

Lena and Todd's Story – Varsity Player

My son plays varsity football at the local high school. He is a husky lad, and it takes a lot of food to fill him up and keep him fueled for all the activity he demands of his body.

I've always had kids in sports. Over the years many of us parents have expressed concern about what the boys are eating, and in the past year or two there has been an increased sense of urgency. Changes we tried individually at home to improve the quality of the food were not embraced, to say the least.

So this year we decided to feed the boys as a team before games. I shared information I had learned at the Suppers program. The other parents were very receptive. I shared information on how to increase energy and stabilize mood with good nutrition. Our parent group decided to set up a menu for pregame breakfasts or dinners that included fruit, whole grains, yoghurt, eggs and lean meats. We prepared and served the meals together for the players, coaches, cheerleaders and band members.

What none of us could accomplish individually, we managed to do as a group. Those hungry kids accepted those nourishing meals. If they missed the white flour and sugary foods, they didn't complain. As the season progressed, the kids realized they had more stamina and energy in the fourth quarter of the game.

There is no doubt in my mind that starting the day with a good breakfast made a difference. I feel very positive about organizing the parents and, as a group, coming up with a formula that really worked:

- * make sure there is only healthy food around when they're hungry
- * make it delicious
- * couch the discussion in terms of stamina on the field

The parents won't need to do any persuading once the kids feel the difference in the fourth quarter.

Different foods have different effects on different people. If you want to find out which breakfast gives your family staying power, then try the Suppers breakfast challenge: <http://www.thesuppersprograms.org/Documents/Activities/BreakfastChallenge.pdf>