
Ideas for Lunch

From GlynnisWhitwer.com

These creative ideas are compiled from tips from my readers. I'm grateful to them for sharing what has worked with their families.

To use these tips in your own home, pick your top 5-10 ideas and list them on a sheet of paper. You might mix and match from some of the categories. For example, pick a cheese and fruit and include a soup for one menu idea. Make sure you've got the ingredients on hand, then post this list of ideas for lunch on your refrigerator or inside a cabinet door. Change this list every once in awhile to add variety.

BREAKFAST FOR LUNCH:

Boiled eggs w/ muffins

Cereal & milk w/ fruit or honey

Egg & toast

French toast

Hard boiled eggs - good sliced & put on toast

Make-ahead muffins w/ some yogurt

Omelets (cheese, bell pepper, ham, tomatoes, bacon bits, etc.)

Pancakes w/ fruit or chocolate chips for fun!

Scrambled eggs - add chopped spinach and/or peppers & sprinkle cheese on top

Toaster waffles w/ fruit or maple syrup/agave nectar

Turkey bacon or sausage

SANDWICHES

Bacon, lettuce & tomato sandwiches

Bagel sandwiches – cream cheese, lunch meat & spinach on a toasted bagel

BBQ pork sandwiches w/ cole slaw

Bologna, cheese & grape jelly sandwiches

Egg salad sandwiches

Egg sandwich - 1. Toast a bagel, fry an egg & top w/ a slice of ham & slice of cheese (add mayo, lettuce) 2. Scrambled egg sandwiches on toast

Grilled cheese & soup

1. A modified version of grilled cheese — just put a slice of cheese (any kind, but my kids prefer Muenster) on a piece of bread. Broil it for a few minutes.
2. Add ham to grilled cheese

Home-made “Subway” - hot dog buns & cold cuts

Hot dog (w/ chili & cheese if desired)

Muffins- (can make ahead) Meatloaf muffins, zucchini muffins or carrot muffins

Nutter butter sandwiches on toast - It's butter, peanut butter & marshmallow cream - (make sure you put it on the toast when it's hot.)

Peanut Butter Sandwiches - (Other options: almond butter, sun butter) - Freeze sandwiches if desired, then let thaw for 30 minutes before eating.

1. PBJ Bullet - Left over hot dog bun
2. PB & apple slices sandwich (can use tortillas)
3. PB & banana sandwiches (w/ bread, bagel or tortilla) (add jelly or fruit preserves)
4. PB & honey sandwiches
5. PB & jelly sandwiches
6. PB & raisins on mini whole wheat bagels w/ strawberry soup
7. PB&J w/ little twists - Use frozen waffles or leftover pancakes instead of bread, almond butter or Nutella instead of PB & marshmallow fluff instead of jelly!

Pita bread & guacamole

Spicy black bean burgers w/ swiss cheese, honey mustard, sprouts & tomato

Toast w/ jelly or peanut butter

Toasted English muffin using any lunch meat/ cheese combo

Tomato sandwich - Toasted bread, mayo & fresh sliced tomatoes

Tuna, relish & mayo on crackers

Tuna melt & an olive for each finger

Turkey or ham & cheese

Biscuit sandwiches - Use a can of biscuits & flatten - add cream cheese & fruit - use any fruit or pie filling (peaches) The kids can have fun & even little ones can flatten the biscuits, spread sauce & put something on top. Fold over and bake as directed on can.

Veggie burgers w/ cheese, carrot chips & fresh fruit. (Veggie patties can be microwaved.)

Unmade sandwiches- bread, lunch meat & cheese on a plate instead of making it into a sandwich. This also works well when eating on the go. For little ones, just cut everything into bit size pieces & put it in a container.

SALADS:

- Chef salad - Cut toppings and store separately.
- Cooked Salad - Warm up leftover boiled potatoes & broccoli (or any cooked veggies) in microwave. Put in bowl w/ lettuce & any raw veggies. Serve w/ dressing (Caesar or Ranch).
- Salad Bar: prepare a large bowl of salad w/ different veggies, meats & shredded cheese (chopped red bell peppers, cucumber slices, diced cauliflower, sunflower seeds or almonds, or black bean, corn, diced tomatoes or salsa.) Add some whole-grain crackers & apple slices or serve w/ garlic bread. - (Prepared the night before & store in separate containers in the fridge.) Everyone can make their own salad w/ ingredients of their choice.
- Shrimp salad (Mix in a little mayo, some chopped celery & Old Bay for a yummy shrimp salad. - Enjoy w/ a tossed green salad.)
- Taco salad
- Tuna salad on a bed of lettuce & a boiled egg

MEAT:

Bag of cooked shrimp. Serve with cocktail sauce.

