



good health

>> starts at home

PARENTS ARE A CHILD'S BEST ROLE MODELS.

So, the best place for kids to learn healthy habits is at home. Each day, you can do little things that can affect your child's health in a big way.

1 *Get 1 hour or more of physical activity each day.*

WHY? Activity helps kids become healthy and strong. Movement strengthens muscles—including the heart and physical activity helps kids look and feel their best.

HOW? Indoors or out. On their own—or with brothers, sisters, cousins, neighbors or friends. Kids can find all kinds of ways to stay active and start a healthy routine. The good news is that your kids' 60 minutes of physical activity doesn't need to happen all at once. Just help them get active for 10 or 15 minutes a few times a day.

You don't need fancy equipment or a health club to help your kids get their daily physical activity. All you need are some regular household items and a little imagination. Combine a few of these tips, and they'll quickly add up to a fun and healthy 60-minute routine.

Naturally, the best way to get your kids moving is to get up and go with them. So make daily activity part of the program, and you could enjoy the health benefits too!

At-Home Gym

Step to it: Take three trips up and down the stairs with your child, or do 20 step-ups on one step.

Kangaroo Jump: Tape a shoelace to the floor in a straight line. Have your child stand on one side of the string with both feet together. Count to three, and cheer as he or she jumps over the string and back 10 times. *TAKE A SHORT BREAK—AND DO IT AGAIN!*

Crab Crawl: Sit with your feet flat on the floor, knees bent. Lean back and place your hands flat on the floor behind you. Lift your seat off the floor, putting your weight on your hands and feet. Now, crab crawl around the room with your kids!

Can Do: Go to the kitchen and find two of the heaviest cans your child can hold. Have him stand with his feet flat on the floor, with the cans in his hands and arms at his side. Show him how to lift the cans up to his chest, bending his arms at the elbows. Have him hold for two seconds, and then slowly lower his arms. *REPEAT 10 TIMES.*

Reach for the Sky: Grab a small textbook and hold it by the spine. Make an "L" with your arm—with your upper arm at shoulder level and your forearm pointing toward the ceiling. Now extend your arm straight over your shoulder, pushing the book toward the sky. Return to the bent-arm position.

REPEAT 10 TIMES, AND THEN SWITCH ARMS. HAVE YOUR KIDS FOLLOW ALONG WITH THEIR OWN BOOKS (AND ARMS).

Get On Down: Start with two bottles of laundry detergent (or any large bottle with a handle). Have your child stand with her feet flat on the floor, shoulder width apart. Place the bottles on each side of her feet. Watch as she bends her knees, grabs the bottles, and stands up. *REPEAT 10 TIMES.*

Hoop it Yourself: A trashcan (or even a box) makes a great indoor basketball goal—perfect for a quick game of one-on-one.

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1 *Get 1 hour or more of physical activity each day.* CONTINUED

House Music. *There's no better way to get active than to dance! It doesn't have to be perfect—sometimes it's more fun to be silly! Just turn up the music and move to the beat.*

Two Steps: Teach your kids to dance while they talk on the phone, watch TV, brush their teeth or clean their rooms!

New Moves: Have your child invent his or her own dance steps. They can be cool—or just wacky.

Dance-a-thon: Try to hop on one foot with your kids all the way through their favorite song.

Jumping Jack Flash: Start with a shorter song, and see if your child can do jumping jacks all the way through it. Work your way up to longer songs.

Video Workouts

Check It Out: Libraries and video stores have tons of workout videos for all kinds of tastes. Find your child's style and take it to the house!

Stretch Your Mind: What about a yoga video? Yoga is a great way for kids to start the day—it loosens muscles and even helps focus the mind.

Double Time: When watching TV at home, do jumping jacks, pushups, or crunches during commercial breaks.

Chores and More

Get the House in Shape: Not only will they score points with you, but cleaning their rooms, vacuuming, or doing the dishes can also get your kids' hearts pumping.

Get Out There

Go Green (Thumb): When the weather is nice, mowing the grass or gardening are great forms of activity.

Team Up: Organize the kids on your block to play a huge game of "Capture the Flag."

Made for Walking: Teach your kids to use their feet every chance they get. Let them walk to a friend's house, to the store, around the mall or wherever it's safe to walk. While they're at it, they can walk your dog (or a neighbor's dog).

How They Roll: Encourage your kids to put their muscles to work on their bikes, skates or scooters. Don't forget the helmets and pads.

A Dash of Speed: See how fast you and your kids can run for one block.

Home Teams: Your children don't need to play organized sports to enjoy team activities. They can meet up with a few friends to shoot hoops, kick a soccer ball, play street hockey or throw a football or baseball. Check out your neighborhood recreation center for open gym times—and for other activities like tennis or swimming.

Give Them the Ball: Teach your kids how to get everyone moving. When they're baby-sitting or playing with younger brothers or sisters, show them how to invent games and get everyone involved. Young kids love games like hopscotch, tag, hide-and-seek, Hula-Hoops, jumping rope, squirt guns, T-ball, kickball or flying a kite—especially when they're doing it with a "cool" older kid.

2 *Get 9 hours of sleep each night.*

WHY? As part of a healthy lifestyle that includes good nutrition and regular physical activity, your child needs at least nine hours of sleep each night.

Sleep is like food for the brain. And just like food, sleep gives your child energy. During sleep, their bodies grow and recover from the day's activities.

Sleep is important for everyone—especially kids. It's not just about feeling grumpy or dozing off in school. Lack of sleep can actually lead to serious health problems.

When kids don't get enough sleep, they can be moody and perform poorly. They might fall asleep in class and fall behind on their homework. They'll have less energy for sports and other physical activities. And when they're tired or low on energy, they're more likely to choose unhealthy foods or snacks. That means getting the right amount of sleep could actually help your child eat better.

HOW? Here are some tips for helping your children get at least 9 hours of sleep each night. Help them build a routine—and stick with it. Then, ask them how they feel when they get their rest compared to when they don't.

