virginia University & Dr. Sandra Gordon, AOL Health Parenting Committee.



En español, Línea de Noticias BLT

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