Barbecue Beef or Pork with beans

Bite-size tacos - Cook the meat & kids can make "tacos" in the scoop shaped corn chips.

Can of pork and beans w/ crackers (mustard added in for extra taste)

Chicken nuggets

Chicken salad - (See recipe section for ideas)

Chili w/ meat & beans w/ scoop chips - Heat in microwave. Add sprinkle cheese. (mustard for taste)

Corn dogs or Mini-corn dog muffins (microwave or cook in the toaster oven)

Fish sticks

Ham or turkey & cheese rollups - take a piece of sandwich meat & lay a slice of cheese on top, then roll it up & eat. (can secure w/ toothpicks)

Ham salad

Hamburgers

Fish tacos (can use canned salmon or tuna)

Grilled chicken sandwiches (w/cheese & honey mustard) Use pre-cooked frozen grilled chicken.

Grocery store rotisserie chicken (use for salads, sandwiches, or quesadillas)

Leftover baked chicken dipped in BBQ sauce, ketchup or ranch dressing

Mason jar meals - Layer brown rice, chicken & a veggie on top. Kids can put in a bowl & warm it up or just eat it cold. Use the jars for single serving leftovers too!

Meatball hoagies - (frozen meatballs are easy to microwave)

Meatloaf - bake it in muffin pans. (Freeze these separately & you can just pop one in the microwave, add salad & have a great meal.)

Microwavable chicken egg rolls (sold at Walmart) - You can microwave them first, then finish them off in the toaster oven to make them crispy. Use ranch dressing for dipping.

Oven roasted beef & cheddar - (slice open a kaiser roll, pile on thin sliced roast beef, brush a little melted butter mixed w/ Worcestershire sauce & add a slice of cheddar. Roast at 325 until melted.)

Parmesan chicken - Instant rice, can white chicken & can of Italian tomatoes

Pork chops - Bake w/ cans of Campbell's chicken & rice soup

Salmon patties / Chicken patties

Sloppyroni - Make "Manwich" following the directions, then mix half a bag/box of cooked macaroni.

Spam, potted meat & Vienna sausages

Steak strips w/ potatoes & veggies (If leftover steak is dry add a little soy sauce & microwave.)

Walking tacos - Put taco seasoned beef into a single serving bag of Frito chips. Add cheese, lettuce, etc.)

Wings (Make this yourself & freeze)

PASTA: (See recipe section for ideas)

BLT pasta salad (See recipe section)

Canned pasta - SpaghettiOs, Ravioli, etc.

Frozen tortellini -Just boil, drain & top w/ whatever you like. (Idea: Add a little butter & parmesan. Serve w/ some fresh fruit & green beans.)

Macaroni & cheese - (Healthy idea: Add frozen carrots & peas to the boiling noodles just before they're done.)

Macaroni salad (with or w/o tuna)

Pasta (especially the bow – tie or " fun " shapes!) & just add sauce.

Prepared cold pasta salad - (Idea: Make some w/ omega 3, higher fiber rotini & the kids still like it!)

Ramen noodles - add tuna / chicken, some cheese & veggies (w/ spinach side salad)

Ravioli

Refrigerated tortellini (pre-packaged & ready to boil) w/ refrigerated or canned sauce. (Buitoni)

Spaghetti

Tri-colored pasta salad w/ fresh veggies - (Idea: Salad w/ a mayonnaise, vinegar, tiny spoonful of sugar, garlic, salt & pepper dressing. It helps to hide the taste of the veggies! Match it up w/ some fresh fruit & cool whip for dessert.)

PIZZA IDEAS:

Bagels, Biscuits, Crescent, Frozen dough, English muffins, Flatbread, Pitas or Tortillas

Toppings: Sauce = red, BBQ or Alfredo, black olives, canadian bacon, cheese, chicken, fresh basil, hamburger, onions, pepperoni, peppers, sausage, tomatoes, etc.

Arnold Sandwich Rounds - Spread a little pizza sauce on them, sprinkled w/ a little mozzarella & throw into toaster oven.

