

MINDFUL MUNCHERS

Teens Toolkit

Your no-nonsense guide to eating well and feeling good.

mindfulmunchers.org | 2026

About This Toolkit

This toolkit is not for your parents or teachers. It's for you. No lectures, no restrictions, just real information to help you make choices that actually make you feel good.

5 Things Worth Knowing

1. Your body is NOT the problem.

Obesity is a complex health condition driven by genetics, food environment, hormones, sleep, and stress. It is not a personal failure. What you can control: your habits. What you can't: your genetics or the food environment you were born into.

2. Food quality > calorie counting.

Obsessing over calories is exhausting and largely ineffective. Focus on eating more whole foods (fruit, vegetables, protein, whole grains) and fewer ultra-processed foods. Your hunger hormones will do the rest.

3. Sleep is important!

When you don't sleep enough, your hunger hormone (ghrelin) spikes and your fullness hormone (leptin) drops. You eat more, crave worse food, and have less willpower, all from being tired. Prioritize sleep.

4. Social media is lying to you.

The bodies you see online are filtered, lit, posed, and often edited. Diet culture preys on teen insecurity to sell supplements and programs that don't work. Be skeptical of anyone selling you a body.

5. Small habits beat big overhauls.

You don't need to overhaul your entire life. Pick one thing to do better this week. Add fruit to your lunch. Drink water instead of soda once a day. Walk home instead of getting a ride. Small things compound.

Quick Myth Busting

Myth	Fact
Carbs make you fat	Refined carbs are problematic, not carbs in general
Skipping meals helps you lose weight	Skipping meals leads to overeating later
Fat-free means healthy	Fat-free foods replace fat with sugar
Enough exercise cancels out a bad diet	Diet matters more than exercise for weight
Supplements burn fat	Almost none of them work. Save your money!

Weekly Habit Tracker

Print this out and track your week!

Habit	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Ate a fruit or vegetable							
Drank water (not soda)							
Got 8+ hours of sleep							
Moved my body 30+ min							
Ate breakfast							
Avoided a sugary drink							
Cooked or helped cook							

Smart Food Swaps

Instead of...	Try...
Soda	Sparkling water + fruit slice
Chips	Popcorn or mixed nuts
Sugary cereal	Oatmeal with fruit
Energy drink	Water + banana
White bread	Whole grain bread
Candy Bar	Trail mix or dark chocolate

Want to learn more? Visit mindfulmunchers.org for articles written specifically for teens. No judgement, just real information!