Step it Up: To help kids get used to earlier bedtimes and more rest, add 15 minutes of sleep time each night until they're sleeping at least 9 hours.

Wind Down: Stick to quiet, calm activities before bedtime, and your kids will fall asleep much more easily. Avoid TV, computers and telephones during the hour before bed. Don't leave homework for the last minute. And don't eat, drink, or exercise within a few hours of bedtime.

Fill In the Naps: If you plan them right, naps can help boost your child's energy during the day. Naps that are too long or too close to bedtime can interrupt their regular sleep.

Dream Makeover: Make your children's bedrooms the perfect places to relax and sleep. Keep them cool, quiet and dark. You might even want to get eyeshades or blackout curtains. Let in bright light in the morning to help them wake up.

Routine, Then Repeat: Establish a bedtime and wake-up time and stick to it. Your kids will find that it's easier to fall asleep at bedtime when their bodies are on a schedule.

Good Habits: Have your children do the same things every night before they go to sleep. This signals their bodies and minds that it's time for bed. Encourage a bath or shower (this will also give them extra time in the morning), or suggest they read a book.

Go Write to Sleep: If your children lie awake worrying about the day ahead, have them write in a diary or make a to-do list. Jotting down notes before sleep helps to clear and settle the mind.

3 *Only 1–2 hours of “Screen Time” per day.*

WHY? The average child or adolescent spends 4–5 hours a day in front of a screen. Yikes! And that’s not just TV—“Screen Time” includes watching DVDs, playing video games or surfing the Internet.

All that time in front of a screen crowds out time for regular physical activity—and experts say that children should get at least 60 minutes of activity or more every day. That means there has to be a balance between Screen Time and activity. Plus, sitting in front of a screen can also encourage snacking on unhealthy foods. So by turning off the screen, you can help crank up your kids’ energy, re-charge their minds and improve their health.

HOW? Fortunately, there are so many things to do that don’t use a screen. Even if your child wants to relax, he or she can read a book, doodle or just take a nap (They need those 9 hours of sleep, remember?). Here are just a few ways to cut back on Screen Time.

Check Yourself: Know how much Screen Time you and your children are getting, and then set limits for the entire family. You’ll be amazed how much extra time you “find” when you turn off the TV or computer.

Play It Down: Using Screen Time to reward or punish a child makes it seem more important than it is. Use praise, encouragement and recognition for physical activity, and make Screen Time a “non-event” in your home.

Watch at Once: If you have a VCR or DVR, you can choose a few of your kids’ favorite shows, record them, and then let them watch them all at once. That way, you’ll have more time during the rest of the week for activities.

Double Time: When watching TV at home, do jumping jacks, pushups, or crunches during commercial breaks. Set up a stationary bike in the TV room, and encourage kids to move through their favorite shows.

After-School Action Plan: Many kids list watching TV as their #1 after-school activ-

ity. Sometimes, they just need help coming up with other things to do. Have your kids make a “Top 10 List” of after-school activities. Just a few examples include riding bikes, shooting hoops, walking the dog, folding laundry or even helping with dinner. Post the list on the fridge, so your kids can check it when they get home.

No TV Dinners: Turn off the TV during mealtime—and take turns talking about the day.

Cut the Cord: Take the TVs and computers out of your kids’ bedrooms. Children who have TVs in their rooms spend almost 1-½ hours more each day watching them than their peers. Plus, if your kids are in their rooms watching TV, they’re removed from family time.

Work It Out: Use the TV to watch a video—whether it’s dancing, tae kwon do or yoga. Put on your sweatbands and have some family fitness time.

4 *Eat fruits and vegetables at every meal.*

WHY? Fruits and vegetables add vitamin A, vitamin C, potassium, fiber and more to your child's diet. In fact, fruits and vegetables are the best source for many of these important vitamins and nutrients.

HOW? At every meal, include some kind of fresh, frozen, or canned fruits and vegetables. Just be sure to watch out for those with fatty sauces or added sugar.

It's not always easy for kids to understand the value of fruits and vegetables—or to appreciate their flavor. But if you can make it fun to explore, prepare and eat them, your children can discover their favorites—and maybe even convince you to try something new.

Planning and Playing

Have a Contest: Host a cooking contest for your children, with the special ingredients being fruits or vegetables. Include a variety of healthy choices. Everyone can take turns judging the most creative and healthiest recipes.

Challenge Yourself: See how many different kinds of fruits and vegetables each member of your family can try. The person who samples the most in a week or a month wins a meal featuring his or her favorites.

Try Them All: Don't know where to start? Why not try every fruit or vegetable you or your kids can think of? Use this alphabetical list—and see how many different foods you can try!



Fruits: Apples, Apricots, Avocados, Bananas, Blackberries, Blueberries, Cherries, Cranberries, Figs, Grapefruit, Grapes, Kiwifruit, Lemons, Limes, Melons (Cantaloupe, Casaba, Crenshaw, Honey Ball, Honey Dew or Persian), Pineapple, Nectarines, Oranges, Passion Fruit, Peaches, Pears, Pineapples, Plums and Prunes, Raspberries, Strawberries, Tangerines, Tomatoes, Watermelon



Vegetables: Alfalfa Sprouts, Asparagus, Arugula, Artichoke, Peas, Bamboo Shoots, Beets, Bok Choy, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Celeriac, Chard, Chicory (Endives), Cauliflower, Collards, Corn, Cucumbers, Eggplants, Kale, Lettuce (Iceberg Lettuce, Butter-head Lettuce, Romaine Lettuce, Leaf Lettuce), Mushrooms, Mustard Greens, Okra, Onions, Leeks, Parsnips, Peppers (green, red, and yellow), Potatoes, Radishes, Rhubarb, Rutabagas, Spinach, Squash (Acorn, Butternut, Spaghetti), Sweet Corn, Sweet Potatoes, Turnips, Watercress, Yams, Zucchini

Shopping

Spy Games: Play "I Spy" in your store's Produce section.

