

10 WAYS TO HELP YOUR KIDS STAY HEALTHY AND FIT

1. Be a healthy role model! Monkey see, monkey do.
2. Make healthy eating fun. Conduct taste tests, plan meals and shopping with your kids, invite them into the kitchen to help cook.
3. Use the “90/10 food strategy”. Create a positive attitude about food by emphasizing healthy choices and limiting (not eliminating) the not-so-healthy cakes, cookies, and candy. That means 90% Healthy and 10% Fun.
4. Encourage a smart breakfast. Break the fast! Give your body food without sugar to begin the day. Studies show that kids who eat breakfast do better in school than those that skip it.
5. Switch to nonfat and low-fat dairy. Kids need calcium, but not the fat and calories from whole milk dairy. After your child turns two, consider making those changes.
6. Load them up with fiber. Encourage your kids to load up on fiber-rich foods, including vegetables, fruit, beans, lentils, and whole grains.
7. Moderate starch is important. Be mindful and moderate with the amount of starchy carbohydrate you serve your kids at each meal. If it is made of flour, sugar, and powdery substances you are looking at a high carbohydrate food. Pop Tarts, white bread and buns, crackers, rice, pasta, noodles, cakes, and cookies are just a few that will raise your blood sugar and increase the fat cells in your body.
8. Serve vegetables 24/7! Try to have vegetables available round the clock. They are low-calorie and high in nutrients. Have veggies washed, chopped, and ready to eat. Try using the snack size bags filled with the veggies ready to pick up and go!
9. Discourage liquid calories which are HIGH in sugar! Liquid calories are digested MUCH more quickly than solid calories- thus sugary beverages will provide your kids with a lot of extra calories without filling them up. If your kids drink them, it’s likely they will eat just as much food as they would have eaten without the extra calories. Instead, encourage LOTS of water. Look how quickly the calories add up: *8-ounce cup of regular chocolate milk= 210 calories, 20-ounce bottle of Coke= 240 calories, 8-ounce cup of orange juice = 110 calories, 8-ounce cup apple juice= 110 calories, THE TOTAL CALORIES FOR THE ABOVE IS 670 calories!
10. Encourage daily exercise! Get yourself and your kids moving and keep moving. Aim for an hour each day. Limit the TV and video games and encourage after school sports, bike riding, long walks, jumping rope, exercise DVD’S you can do together, do household chores together...just keep moving!

Following are two websites that may help you get started with some healthy steps.

www.in.gov/inshape/2437.htm

www.mayoclinic.com