

# TIPS TO A SUCCESSFUL LUNCHBOX



It's back to school (hooray) .... but also back to packing lunches! Whether packing the lunchbox is a joy or a chore for you, the dreaded lunchbox fatigue is something we all want to avoid! Not to mention we all know how frustrating it is when kids bring their lunch home with them at the end of the day.

Adding dairy foods to the lunchbox can provide energy to power kids through their day, and importantly the nutrients to help build strong bones for life. Depending on their age and gender, children need between one to three and a half serves of dairy every day. Using the school lunchbox is a great option for ticking off at least one daily serve of dairy nutrition. And the kids will love the variety and flavour. It's a win, win!

There may be a variety of reasons why your child does not eat all the food in their lunchbox. The following suggestions may be helpful.



Try to encourage your child to make decisions about what they eat and chat with them before preparing their lunch.



The lunch box style: your child may have an issue with their lunch container. It may be difficult for them to open or want the latest fashion in lunchboxes to be like the other kids.



**Boredom:** try to pack a different lunch every day. For younger children, cut the sandwiches in different ways to add interest: for example triangles, squares or strips.



You could use one slice of white and one slice of brown to make a 'zebra' sandwich.



You could even add a little message from you in their lunchbox to brighten their day, and their lunch if they're not going to be happy with what you snuck in.



**Too dry:** if they say the filling is too dry, try leaving a sandwich uncut. Some fillings like dips or cream cheese may stay fresher this way.



If your child's appetite seems small, offer smaller servings. For example, half a sandwich might be more appropriate than a whole one



Think about what your child likes to eat at home and try to translate that into a lunchbox option.



Foods should be simple and easy to prepare, ready to eat and appetising after several hours storage in the lunchbox.



Foods such as sandwiches can be prepared the night before or on the weekend, frozen, then taken for each day's lunchbox



It is important to keep offering healthy lunchbox choices in a variety of ways, as children learn to eat what is familiar to them.



Make other meals count: if your child hardly eats anything from their lunchbox despite your best efforts, try to at least ensure they have a nutritious breakfast and dinner that includes a serve of dairy at each meal occasion. Trust that your child will eat when hungry.