Pick a Peck: When shopping, let kids select a new fruit or vegetable (Or several!) to try.

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4 *Eat fruits and vegetables at every meal.* CONTINUED

Creating

Saucy Idea: Make applesauce from fresh apples. Let your kids stir, and add some cinnamon.

Dip In: Chop raw vegetables into bite-sized pieces. Try bell peppers, carrots, cucumbers, broccoli, cauliflower or celery, and dip your favorites into low-fat or fat-free dressing. Be sure to read the labels and make sure the dressings aren't loaded with saturated fat and salt.

Chill With Some Fruit: Put 100% fruit juice in an ice tray and freeze it overnight. Use toothpicks as "handles." Kids can eat the fruit cubes as "mini-popsicles," or even put them in other juices! Frozen seedless grapes make natural mini-popsicles and are a great summer treat.

Mix Them Up: Add fruits and vegetables to foods that are cooked or baked. Toss vegetables into pasta sauce, lasagna, casseroles, soups, and omelets. Mix fresh or frozen berries into pancakes, waffles or muffins.

Smooth Move: Smoothies are a great way to get more fruit—and they're really easy to make! A basic smoothie is just frozen fruit, low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk (and/or some yogurt), and 100% fruit juice. Throw it in a blender (Parents only, of course), and blend until it's... you guessed it... smooth. Experiment with different fruits to find your kids' favorites.

Veggie Roast: Try roasting vegetables like cauliflower, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, onions, carrots, tomatoes, or eggplant in the oven. Long exposure to the high heat will cause the vegetables to caramelize—which makes them less bitter and plays up their natural sweetness.

Top That: Add fruits and vegetables to foods your kids already love. Try frozen peas in mac 'n' cheese, veggies on pizza, and sliced fruit on breakfast cereals or low-fat ice cream.

Cooking

Clean the Greens: Let kids wash fruits and vegetables before cooking or eating.

Make it Snappy: Children can snap the stems off green beans, snap open pea pods, or snap the stalks from broccoli or cauliflower.

Tear it Up: Have your kids tear lettuce for salads or sandwiches.

Slice, Dice and Peel: Older children can peel and slice carrots, cucumbers, potatoes... the list goes on!

Measure Up: Let kids measure frozen vegetables for cooking.

A Dash of Fun: Show your kids how to sprinkle herbs or other seasonings onto vegetables.

Monster Mash: Pull out the potato masher, and let the kids get after it!

Eating

Salad Sandwich: Encourage kids to order lettuce, tomatoes, onions or other veggies on their sandwiches.

Smart Swaps: Skip the fries and onion rings at restaurants, and order your kids a side salad or baked potato (with minimal toppings) instead. A large order of fries can have at least 500 calories!

5 *Drink only water, low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk and 100% juice.*

WHY? You've probably heard about "hydration," or "staying hydrated." The need to "hydrate" is just another way of saying, "Drink plenty of fluids throughout the day."

But not just any fluids—because the kinds of liquids kids drink are just as important as the foods they eat.

WHY WATER? Quite simply, water is the most needed nutrient of all. In fact, most of the human body is made of water. If your child weighs 90 pounds, about 63 of those pounds are nothing but water!

On a regular day, your child's body loses two to three liters of water. Add some physical activity or sweat, and he or she can lose even more. That's why it's important for your kids to take in plenty of fluids.

WHY LOW-FAT (1%) OR FAT-FREE MILK? They help replace fluid in your child's system. It also provides vitamins and helps build strong bones. Plus, it has protein and other nutrients—without the saturated fat and high calories of whole milk. Have your child aim for 3 cups of low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk each day.

WHY 100% JUICE? 100% fruit juices are naturally sweet and delicious—without added sugar, preservatives or unhealthy ingredients. Too much added sugar in your child's diet can lead to health problems.

WHAT ABOUT SODA? You might be thinking, "Sodas have water, right?" That's true, but sodas don't add vitamins or nutrients. Also, consider this: There are about 250 calories in a 20 oz. soda served at a restaurant. With only a few free refills, your child might be drinking 1,000 calories!

HOW TO HYDRATE: Below are some tips for keeping your kids hydrated.

Tinkle Test: How can you tell if your kids are getting enough fluids? Ask them to check the color of their urine! If it's clear or light yellow, they're getting enough. The darker it is, the more liquids they need to replace.

Keep it Handy: Have your kids carry a water bottle. And keep a pitcher of water in the refrigerator, so it's cold and refreshing.

Don't Run Out: If your child is playing, running, jumping and sweating, he or she needs even more water and other fluids.

Fill 'Er Up: Drinking a glass of water before a meal can help your kids feel full and resist the urge to eat more than they need.

Eat Your Water: Remember the rule about fruits and vegetables at every meal? Well, it's partly because they're actually good at replacing fluids. Fruits like grapes, watermelon, oranges or cantaloupe are full of water. So are veggies like lettuce, cucumbers and celery. Just be sure to keep the liquids flowing, too.



health & help

>> are everywhere

AT HOME, AT SCHOOL OR IN YOUR COMMUNITY,
healthy choices are all around you. In here
are tips you can use wherever you are—from
your doctor's office to the local recreational
center to the grocery store and more.

1 *Start with a strong, active family.*

WHY? Your kids need 1 hour or more of physical activity each day. It's a simple guideline—and it can make a big difference in your child's health and wellbeing. Unfortunately, less than 60 percent of adults are physically active on a regular basis. And 25 percent aren't active at all.

Inactive people have a higher risk of heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure and obesity. So, to build a family based on healthy habits, it's up to you to set the tone at home.

HOW? Do something. Do anything. Do less "nothing". There are countless ways that families can have fun and get physically active. And your kids' 60 minutes of physical activity each day don't need to be completed all at once. Just help them get moderate and vigorous activity for 10 or 15 minutes several times throughout the day.

De-Activate Your Screens

TVTime-Out: Time spent watching TV, playing video games or surfing the Internet is time your kids could be using to stay physically active.