Barbecue chicken pizza - Use BBQ sauce instead of pizza sauce & top w/ cheese & chicken (leftovers work great for this) Bake about 6 minutes until bubbly.

Biscuit pizzas - Use can of biscuits & flatten them out on a cookie sheet. Spread w/ a little pizza sauce from a jar, sprinkle w/ shredded cheese & other toppings. Then bake.

Crescent pizza roll - Take a crescent, lay it flat, put a few slices of pepperoni, half a cheese stick, roll & bake according to the package.

Flatbread pizzas - Use pita or flatbread

Fruit pizza - Toast bagels or english muffins, add peanut butter or cream cheese & sliced fruit (of choice) on top.

Homemade Pizza Rolls - Cook a pound of hamburger, roll out dough on cookie sheet. (box mix) Put hamburger & mozzarella cheese on dough. Roll it up lengthwise. Make two. Brush garlic butter on rolls. Bake at 350 for 15-20 minutes. Cut up in slices & use spaghetti sauce for dipping.

Mini pizza - (can use pre-made mini crusts)

1. With pita, sauce & sprinkled cheese – pop in microwave for a brief time or slide in oven or toaster oven to melt the cheese.
2. Personal pizzas on English muffins - (let the kids build their own pizzas.) - Just broil them a few minutes or cook in oven on 400 for about 7-8 mins (or microwave until cheese melts - about 1 minute.)
3. Toast muffins, top w/ a bit of spaghetti sauce & sprinkle w/ cheese. Keep turkey pepperoni, browned & crumbled sausage & chopped onion & green pepper in the freezer to add. Broil till cheese melts.

Personal Hawaiian pizzas - English muffins, slice of sandwich cheese, chopped ham & pineapple chunks.

Pepperoni Dough Roll - Take frozen roll dough, thaw just until pliable (about 1 hr), wrap around 5-6 slices of pepperoni & let rise in muffin pan (covered w/ plastic wrap) in warm place just until it rises over top of pan (if they get too puffy they aren't as good). Bake at 350 for about 15 min. Yummy, even at room temp or easy to reheat in microwave.

Pizza roll-ups / Pepperoni rolls - Jarred pizza sauce or pizza quick, some mozzarella cheese & the sliced pepperoni – Spread the sauce onto the tortilla shell, sprinkle some cheese & pepperoni, then roll it up & put it in the microwave for 30 seconds or so.

Tortilla pizza - Jar of pizza sauce, cheese & some pepperoni - Use the skillet to make individual pizzas on the stove. (With the fixing between two tortillas, they're not too hard to flip.)

SNACKS:

Applesauce

Big glass or thermos of milk / chocolate milk

Crackers w/ peanut butter or cheese & lunch meat

Granola w/ dried fruit & seeds or Granola Bars

Jello cups

Nuts or trail mixes (Cashews, almonds, walnuts)

Oatmeal

Pickles

Popcorn bags

Pretzels

Pudding cups

Raisins

Rice cakes w/ peanut butter, cream cheese or spreadable cheese

Sweet tea w/ lemons

Yogurt w/ fruit or granola (also use as a dip w/ pretzels or veggies)

CHEESE:

Cheese & stick crackers

Cheese quesadillas w/ fresh chunky salsa

Cheese slices & crackers

Cheese sticks

Cheese w/ fruit (grapes) & toast (w/ fruit preserves)

Cottage cheese w/ potato chips as the dippers. (Doritos)

Cubes of cheese

Microwaveable mac & cheese

Ritz crackers topped w/ squares of lunchmeat or just shredded or sliced cheese & microwave for a few seconds.

String cheese

FRUIT:

Apple slices dipped in caramel, honey, or peanut / almond butter

Cherry tomatoes

Fresh seasonal fruit

Fruit cups

Fruit dip

Fruit juice

Fruit salsa (see recipe section)

Granola w/ dried fruit and / or chocolate chips

Grapes & goldfish in a bowl

Healthy fruit / protein smoothies w/ yogurt (Idea: Use Kefir probiotic drink, frozen bananas & berries w/ a hand blender). Serve w/ toast.

