



Lunchboxes

NZDSA
resources



Tips and tricks from other NZDSA families on school lunches.



LUNCHBOX LEARNING

Tips and tricks from other NZDSA families on school lunches.

- Courtney kept bringing home most of her lunch even when it was food I knew she loved. It turned out the children only got 10 minutes to eat their lunch and she couldn't eat hers in that time. A quick word with the teacher and the problem was solved.
- James thought as it was a 'lunch' box, he couldn't eat his morning tea from it. We now write "M" on his wrapped morning tea and "L" for his wrapped lunch.
- If using gladwrap scrunch up the fold ends otherwise it needs incredibly good fine motor skills to undo. I use bags, paper or disposable containers rather than gladwrap.
- Abigail is allowed to leave her drink bottle on a window sill in her classroom rather than her bag, so she has easy access to it and her teacher aide can see if it needs topping up with water.
- We had such trouble with Joshua learning to put his lunch-box back in his bag after lunch, he would just leave it in the middle of the field or where ever he went to play. In the end they made it one of the class duties to help Joshua, so each day one child had the responsibility of checking that Joshua had put his lunch box away.
- We encourage Lily to make her own lunch. She decided to have a hard-boiled egg like her friend one day, but just took a raw egg from the fridge not realizing it had to be cooked. To save face she ate the egg raw, which gained her a lot of respect from the boys in her class!
- NEVER BUT NEVER put in your best teaspoons! I buy a big pack of plastic teaspoons from the \$2 shop just for lunch boxes, having lost lots of my cutlery!
- Make sure your child's lunch box is easy to identify. Like almost all the boys in the school, Samuel has a 'Bob the Builder' lunch box, which makes searching lost-property for it much harder!
- Check if your child can use the school water fountain. Ones with push in buttons are often easiest. Make sure he has his own water bottle if he can't use the school water facility.

True tales & tips



- If your child needs help to open their lunch box and its contents, this can be mentioned in the ORS application form.
- If your child is continually losing lunch boxes, use an ice-cream container instead.
- A dentist advised against using Popa juice bottles for Trent. Children use their teeth to pull up the top and the tops start to wear away teeth. I have found other plastic drink bottles with a pull up lid from the Warehouse and also seen them in Pay Less Plastics and in supermarkets easier for the children to pull up with their hands.
- When children put away their lunch box encourage them to put their lunch box in their bag the same way the zipper runs across. This will also help with zipping up their bag.
- About 12% of children with Down syndrome have coeliac disease. Encourage manufacturers to make gluten free lunch box fillers by buying them occasionally, even if your child doesn't need thave coeliac disease. Try Griffins Cookie Bear Iced Rice.
- At Kindy they taught Peter to pour his own drinks by making a large mark around the plastic cup to show him when it was full enough to stop pouring.
- Usually I cut the end off the wrappers of fruit bars or muesli bars to make it easier for Edward to manage. If I forget, the school offers him scissors so he can cut it himself.
- Make sure your child understands lunch box contents are not for sharing. We had to stop Lucy giving food to anyone who asked because she felt sorry they didn't have anything nice to eat.
- Use hassle free Lunch Boxes - Ones that open easily!!!! A lunch box with an attached lid means one less thing to loose.
- Georgia far prefers soft food, but she will eat an apple so long as it's already sliced for her.
- Cheese contains loads of protein and calcium and is a great way to finish a packed lunch as it cleans your child's teeth too.
- Many children with Down syndrome are constipated. Kiwi fruit helps constipation and has been shown to contain a special enzyme which hurries its progress through the gut.
- Each time Thomas forgot to put the top on his drink bottle properly, we'd end up with everything in his bag soaked through. Now we use a bag with a drink holder on the outside.

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NZDSA resources

Want to know more?

The NZ Down Syndrome website can provide more information and link you to many more articles and organisations.

www.nzdsa.org.nz



0800 693 724

nzdsa.org.nz

PO Box 4142, Shortland Street

Auckland, 1140

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For permission requests contact the New Zealand Down Syndrome Association

neo@nzdsa.org.nz

OR

NZ Down Syndrome Association Inc.

P O Box 4142

Auckland, 1140