Unglue Yourself: Your kids won't like cutting back on Screen Time if they see you as the family couch potato. The best way to influence their behavior is to set a good example.

No Re-runs: Change things up to keep activity interesting. Try physical activities that offer variety such as shooting hoops, walking the dog, playing catch or riding bikes.

Pre-Screening: Have your kids pick their favorite shows each week. Turn on the TV just for those shows, and then turn it off afterwards. That way, they won't end up watching whatever comes on next.

Fit as a Family

Walk the Walk: Eat dinner as a family, and then go for a walk together.

Game of the Week: Spend a Saturday or Sunday afternoon skating or playing touch football.

Form a Team: Sign up for a family fun run, fun walk or car wash.

Sign Up: Buy a family membership at the neighborhood recreation center, YMCA or health club.

Lesson Up: Check your neighborhood park for free tennis or golf lessons, and sign up as a family.

Tackle Chores: Do housework or yard work together.

2 *Get help from your child's healthcare provider.*

WHY? You help your child stay physically active. You set a good example by serving and eating nutritious foods. And you make sure there are healthy lifestyle choices at home and at school. But even as the quarterback for your child's health, you still need some coaching. That's why a good way to keep your child on a safe, consistent path to a healthy lifestyle is to talk with your child's healthcare provider (doctors, nurse practitioners, etc.).

A doctor knows how to measure your child's total health—and can assess where your child fits compared to other kids in his or her age group. Working with a pediatrician, you can make an age appropriate plan that's a perfect fit for your child.

HOW? Healthcare providers look at key measurements like Body Mass Index (BMI) to see whether a child is at risk for weight-related health problems. Since each child is different—and because all kids change and grow so quickly—a healthcare provider is the best person to decide whether your child's diet and lifestyle are truly healthy for him or her.

Learn which health problems are caused by poor eating habits and a lack of physical activity. Learn your child's BMI—and what it needs to be. Then, using these tips, make it easy and fun for your child to grow up healthy and happy.

Children and Weight

A Growing Concern: Weight problems among children have increased dramatically since 1980.

Take it to Heart: One of the biggest threats to overweight children is the risk of cardiovascular disease—or diseases of the heart and blood vessels. Cardiovascular disease is the number one cause of death in the United States.

Side Effects: Children who are overweight are more likely to suffer from all kinds of health problems—including Type II Diabetes, sleep disorders and high blood pressure.

Get the Facts

What is "Overweight"?: The word "overweight" (or, "over a certain weight") has mostly been used as a description. Now, "overweight"

is a condition all its own. To a healthcare provider, overweight (or, "excess weight") in a child is a sign of potential obesity.

What is "Obesity"?: Children whose Body Mass Index (BMI) are in a certain percentile are said to be "obese." Obesity happens when, over time, a child takes in more fuel (calories) than his or her body can use.

What is BMI?: Body Mass Index is a number that predicts risk of disease by comparing a child's weight to his or her height. While it is not a direct measurement of body fat, BMI is a good indicator of a child's "fatness."

How Can I Learn My Child's BMI?: Be sure to have your healthcare provider check your child's BMI regularly—to make sure it's accurate, and to see any changes.

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2 *Get help from your child's healthcare provider.* CONTINUED

What is a Healthy BMI?: Each child's BMI value is compared with other children by looking at the respective growth curve. Your child's BMI will fall into a "percentile." The chart below shows weight status categories and the corresponding percentiles to help you determine what particular BMI value means for your child:

WEIGHT CATEGORY	PERCENTILE
Underweight	Less than the 5th percentile
Healthy weight	5th percentile to less than the 85th percentile
Overweight	85th percentile to less than the 95th percentile
Obese	Equal to or greater than the 95th percentile

Ask Questions

"How is My Child's Weight?": Does your child need to lose weight, gain weight or maintain his or her current weight? Some kids will grow into their weight, and others may need to shed a few pounds.

"What is My Child's BMI?": Many healthcare providers track BMI for their patients, but some don't. Just ask your child's healthcare provider.

"How Often Should We Visit?": Ask about follow-up appointments and more tests, as necessary. And find out how often your healthcare provider wants to measure your child's BMI.

Make a Plan

What's Next?: If your child is overweight or obese, the healthcare provider might want to do more tests to know if your child has a higher risk of health problems.

History Test: Tell your child's healthcare provider if there is a history of disease in your family—especially if it's weight-related. If there is diabetes, high blood pressure or high cholesterol in your family, your child might be at a higher risk when he or she grows up.

"How Can Our Family Eat Healthier?": Tell your child's healthcare provider about your family's diet. Look for specific changes you can make to eat healthier. The healthcare provider may suggest that you visit a registered dietician for more advice.

"What Kind of Activity is Good for My Child?": Your child's healthcare provider should know what types of physical activity are best for kids of different ages and fitness levels.

"What Else?": In addition to healthy eating and regular physical activity, your child's healthcare provider might suggest other healthy habits—like cutting back on Screen Time or eating more meals at home.

Talk to Your Child

Make it Light: Talking to your child about health, weight and fitness can be tricky. You know it's important, but it can be sensitive for your child.

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2 *Get help from your child's doctor.* CONTINUED

Talk to Your Child

Fair's Fair: Don't expect your kids to be the only ones to make changes. Set an example, and enjoy the health benefits yourself.

The Right Rewards: Many parents make the mistake of saying, "You can have ice cream after you finish your carrots." That turns dessert into a reward—and healthy foods like vegetables into a chore. And that's completely backwards! It's the same with Screen Time. Make physical activity the better alternative to TV—not a punishment.

Make it Matter: Kids don't care that being healthy now will prevent their risk of disease in the future. Instead, explain that activity will help them run faster, swing a bat harder, feel better and have more energy to play.

Bring a Friend: Encourage your kids to invite friends for play-dates, bike rides or backyard games.

Avoid the "D" Word: Adults don't stick to diets, so why would kids? Teach your children to eat and drink in moderation (including an occasional treat).