Kabobs: slice watermelon, cantaloupe, strawberries, blueberries, cherries, grapes, bananas, oranges & kiwi. Wash up in advance & prepare. (peanut butter, Nutella or yogurt for dipping)

Pomegranate seeds - Very refreshing! (Trader Joe's has ready-to-eat packs)

VEGGIES: (Can serve w/ pita chips & hummus, salad dressing (ranch) or other dip)

Baked potato bar (Leftover boiled potatoes - Warm up in the microwave & it tastes like a loaded bake potato) :: Potatoes can be "baked" in the microwave within 5 minutes - Top w/ cheese, sour cream, beans, bacon, salsa, ham, etc.

Bell pepper strips (Red, Orange, Yellow)

Carrots w/ ranch or blue cheese dressing

Celery

Cucumber slices

Edamame

Fresh steamed green beans (cool from fridge)

Frozen peas & carrots

Hummus & veggies

Jicama

Potato salad

Potato skins

Raw asparagus

Raw sweet potato slices

Snap peas

Squash cut in slices (add to a salads)

Stalks of rhubarb

Steamer veggies that are easy to pop in the microwave

Veggie trays

Veggie wrap w/ hummus

W/ BEANS:

Bake refried beans topped w/ beef or chicken, cheese & enchilada sauce in a (jelly roll-size pan) until it starts to bubble. Serve w/ chips, sour cream & veggie “toppings”. (This is the only way my kids will eat the beans.) It reheats well. Fruit is a refreshing side.

Bean tostadas

W/ CHIPS:

1. Easy tacos - Cheese on chips w/ salsa & bacon bits

2. Guacamole, shredded cheese & blue corn chips

3. Healthy nacho plate w/ beans & cheese, topped w/ salsa

4. Homemade nachos - chips topped w/ cheese, homemade taco seasoning & add ground beef, jalapeños, olives, corn, black beans, etc. (Bake in the oven) Top w/ salsa .

5. Salsa, grated cheese & chips

6. Taco dip - Cream cheese on bottom, black beans & salsa next (or turkey chili), cheddar cheese on top.

Bake 350 for 15 minutes, serve w/ whole grain chips or crackers.

W/PEANUT BUTTER OR ALMOND BUTTER:

Ants on a log (celery, peanut butter (or strawberry cream cheese) & raisins)

Apples (Slice 2 green apples into rings & make an apple sandwich w/ peanut butter)

Bananas

Carrots

Celery

Cherries

Craisins

Dried or fresh fruit

Graham cracker peanut butter “sandwiches”

Mini marshmallows

Pretzels

Raisins

Sweet pickles

W/ TORTILLAS: - You can roll just about anything into one (Wrap it in a tortilla & they eat it up!!) [**Use

lettuce for wraps or coconut or spinach tortillas as an alternate to add variety.]

1. Bean & cheese burritos or quesadillas (warm black beans or refried beans & cheese on a tortilla. Microwave & then wrap in foil.)
2. Black beans sautéed w/ cheese & little onion. Make it into a bean burrito.
3. Chicken & cheese w/ pizza sauce to dip
4. Peanut butter & banana and / or jelly - (slather tortilla w/ peanut butter & roll up a whole banana & sprinkle w/ cinnamon & sugar to sweeten.)
5. Hummus wrapped in a whole wheat tortilla w/ spinach & cashews
6. No-meat tacos dipped in ranch or salsa
7. Pizza - See pizza section
8. Sliced chicken breast, pepper jack cheese, fresh spinach & mushrooms. Wrap in tortilla.
9. Turkey, burrito shells, ranch dressing or whatever condiment

10. Turkey, ham or other cold cuts, add red bell pepper strips & cheese - w/ mayonnaise, mustard or salsa.

OTHER:

Canned soup. Keep a nice assortment on hand.

Canned tamales

Couscous boxed mixes (easy, fast & cheap)

Crock pot - Chili, soups & stews - top it w/ some grated cheese

Lo-mein & veggies

Homemade Lunchables - Stack in different ways or cut up the meat & cheese in different shapes. Use a cute, divided plate & fill it w/ strips of ham, turkey, low-fat turkey pepperoni or other deli meats, sliced cheeses / cheese chunks & a few crackers or wheat thins. Serve w/ fruit salad.

Precooked tofu & lots of fresh veggies

Pot pies

Rice (leftovers are good!)

