

Parents in the Know

Focus on Health

Healthy Habits

It is your job to help your child develop good health habits. The American Heart Association recommends the following 10 things:

1. **Be a healthy role model.** Children learn from example.
2. **Get on the move.** Make sure that everyone in your family stays active daily.
3. **Limit screen time.** Keep track of how much time your child spends in front of the TV, computer, or video games. Set healthy limits.
4. **Make exercise fun.** Get your child in an activity that he enjoys. He is more likely to stick with it.
5. **Offer encouragement.** Be your child's biggest cheerleader!



6. **Set goals and limits.** It is important for your child to learn to set exercise and activity goals while learning to limit unhealthy foods and activity.
7. **Food is not a reward.** Find a healthy way to reward your children. Extra play time is a great idea.
8. **Eat together.** Having dinner together as a family is a wonderful way to bond, ensure healthy eating habits, and lets you spend time together. Make it a priority.
9. **Read the labels.** Know what is in the foods you are eating. Teach your child to read the labels also.
10. **Be involved.**

Based on: "Top 10 Ways to Help Children Develop Healthy Habits", American Heart Association, <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3030485>

Outdoor Fitness

Many children today don't even know what to do when you tell them to go outside and play. Some classic games to teach your children to play outside include:

- * Hopscotch
- * Tag
- * Hide-And-Seek
- * Shadow Tag
- * Kick the Can
- * Jump Rope
- * Kickball
- * Jacks
- * Marbles
- * Four Square
- * Duck, Duck, Goose
- * Croquet
- * Blow Bubbles
- * I Spy

Healthy Recipes

Make eating and staying healthy fun for your child with these easy recipes you can do with your child.

Ants on a Log

5 celery stalks
1/2 cup peanut butter
1/4 cup of raisins

1. Cut celery stalks into logs
2. Fill with peanut butter
3. Add raisins for ants

Apple Smiles

Apple
Peanut Butter
Mini Marshmallows

1. Cut apples into wedges
2. Add peanut butter to 1 side of 2 wedges
3. Add marshmallows
4. Top with another wedge

* **Warning:** Always make sure that you are aware of any food allergies when cooking with a child. These recipes include nuts.

What Research Says



There are many benefits from physical activity. Children who are active have less chance of becoming overweight. Active children also are less likely to develop type 2 diabetes, high cholesterol, or high blood pressure. Activity increases a child's self-esteem, and reduces the chance of having problems with depression and anxiety. Exercise increases a child's bone strength, muscles, and attention. So, get out there and move with your child!

Based on: "Keeping Kids Healthy and Fit: Motivating Kids to Get Fit", PBS Parents, <http://www.pbs.org/parents/special/article-motivatetomove.html>

Focus on Health

Healthy Snacks

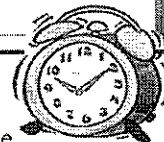
Most children come home hungry and ready for a snack. Snacks don't need to be bad for you. The important thing is to have plenty of healthy snacks on hand for you and your family. Some healthy snack ideas include:

- Fruit
- Vegetables with low fat dip
- Low fat yogurt
- Whole grain cereal
- String cheese
- Turkey on whole wheat bread
- Cottage cheese
- Rice cakes
- Whole grain crackers
- Pretzels
- Air-popped popcorn
- Fruit smoothie made from low-fat milk
- Applesauce
- Frozen grapes

Based on: "Chef Solus' Favorite Healthy Snack Ideas", Nourish Interactive, http://www.nourishinteractive.com/free_printables/family_nutrition_handouts/kids_nutrition_tips.pdf



Images provided by clipart.com



Time Saving Tips

Keeping your children healthy doesn't have to be a full time job. Here are some things to remember:

1. Provide your child with five servings of fruits and vegetables each day.
2. Eat healthy proteins including lean meats.
3. Whole-grain breads and pasta are great sources of fiber.
4. Limit sweets, fast foods, and other junk foods.
5. Encourage your child to drink milk instead of soda.
6. Stay away from frying. Broil or grill foods.

Based on: "Child Nutrition", Medline Plus, <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/childnutrition.html>

Books for Early Elementary

Growing Colors, by Bruce McMillan
Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes and Other Action Rhymes, by Zita Newcome
Get Up and Go, by Nancy Carlson
The Busy Body Book: A Kid's Guide to Fitness, by Lizzy Rockwell



Books for Upper Elementary

Yum! Mmmm! Que Rico! America's Sproutings, by Pat Mora
The Race Against Junk Food, by Anthony Buono
Eat Your Vegetables, Drink Your Milk, by Alvin Silverstein
The Healthy Body Cookbook: Over 50 Fun Activities and Delicious Recipes for Kids, by Joan D'Amico

"It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver." ~ Mahatma Gandhi

Activities to Try at Home

Dealing with a picky eater can be frustrating. However, there are simple things you can do to help.

- * Introduce healthy elements into foods your child likes. For example, put fruit in her cereal or blueberries on her pancakes.
- * Get your child to help prepare meals.
- * Don't bring unhealthy foods into the home.
- * Encourage regularly scheduled healthy snacks throughout the day.
- * Make sure healthy food are available.
- * Be a healthy role model. Don't expect your child to eat foods you won't.
- * Don't make children eat everything on their plates.
- * Teach your child to only eat until he is full.
- * Colorful foods are often full of nutritional value.
- * Let your child pick what fruits and vegetables you buy at the grocery store.
- * Treats are treats. Allow your child treats on occasion. However, make sugar the exception, not the rule.
- * Turn the TV off. Eating in front of the TV encourages overeating.

Based on: "Ten Do's for Dealing with a Picky Eater", the American Heart Association, <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3033903>