Baby Steps: Don't expect dramatic change overnight. Be consistent, but be patient too.

3 *Play outside of home and school.*

WHY? Community league sports, public recreation and other organized activities fill in the gaps between activities at home and at school. Plus, they're a great way for your kids to make new friends—and a chance for you to meet other parents and neighbors.

HOW? Pick up a newspaper or look online—you'll find all kinds of classes, sports, parks and other opportunities right in your neighborhood. Many are inexpensive, and some are even free. Look for family activities to try with your children, and encourage your kids to explore on their own. Your child could find a favorite hobby—and a healthy habit for life.

Go Back to School: Sometimes schools in your neighborhood offer organized after-hours physical activities like dance classes, recreational sports or fun-walks for fundraising. Other times, the playground or basketball court and a Saturday afternoon are all you need.

Go to Class: Check out the YMCA, health club or recreational center in your neighborhood for a list of yoga classes, team sports, swim lessons or other activities.

Park It: Local parks are full of hiking, biking and jogging trails that are perfect for families. Some have lakes or pools for water skiing or swimming. Your kids can fly kites, play catch or throw a frisbee with the dog.

Know the Score: Before you sign up your child for team sports, consider his or her age and emotional development. Most kids are ready for team play by around the age of 6, but every child is different.

Play it Smart: Only 5% of sports injuries involve broken bones. Most are sprains (injuries to ligaments) and strains (injuries to muscles). Kids get sprains and strains from

pitching too many innings or running too far too fast. Know the risks, and help your child prevent injuries by taking it easy.

Play it Safe: Teach your kids the importance of stretching, learning proper technique, taking breaks and wearing the right gear. Tell them it will help them play longer and do better.

Play it Cool: Make sure your children drink plenty of water and healthy fluids before, during and after they play. Cut back on practices and games when it's hot and humid.

Don't Stress: More than anything else, sports and playtime should be fun for your child. Avoid overly competitive leagues and "win at all costs" coaches. If your kid likes playing hard, that's good. Just make sure it doesn't get in the way of school, friends, fun or other healthy habits.

Calling it Quits: If your child wants to quit a sport, listen for the real reason. Sometimes kids just lose interest. But if your child has a problem with a coach or teammate, talk with the coach to find a solution.

4 *Get more from the grocery store.*

WHY? Children need fuel to power their busy lives. And healthy foods like fruits, vegetables and lean meats are the best kinds of fuel. By adding healthier choices to your children's diet, you can even help them do better in school and at play.

HOW? Healthy eating starts at home. By planning ahead before shopping for groceries, you can make healthier meals for your family—and maybe even save money in the process. Use these tips to know what foods are best for your children, and learn how to get the most out of your grocery budget.

Food to Know

Fiber, Vitamins & Minerals: Make sure your child gets 100 percent of the fiber, vitamins (including A & C), calcium, iron, and other nutrients he or she needs every day. Fruits and vegetables are a great source of these nutrients.

Saturated Fat and Trans Fat: These are bad fats that clog arteries. Limit the total fat in your kids' diet to no more than 25–35% of their total daily calories.

Cholesterol and Sodium: Eating foods with too much cholesterol and sodium (salt) can lead to serious health problems. The less cholesterol and sodium your kids eat, the better.

Sugar: Limiting sugar in your child's diet can be a challenge. It might surprise you to see all of the foods that are made with added sugar. Sugar adds unused, "empty" calories to your child's diet—and too much sugar can turn to fat. Watch out for foods that have added sugar, and make different choices.

Before You Go

Whip Up a Menu: Plan your meals for the upcoming week or more. Need ideas? Check out heart-healthy recipes from the National Institutes of Health (NIH): www.nhlbi.nih.gov

Take Stock: Check the pantry and refrigerator for healthy foods you already have—and work them into your menu.

Make a List: Try downloading the Grocery List Template and My Shopping List to help organize your shopping.

Check Your Tank: If you shop hungry, you're more likely to buy more than you need—and you might be tempted to buy unhealthy snack foods.

Get a Sitter: If you can, leave your children at home when shopping. Grocery stores place candy and sugary cereal right at eye-level for kids. If the kids come along, take the time to teach them about healthy eating.

At the Store

Size it Up: Sometimes even small packages contain more than one healthy serving. If your child eats everything in the package, he or she could be eating two or more portions. Check the label for serving sizes.

Value Shopping: The %DV (Percent Daily Value) column suggests how much of a nutrient belongs in a 2,000 calorie per day diet. So, if you want to limit saturated fat or sodium (salt) in your child's diet, look for foods that offer less than 5% of the recommended daily amount of those nutrients. To make sure your child gets 100% of the fiber and vitamins he or she needs, choose foods with high percentages—then add up the values throughout the day.

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4 *Get more from the grocery store.* CONTINUED

Simple Swaps: Instead of high-fat or sugary foods, buy only whole grain cereal, fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk, lean ground beef, baked chips, whole wheat bread and reduced-fat cheese.

Time Savers: If you're rushed at home, look for pre-washed, pre-cut fruits, vegetables and salad kits.

Stock Up: Fill your pantry and freezer with nutritious packaged foods like quick-cooking brown rice, canned beans and tuna, or frozen fruits and vegetables. That way, you'll always have healthy options on hand.

In the Meat Department: Buy lean ground beef, ground turkey, or ground chicken that is less than 10% fat. Look for lunch meats that are at least 95% fat-free.

In the Dairy Section: Choose 1% or nonfat (skim) milk. Buy low-fat or reduced-fat cheese made from part skim milk. Pick up low-fat frozen yogurt, popsicles, or sherbet instead of full fat ice cream. And try some low-fat yogurt or cottage cheese.

In the Snack Aisle: Look for foods without added sugar, like 100% fruit bars. Or try lighter snacks like gingersnaps, animal crackers, vanilla wafers or angel food cake. Healthier snacks include rice cakes, pretzels, and unsalted, unbuttered popcorn.