1. Steamer bags of fried rice (add some of the rotisserie chicken to the rice after microwaving.)
2. Microwavable rice pouch (Sold at Trader Joe's)- w/ soy sauce (add veggies, chicken or shrimp & cashews)
3. Rice-a-roni

Tater tots or French fries

Tomato soup

1. With instant rice
2. With cheese sprinkles & hard boiled egg sprinkles on top
3. Topped w/ goldfish crackers
4. With grilled cheese

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- If your kids can use the oven, get them frozen nan bread, pakoras & samosas. Buy yogurt for dipping. Or even frozen chutney, which can go in the microwave.
 - Use Trader Joe's garlic naan, spoon tomato sauce & cheese, top w/ pepperoni & cut it in half & stack it – everything is tight in there so it all stays put. I put ranch in a dipping container & include cut up red bell peppers, carrots & celery.

LEFTOVERS

- Leftovers: Cook in abundance for dinner to have leftovers for lunch & sometimes breakfast or odd-hour snacks. (Freeze the leftovers for a quick meal in individual servings so anyone can pop it in the microwave.) :: Make burritos w/ beans, cheese, salsa & meat. Wrap in foil & freeze them. Grab & microwave for lunch!
- Leftover ideas: Use what you have! Have chili, hamburgers & hotdogs? = Then have chili cheese fries one day – w/ added tomatoes, onions & sour cream. Then w/ the hamburgers, make hamburgers w/ gravy & rice one night. With hotdogs, make a slit in them & fill w/ cheese, wrap them in bacon & bake them until the bacon is done. This saves you from the same things over & over.

NAME BRAND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Hot Pockets

Boston Market frozen meals

Buitoni refrigerated tortellini & sauce (pre-packaged)

Campbell's Soup At Hand

Costco egg rolls

Costco size pack of Wholly Guacamole in the freezer

Frozen Superpretzels

Gogurts

Hormel Natural Choice lunch meats

Kefir probiotic drink (good for smoothies)

Monte Cristo's spicy black bean burgers

Pure Wraps (coconut wraps - green package)

Uncle Ben's vegetable rice packs

Vienna sausages

Walmart brand microwavable chicken egg rolls

FUN IDEAS

- Give the kids paper plates & silverware - Tell them they can have a picnic (makes it more fun) & then have them choose an item from each shelf of the fridge!
- To add motivation for kids turn anything into a cupcake - Corn bread cupcake w/ a hotdog in the middle... PB & j cupcake... Etc.
- Fun shapes - Use cookie cutters to cut the crusts off for fun sandwiches (after they are put together) - Anything that can be cut w/ cookie cutters tastes better! (sliced cheese, bread, pancakes, or apple slices)
- MUFFIN TIN MEALS aka "Bento Box" (or use a chip-and-dip type tray to be festive) - Fill each section w/ something different. Chicken nuggets, chicken or ham slices, cubed cheese, carrot sticks, sliced cucumbers, crackers & fruit (strawberries), a dip or peanut butter & a treat or cookie.
- PEASANT LUNCH - 1 cheese stick, 1 oz nuts, apple slices or orange wedges, slice of bread or 8 crackers, 10 black olives (one for each finger, of course!)

ORGANIZING

- Choosing one from each category per day: 1. ham rolls, celery & PB sticks, pepperoni & cheese 2. Red pepper strips, carrots, cucumber slices 3. Cut up melon, grapes, berries 4. Crackers, nuts, buttered bread 5. Pickles or olives
- Have kids make 3 lists of food they like: 1. Proteins (peanut butter, hummus, milk, eggs, cheese, etc.) 2. Carbs (bread, tortillas, oats, most fruit, granola bars...) 3. Bulk/Fiber (carrots, peas, celery, jicama, berries...) - They can create their own little balanced meals & snacks.

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- Keep all the snacks in a bin labeled “Snacks” (duh) where they are easily accessible.
 - Let kids help w/ the lunch menu, so they’ll be helping w/ the planning & prep. - The “everyone gets to pick one dinner a week” is great! - That way, when you have something that is not their favorite, they can’t complain. They have to eat it b/c their favorite will be coming!
 - Show your oldest (if applicable) how to plan for what would need thawing and / or preparation in advance on a calendar so you don’t forget the pre-meal prep.

RECIPES

CHIPS:

Cinnamon chips home made (ahead of time) - Make them from soft corn tortillas - lightly butter 6” tortillas, sprinkle w/ cinnamon & sugar. Cut w/ a pizza wheel into triangles. Bake for about 8 minutes. Store in a air-tight bag until use. (You can buy cinnamon chips by the bag at some grocery stores.)

