

September is National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month. Over the past 30 years, the childhood obesity rate in America has almost tripled. According to the CDC, in 2010 approximately 17 percent of children ages 2-19 years were already obese. Children and teenagers who are obese are more likely to become obese adults. Overweight and obese youth are at greater risk of developing serious adult health problems such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke, certain types of cancer, and osteoarthritis. To reduce risk of these diseases, healthy eating and physical activity is important for children and adolescence.

Empty calories from added sugars and solid fats contribute to 40% of daily calories for children and adolescents aged 2 to 18 years, affecting the overall quality of their diets. Approximately half of these empty calories come from: soda, fruit drinks, dairy desserts, grain desserts, pizza and whole milk. Kids ages 2 to 11 will see 26,000 TV ads this year—22 percent of them marketing food, most of which is considered junk food or fast food. To ensure a healthy lifestyle for children, remember the 5-2-1-0 rule: Every day have 5 fruits and vegetables, no more than 2 hours of screen time, at least 1 hour of physical activity, and 0 sugary beverages.

For a homemade, healthy version of kid-friendly chicken nuggets (which are also freezable), try out this recipe!

Freezer Friendly Chicken Nuggets



Ingredients:

- 4 lbs. chicken, cut into nugget pieces
- 5 eggs, beaten
- 1 ½ cups flour
- 2 cups of blended Cornflakes cereal, with paprika or favorite spices added

Directions:

1. Set up your dipping station. Put flour in a bowl, beaten eggs in another bowl, and blended Cornflake crumbs in a 3rd bowl.
2. Cut your chicken into nugget-sized pieces.
3. Coat each piece of chicken in flour, followed by the egg, followed by the Cornflake crumbs.
4. Bake at 350 degrees F for 20 to 25 minutes. Serve with favorite dipping sauce and enjoy!

Freezing Directions:

1. Let the nuggets cool completely.
2. Portion the nuggets out based on how many your family would eat at a meal and place them in freezer bags.
3. Be sure to date and label the freezer bags. Freeze up to 3 months for best quality.