Around the Store: Trade up to fat-free salad dressing and mayonnaise. Check out dried beans and peas with no added salt. And of course, pick lots of fruits and vegetables.

Shop to Save

Make it Big: Block out a few hours on the weekend to make a big batch of chili, a hearty soup, a pasta dish or a casserole. When your kids' schedule heats up during the week, you and your family can just zap-and-eat.

One-Stop Shopping: The fewer trips to the store, the less likely you will be to buy unnecessary items.

Store Up on Rewards: Sign up for your grocer's bonus/discount program.

What's in a Name?: Store brands are sometimes cheaper than name brands—and are just as good. You just have to know where to look: Stores often place name brands at eye-level, and store brands lower or higher on the shelf.

Home Grown: Go to the local farmer's market. The foods are sometimes fresher and usually cost the same (if not less). Plus, you know they're coming right from your area.

Bulk Up: Buy low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk in the largest containers you can use before it spoils. Try buying a whole chicken, removing the skin, and cutting it into parts instead of paying more for pre-cut chicken.

Brown Bag It: If you spend \$7 a day on lunch 5 days a week, you'll spend a total of \$1,820 in just one year. Bringing lunch from home saves money—and may help you control calories.

Homemade Snacks: Cut costs and control your kids' portions by assembling snacks at home. Put small portions of unsalted nuts, seeds, dried whole grain cereal, low-fat cheese, dried fruit or cut vegetables into baggies.

Save the Sugar: Serve water, low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk instead of expensive, sugary drinks.

Dish it Out: Controlling portions helps you keep an eye on your kids' calories and save money, too. Serve moderate portions, avoid seconds, and freeze leftovers to enjoy later.

5 *Go out to eat healthier.*

WHY? It's fun to go out to eat as a family. And sometimes you're just too busy to make a meal. Just be careful—restaurants are businesses. When you order more food, they make more money. Some make a big deal out of larger portions. Others offer “value meals” at an attractive price, but with extra calories lumped in. So as a parent, you have to make sure your kids' eyes aren't bigger than their diets.

HOW? For those times when fast food is the only option—or when you want to take a break from cooking at home—there are some simple things you can do to cut calories and to limit fat, salt and sugar in your kids' choices.

Start Smart: Learn what to look for on the menu. Watch for low-fat options like au jus (in its own juices), baked, broiled, fresh, grilled, poached, lean, roasted, or steamed. Avoid foods served au gratin, buttered, breaded, creamed, fried, crispy, or sautéed.

Side Note: Ask for all sauces and salad dressings on the side so that you can control how much your kids use.

Set Some Aside: Bring food storage containers with you. When your order arrives, portion out enough for your kids, and then store the rest for later. Restaurant portions can be large, so you can save money and avoid the temptation to clean your plate.

Eat Like a Kid: There's no rule against ordering a kid's meal for yourself. You'll get less food—and fewer calories—for less money.

Learn to Share: Teach your kids to share their meals with their brothers, sisters and friends. They'll learn a lesson and get healthier portions.

Easy on the Sauce: There are lots of hidden calories in mayo, sour cream, salad dressing and other sauces.

Choose Chicken: When in doubt, a grilled, baked or broiled chicken breast (not breaded or fried) is a healthier choice.

Veg Out: Have your kids ask for tomatoes, lettuce, onions, or other veggies on their sandwiches.

Sub In: Order a side salad or baked potato instead of fries. A large order of fries can have 500 calories!

And to Drink: Go with water, 100% fruit juice, or fat-free and low-fat (1%) milk instead sugary, high-fat drinks.

Down Size: It may seem like a good “value,” but there are lots of extra calories and fats in those super sizes. Regular sizes are usually the better portions.

Treat Yourself: Dessert is fine once in a while. Try low-fat frozen yogurt or sherbet instead of ice cream. Add sprinkles instead of caramel sauce or hot fudge.

Don't Double: Most burger patties are well over a single serving (2 - 3 ounces, or about the size of a deck of cards). Have your kids go with a single burger, and tell them to resist the urge to add bacon.

Mexican Food: Order vegetarian refried beans (made without bacon or lard), or plain black beans. Choose soft tortillas (like the ones used for burritos) instead of fried taco shells. Replace the cheese or sour cream with salsa or guacamole.

CONTINUES ON THE NEXT PAGE

5 *Go out to eat healthier.* CONTINUED

Pizza: Order a thin-crust with extra veggies. Go easy on the cheese and meats. Before you eat, use a few paper napkins to blot the extra oil. You'll cut some fat right off the bat—and you'll never miss it.

Italian Food: Avoid creamy sauces and pesto on pasta. Instead, try marinara sauce or pasta primavera. Pasta portions can be hearty—try sharing with your kids or taking some home.

Chinese Food: Order steamed rice instead of fried rice. Try boiled, steamed, broiled or lightly stir-fried dishes. Pile on the vegetables. Avoid deep fried and egg dishes, and go light on the salty sauces.

Burger Night: Try the regular or kid-sized portion. Load up on lettuce and tomato, and try to skip the cheese.

Breakfasts: Choose a small whole-wheat, high-fiber muffin, bagel or toast. Replace the bacon or sausage with ham (it's leaner). Watch out for fruit juices that are loaded with added sugar. Say, "Fresh-squeezed, please."



healthy schools

= successful students

TEACHING YOUR CHILDREN TO MAKE HEALTHY

choices at school and after class can be just as important as helping them get good grades.

That's why parents need to work with schools to provide healthier food options and activities.

1 *Teach health at home.*

WHY? Education starts at home. So, one of the best ways to help your kids do better in school is to teach them healthy habits that they can take with them.

HOW? Talk to your child about making healthy food and drink choices. Find ways to make physical activity part of your routine. Become your child's role model for a healthy lifestyle—and send them to school with the knowledge they need to perform at their best.

For even more tips to help your kids eat better and get active outside of school, check out the “At Home” resource for parents.

At-Home Gym

Meet Over Lunch: Read the school menu with your child and look for the healthiest choices.

