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Getting 'Tweens' Attention with Good Nutrition

Kids 7 - 12 Know What They Want – But Is It Good for Them?

YAKIMA, Wash. (Feb. 3, 2003) – To twist the lines from a popular Christina Aguilera song, “What do ‘tweens want, what do ‘tweens need?” Or a better question might be, “Who are ‘tweens?” They are kids between the ages of 7 and 12 and, according to food industry watchers, the next big market advertisers and manufacturers should pay attention to. Why? Because ‘tweens wield more than \$100 billion annually in personal spending power – *\$10 billion on food and beverages alone.*

The challenge for the parents of this powerful, yet picky, age group is buying food products kids *want* to eat, while making sure they provide them with the nutrition growing bodies demand.

One way to replace junk and convenience foods in their diet is to get youngsters involved in the creation of healthy snacks. By adding just a few simple ingredients to meals and snacks, such as fruits and vegetables, parents set their kids up for diet success.

Easy-to-open cans of fruit, like canned pears, offer a quick solution for the after-school bunch hungry for a tasty snack. ‘Tweens will surely love a sweet twist on a kid favorite with the *Pear Quesadilla*. Heat up homework time with *Red Hot Cinnamon Pear Sundaes* or fill ‘em up on *Pear Waffle Tacos* for breakfast.

See if the ‘tweens in your household don’t ooh and ahh when they get their chompers around some of the delicious recipes they can make all by themselves!

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'TWEEN CUISINE

2-2-2-2

Pear Quesadillas

(Makes 4 servings)

For an anytime meal or snack, canned pears offer a surprisingly great twist on an old southwest favorite. Look for roasted red peppers in jars in the canned vegetable aisle.

Ingredients:

Four 8-inch flour tortillas, plain, tomato, or whole wheat

One 15-ounce can pear slices or halves, drained

2 cups (8 ounces) pre-shredded Monterey Jack cheese or cheddar cheese

1/3 cup roasted sweet red peppers, julienne-sliced and drained

1/3 cup sliced green onion

One 2-ounce can chopped mild green chiles, drained (1/4 cup)

Desired Toppings: Salsa, dairy sour cream, sliced olives, sliced toasted almonds or crumbled cooked bacon

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350°F. On a large baking sheet place two tortillas. Dice the pears; sprinkle half of the diced pears over each tortilla. Sprinkle half of the cheese, peppers, onions and chiles over each tortilla, leaving a 1-inch edge all around tortillas.

Top with remaining tortillas, pressing them gently over the filling. Bake for 9 to 11 minutes, or until cheese is melted and filling is hot. Cut each quesadilla into eight wedges; serve immediately with Desired Toppings.

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: Approx. 10 minutes

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'TWEEN CUISINE

3-3-3-3

Red Hot Cinnamon Pear Sundaes

(6 servings)

The simple sundae sauce must boil for ten minutes for the proper consistency; however, don't cook it longer, as it will become too thick. It keeps well in a covered container in the fridge for up to several weeks.

Ingredients:

Red Hot Cinnamon Sauce:

1 cup granulated sugar

1 cup water

3/4 cup cinnamon red-hot candies (6 _ ounces)

Sundaes:

1 _ pints vanilla ice cream or frozen yogurt

One 15-ounce can sliced pears, drained

Additional cinnamon candies for topping

Directions:

In a medium saucepan combine sugar, water and candies; bring mixture to boiling, stirring constantly. Reduce heat to medium; boil mixture for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat; make sure to let sauce cool at least 20 minutes before using, or cool, then cover and refrigerate to store.

To make sundaes, scoop ice cream or frozen yogurt into 6 dessert dishes. Spoon sliced pears over each sundae. Spoon Red Hot Cinnamon Sauce over ice cream; sprinkle with more cinnamon candies. Serve immediately. Store leftover sauce in refrigerator.

Makes 1 _ cups sauce.

Prep time: 20 minutes

Nutritional Information Per Serving: calories 389; fat 1.3g cholesterol 5mg; sodium 65mg; carbohydrate 91g; dietary fiber .5g; protein 4.8g.

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'TWEEN CUISINE

4-4-4-4

Peanut Butter-Pear Waffle “Tacos”

(4 servings)

With frozen waffles and canned pears on hand, it's a snap to fix this quick meal or snack for the kids. Round waffles are best for folding into a soft taco shape.

Ingredients:

- One 15-ounce can sliced pears
- 2/3 cup creamy peanut butter
- _ cup cocoa puffs cereal or puffed rice cereal
- 4 frozen round toaster waffles

Directions:

Drain pears, reserving 2 tablespoons of the juice. In a small bowl stir together the peanut butter and reserved juice; stir in cocoa puffs cereal just until mixed.

Toast the waffles as desired. While hot, spread each waffle with one-fourth of the peanut butter mixture; top with one-fourth of the pear slices. Fold each filled waffle into a taco shape; serve immediately.

Prep time: 10 minutes

Nutritional Information Per Serving: calories 426; fat 26g cholesterol 37mg; sodium 360mg; carbohydrate 38g; dietary fiber 4g; protein 15g.

For more tasty recipes featuring flavorful canned pears and to sign up for a free quarterly e-newsletter, visit www.eatcannedpears.com.

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