

Total Nutrition

Sending Your Kitchen To College

by *Mindy Hermann, R.D.*

(NAPSA)—My sons don't start college for a couple of years, but I've started to prepare them for meals without Mom and Dad. I encourage them to cook more often and ask them to come up with menus. We also discuss which favorite recipes should go in the family cookbook that I'm making for them. Still, it's frightening to think about what they might eat once they aren't under our watchful eye.



Mindy Hermann

I asked for tips from a couple of experts—Kathleen Zelman, MPH, RD, LD, Director of Nutrition for WebMD, and Ann Litt, MS, RD, LD, author of "The College Student's Guide to Eating Well on Campus"—on how to prepare college kids to eat on their own:

- Together, make a list of essential food skills to learn and to practice at the market, like making a grocery list, getting the best value for the money, reading labels, choosing the freshest food and picking lean meats.

- Discuss the types of foods that your teenager enjoys most, the food budget and which meals are not covered by a school meal plan.

- Make a list of nutritious foods to eat every day, such as fruits, vegetables, low-fat milk and dairy products and foods that contain whole grain. Whole Grain Total®, for example, is a convenient and quick breakfast or

10 Kitchen Essentials

- Ready-to-eat whole grain cereal
- Hot cereal packets
- Flour or corn tortillas
- Plain or flavored yogurt
- Skim milk
- Pre-shredded cheese
- Cottage cheese
- Peanut butter
- Baby carrots
- Dried fruit



snack food that supplies several essential vitamins and minerals.

- Put together a family cookbook with simple recipes that are easy to prepare and hard to ruin.

- Create a list of must-have foods for the dorm room or apartment pantry.

- Help your child master the preparation of several basic dishes: pancakes, eggs, muffins, pasta, grilled chicken, burgers, tacos and salads.

- Purchase a set of microwave-proof plastic cooking and storage containers, along with inexpensive, essential cooking utensils.

- Explain the basics of food safety: proper dish washing, hand washing, cleaning of sponges and cutting boards, food storage and food temperatures.

"Whether kids are on a meal plan or will be preparing their own meals, stocking the dorm or apartment kitchen with good choices is essential to eating well, especially at the odd hours when college students choose to eat," says Litt.