Pack a Healthy Lunch: Fill your child's lunchbox with healthy, tasty foods—like whole grain bread, fresh fruits and veggies, lean meats, low-fat (1%) or fat free milk and 100% juice.

Serve Smarter Snacks: Try baked chips or pretzels with salsa, reduced-fat or low-fat ice cream, and fruit smoothies.

Still Scratching Your Head? Use the Alliance Product Navigator (HealthierGeneration.org/productnavigator) to find even more healthy snacks for school or home.

Use a Calculator: The Alliance Product Calculator (HealthierGeneration.org/productcalculator) can help you know which snack foods fit best into a healthy kid's lunchbox.

Sweeter Treats: Rather than using food as a reward, look for creative and affordable ways to celebrate your kids' successes. It might be a family outing, a book or an educational toy.

Phys. Ed. at Home

Coach Your Kids: Lead by example—make physical activity part of your daily routine, and help them see the benefits.

Huddle Up: Look for sports programs in your community—and talk to other parents about physical activities in your neighborhood.

It's Their Call: If your child doesn't like the usual sports, look for alternatives like dance, karate, skateboarding, or rock climbing.

Keep Moving: Remember that almost any type of physical activity (including free play) can help your child's health and ability to learn.

2 *Become a cheerleader for physical activity.*

WHY? When children are physically active, they're more able to learn and achieve. Yet many schools are finding it harder and harder to make time for physical education. Today, only 68% of elementary schools offer a daily recess. And in grades 9 through 12, only about half of students have one or more physical education classes during the school week.

Outside of school, kids are also less active than ever. This not only affects their health, but also their performance in class. That means as a parent, it's up to you to find more ways to keep your kids moving.

HOW? Work with your child's school to make recess and daily physical education a priority. And look for other ways your kids can be physically active throughout the day. Check out HealthierGeneration.org/schools for ideas to help your child get more physical activity during the school day.

At School

Coaching Tips: Ask a coach or PE teacher what physical activities are offered during and after school.

Go to the Principal's Office: Talk to the principal—or write to the district superintendent if you are concerned about the lack of physical education at your child's school.

Pedal Power: Only 16% of kids today walk or bike to school. Why not encourage your kids to do what you and your parents did? Be sure to have them wear a helmet while biking.

Outside of School

Do Your Homework: Learn about free and low-cost opportunities for physical activity before or after school.

Sign Up: Volunteer to help with afterschool sports teams.

3 *Bring in a “substitute” at school parties and fundraisers.*

WHY? Schools need money for programs and materials. Classroom parties—like birthday and holiday celebrations—help kids relax and socialize. And other school events like dances and fairs bring parents, teachers and kids together.

The challenge facing parents is that these parties can encourage unhealthy eating. Your children need options to replace unhealthy snacks at school parties—and schools need fundraising ideas that are built around physical activity and healthy choices.

HOW? There are plenty of ways to plan and organize parties, events and fundraisers that can teach kids healthy habits. It just takes a little creativity. And who knows—your school’s event might be even more popular because it helps kids become healthier.

Party Healthy

Fun, not Food: Avoid making refreshments the “main event” at parties. And don’t use food as a reward or prize.

Different Drinks: Serve low-fat (1%) or non-fat milk (plain or flavored), 100% juice, and water at parties.

Chip-less: Substitute pretzels, low-fat popcorn, rice cakes, bread sticks, graham crackers or animal crackers.

Healthy Pizza: When the party calls for pizza, try low-fat toppings like vegetables, lean ham or Canadian bacon—or serve pizza dippers with marinara sauce.

Play On: Instead of an indoor party, why not give children extra recess time? At birthday parties, let the birthday boy or girl pick an active game for everyone.

Activity is Rewarding: Let the birthday boy or girl be the teacher’s “assistant” for the day. He or she could walk deliveries to the office, lead the line or start an activity.

Giving is Fun: Turn a regular party into a special community service project. Invite senior citizens in for lunch, or make blankets for rescue dogs. Parents can plan the events and bring materials.

A Sweet Story: Rather than baking sweets, why not donate a book in your child’s name to the classroom or school library? You could even go to school and read it to the class.

(Fund) Raising Awareness

Top Sellers: Instead of food, try selling balloons, bumper stickers, candles or gift certificates as fundraisers.

Raise Nutrition: Invite local chefs to donate healthy foods for a “Taste of [Your Town]” event. Charge for admission.

Raise Interest: Try raising money for your child’s school through community activities and events. Plan an art show, a car wash or a recycling drive.

Raise Your Activity Level: Work with your child’s school to organize events like walk-a-thons, dance-a-thons or bike-a-thons. Ask sponsors to pledge money by the mile or by the hour.

Get Help: Your PTA is a great place to find fundraising ideas—and volunteers. Visit www.pta.org for more information.

4 *Raise your hand and volunteer.*

WHY? Your kids need healthy food choices and plenty of physical activity at school. But schools don't always have the money, the time or the people needed to give kids the healthiest options.

The good news is that parents are making a huge difference in schools across the country just by showing up and helping out. Caring parents like you are making sure their kids have plenty of healthy foods and physical activity at school. Plus, their efforts are helping other children, too.

HOW...

Roll Call: Let your child's principal know you're here—and you're ready to help.

Bring Back Recess: A survey found that 90% of teachers and parents want daily recess in schools. Take action with support and leadership from the National PTA. To help make recess and physical activity part of your child's school day, go to:

www.peacefulplaygrounds.com

Get Growing: Get a group of parents together, pick a place, and design the perfect garden for students. Then set a budget, raise a few dollars and start digging! For more information, go to **www.fns.usda.gov**

Use Your Feet: Fewer and fewer kids are walking or biking to school. That's why groups like Safe Routes to School are working with cities to clear safer paths for students. Find out more at **www.saferoutesinfo.org**

Join the Network: Join the Healthy Schools Program's Network at HealthierGeneration.org/schools to get free access to ideas and tools that will help you work toward a healthier school with your child's teachers and principal.

