

Breakfast Boosts Brain Power

By Margaret O. Kirk, *Family Health Handbook*, *workingmother.com*, February/March 2008

Eating well improves learning and memory in schoolchildren, according to an Australian and Indonesian study that was published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* (October 2007).

What You Need To Know

Earlier studies have reported that students perform and behave better in class if they eat well, but this research also indicates that nutrition helps kids learn more efficiently, boosts memory skills and has a beneficial impact on test performance.

What You Can Do

Don't let the kids leave the house with an empty stomach. "I can't stress how crucial breakfast is," says Dr. Grant. "Whole grains in the morning, including a balance of protein and carbohydrates — it's so important. It's the food that fuels your mind so that you can get through the academics." An ideal breakfast? Whole-grain toast or cereal (the carbohydrates); an egg, cheese or yogurt (protein); and milk or orange juice. (See *Healthy Child*, *workingmother.com*, February/March 2008 issue.)

Provide healthy food choices at every meal and think twice before you slip that little bag of cookies into the lunchbox. Limit sugar products, says Dr. Grant. They can have an adverse effect on a student's ability to concentrate.

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