

Breakfast a key to school success

school without their pencils and notebooks, increase the risk of weight problems. and they shouldn't send them off to school without a nutritious breakfast either, according to an expert at Baylor College of Medicine.

"A healthy breakfast is important for several reasons," said Dr. Teresia O'Connor, assistant professor of pediatrics at the Children's Nutrition Research Center at Baylor and pediatrician at Texas Children's Hospital.

Research has shown that children who eat a nutritious breakfast in the morning have an easier time focusing on schoolwork since they are not distracted by hunger, according to

Parents wouldn't send their children to O'Connor. In addition, skipping breakfast can thing is to be sure children eat one healthy

She suggests including multiple food groups to ensure a healthy breakfast. This includes whole grains, which help you stay fuller for longer.

Breakfast is also a good time to eat fruit, said O'Connor. Whole fruit provides dietary fiber, which is a part of a healthy diet and can help prevent heart disease and cancer.

Many schools have free breakfast programs. O'Connor suggests parents talk to their children about whether they would prefer to eat breakfast at home or at school. The important

breakfast and not two breakfasts, which adds calories.

O'Connor also suggests getting children into a regular schedule before school starts, including sleep and meal schedules. Sleep is key in helping children focus in school, but is also important for maintaining a healthy weight.

Children need time to burn off the calories they consume during the day, and this can be done by playing actively indoors or outdoors. O'Connor reminds parents that being healthy includes not just what you eat but also physical activity.



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