5 *Quiz the school, and work together to find answers.*

WHY? When kids eat healthy foods and get plenty of physical activity, their bodies and minds work better. That means healthy kids learn better and miss fewer days of school.

If you want a healthier school environment for your child, you have to help create it. To do that, you need to learn how to get things done at school, at the school district—and maybe even at the state level. Join the Healthy Schools Program's Network at HealthierGeneration.org/schools to get free access to ideas and tools that will help you work toward a healthier school with your child's teachers and principal.

HOW? The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) now requires all school districts to create a School Wellness Policy. Part of this plan makes schools set goals for nutrition education and physical activity. Plus, the policy encourages parents to be involved.

Get to know your child's teachers and administrators—and get to know the way things work in your school district. Rather than fighting the system, learn to work with it. Become a positive voice for your children's health. With a little patience, your efforts can make a difference—not only for your child, but for others too.

Join the Council: Many states require local School Wellness Councils or Health Advisory Councils. These groups bring principals, teachers, parents and students together to address important student health issues. To find out if your child's school or district has a school wellness council or health council, contact the principal or the district food service director.

Be a Team Player: Once you find your local School Wellness Council, offer to help in any way you can. If you see good things being done, be sure to offer praise. If you have a good relationship with the council, they'll be more likely to listen to your suggestions for change.

Ask Questions: What is your school district's wellness policy? What are the goals for physical education and healthy food options? When does the policy start? How can parents make sure that things are being done?

Study: Find out whether your kids can get healthy foods in the cafeteria or vending machines. Make sure they're getting enough time for recess and physical education classes. And see if the school is selling healthy foods at fundraisers.

Join the PTA: Your school's Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is a great place to find other parents who care about their children's health and fitness. Tell them about the school's Wellness Policy—so that they can help make sure it's working, too.

Extra Credit: If you're serious about making real changes in your child's educational system at the district or the state level, check out the Action For Healthy Kids website and download their "Parents are the Power" brochure:

www.actionforhealthykids.org

Appendix

GOOD HEALTH STARTS AT HOME

1. Get 1 hour or more of physical activity each day.

International Food Information Council, Kidnetic, *Bright Papers: Five Fun Ways to Get Physical*

International Food Information Council, Kidnetic, *Bright Papers: How to Get Moving and Have Fun When it's Just You*

2. Get 9 hours of sleep every night.

National Sleep Foundation, *Teens and Sleep*

3. Spend only 1-2 hours of "Screen Time" per day.

National Heart and Blood Institute: We Can! Parent Resources, *Helpful Ways to Reduce Screen Time*

International Food Information Council, Kidnetic, *Bright Papers for Parents: Setting Limits on Screen Time*

4. Eat fruits and vegetables with every meal.

Produce for Better Health Foundation: Fruits and Veggies More Matters, *Top Ten Ways to Get Kids Involved*

5. Drink only water, low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk and 100% juice.

International Food Information Council, Kidnetic, *Bright Papers: Go with the Flow Drink those Fluids*

HEALTH AND HELP ARE EVERYWHERE

1. Start with a strong, active family.

International Food Information Council, Kidnetic, *Bright Papers: Make Fitness a Family Affair*

International Food Information Council, Kidnetic, *Bright Papers: Setting Limits on Screen Time*

2. Get help for your child's doctor.

Center for Disease Control and Prevention, *About BMI for Children and Teens*

3. Play outside of home and school.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *"Division of Adolescent and School Health"*

Parent Teacher Association (PTA), *Parent Guides: Physical Activity Overview, Physical Activity: What You Need to Know*

4. Get more from the grocery store.

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute: We can!, *Parent Tips: Healthier Eating While Saving Money*

International Food Information Council, Kidnetic, *Time Saving Tactics for Healthy Family Eating*

California Project LEAN: Leaders Encouraging Activity and Nutrition, *Shop, Cook, & Eat Lean*

Families Eating Smart and Moving More (Harnett County, NC), North Carolina Cooperative Extension, North Carolina Division of Public Health, North Carolina Academy of Family Physicians, *Shop: Get the Best for Less (Color Me Healthy Resource)*

5. Look for healthier restaurant foods.

Families Eating Smart and Moving More (Harnett County, NC), North Carolina Cooperative Extension, North Carolina Division of Public Health, North Carolina Academy of Family Physicians, *Eating Smart on the Run: Fast Food Survival Guide*

HEALTHY SCHOOLS = SUCCESSFUL STUDENTS

1. Teach health at home.

California Project LEAN (Leaders Encouraging Activity and Nutrition), *Food on the Run*

2. Become a cheerleader for physical activity.

Parent Teacher Association (PTA), *Parent Guides: Physical Activity Overview, Physical Activity: What You Need to Know*

Peaceful Playgrounds, Recess is on the Upswing

California Project LEAN: *Food on the Run*: Find answers to some of parents' most common questions on how to get teens to choose healthy foods and be physically active

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: *Physical Activity, School and Community*

3. Bring in a "substitute" at school parties and fundraisers.

Connecticut State Department of Education and Team Nutrition, *Healthy Celebrations: Promoting a Healthy School Environment*

Coalition on Children and Weight San Diego, Community Engagement Partner of the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative, *Captive Kids: Selling Obesity at Schools, An ACTION GUIDE to Stop the Marketing of Unhealthy Foods and Beverages at School*

4. Raise your hand and volunteer.

Peaceful Playgrounds, Recess is on the Upswing

U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Environmental Education Program of Marin, *5 A Day and School Age Children: School Gardens*

Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), *Safe Routes Info, Safe Routes to School Guide*

Parent Teacher Association (PTA), *Parent Guides: Physical Activity Overview, Physical Activity: What You Need to Know*

5. Quiz the school and work together to find answers.

Action For Healthy Kids, *Handouts for Parent Advocates*

Colorado Action For Healthy Kids, *Parents are the Power Toolkit for Creating Change*