TACOS:

Crock Pot Taco Joe

1 med onion diced

4oz can green chili peppers

1 can each: corn, black beans, pinto beans (rinsed)

1 pkg taco seasoning

Heat in crock pot until heated throughout, or longer for more flavor

Serve on chips, rice, pasta, or plain

Quick Tacos - Cook ground meat w/ taco seasoning as you normally would for tacos. Add 8 oz cream cheese to the meat mix. Cook taco shells as directed. When cooled slightly, fill shells w/ meat mixture, then place on cookie sheet & freeze until solid. Place frozen shells in ziplock bag. To serve, take out desired shells & place in microwave w/ some grated cheese & heat until warmed throughout OR place in sprayed baking dish w/ grated cheese on top of shells & bake at 350 for 30 minutes.

SOUP:

Crock pot of soup -

Taco soup - serve it w/ a few Fritos on top & sour cream

1 lb browned ground beef or cooked chicken (can be left overs or even canned)

1/2 cup onion finely chopped

1 can kidney beans (drained & rinsed)

1 can black beans (do not drain)

1 can corn (do not drain)

1 can Rotel tomatoes

1 large can diced tomatoes

1 pkg taco seasoning

1 pkg Hidden Valley Ranch dressing mix (dry)

**Combine in crock pot until hot. You may top each bowl w/ shredded cheddar cheese, Fritos & sour cream.

"Homemade" soup - chicken bouillon cubes boiled w/ pasta & spices

SALAD:

BLT pasta salad - (this recipe that makes about 8 servings using 12oz. rotini pasta)

1 cup mayonnaise

2 Tbsp white or cider vinegar

1/2 tsp salt

1/4 tsp pepper

3 tomatoes, diced

3 green onions, diced

1 pkg precooked bacon or turkey bacon - (Cooked according to package directions until crisp.)

- Cook pasta according to package directions; drain & rinse w/ cold water. Place in large salad bowl. Combine mayonnaise, vinegar, salt & pepper in a small bowl & stir until blended. Pour

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over pasta & stir to coat evenly. Add tomatoes, green onions & crumbled bacon. Stir all ingredients together.

Chicken salad -

1. Take a can of chicken & mix in some sweet relish, mayo, sunflower seeds, chunks of apple.
Put it on crackers or bread, roll into a tortilla or eat w/ a fork on a bed of lettuce.
2. Stuff chicken salad in a tomato w/ a slice of flat bread & honey butter. Along w/ carrot & celery sticks it's filling & nutritious. Even without the bread & butter.
3. Chicken bacon ranch croissants -
 - 2-cups shredded chicken (Quick way is canned chicken)
 - 1-pkg of cream cheese
 - 1-pkt ranch dressing mix
 - 2-cups shredded cheese of your choosing (Monterrey Jack, Colby & Pepper Jack)
 - 2-pkg of Pillsbury croissant rolls
 - Bacon bits (Buy pre-cooked real bacon bits or make your own)
 - Put a spoonful on croissant & roll it up then brush tops w/ melted butter & sprinkle a little cheese on top & bake for about 20 minutes at 350.
4. Jazz up chicken salad by having the mayo & adding sour cream, turkey bacon & dried cranberries.

PASTA:

Pesto Pasta - 1 pound shell pasta, 1 container pesto sauce, 1 package pine nuts, shredded parmesan cheese :: Cook all the pasta according to the directions & drain. Combine w/ the pesto sauce & pine nuts. Top w/ the cheese & serve w/ fresh fruit.

Stromboli - Thaw a loaf of frozen bread dough & spread it on a 9×13 pan. Sprinkle it w/ oregano & spread a layer of sandwich pepperoni & salami on top, followed w/ a layer of provolone cheese. Roll into a loaf & secure w/ toothpick. Brush w/ egg whites. Bake at 350 for 25 mins. Let cool & cut into 2 inch slices. Dip in pizza sauce.

Swim team pasta salad - It's basically elbow macaroni mixed w/ things your kids like & tossed w/ Italian dressing - Broccoli florets (Can buy the pre-cut bags), banana pepper rings, pepperoni or ham, diced green peppers, olives, shredded carrots, baby spinach & mozzarella cheese (Just cut up a stick of string cheese). Keep a bowl of cooked macaroni in the fridge so kids can make a customized salad anytime.