



Healthy & Fit Families



Helping Kids Be Their Best





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About this Booklet

This guide is written by the registered dietitians of the Nutrition Council to support parents' efforts to help their children develop healthier eating and activity habits. Healthy active children are good learners and are more likely to be their best!

Making healthy food and activity choices allows each child to grow and develop at a rate that is normal for them. Staying at a healthy weight is just one way to help kids be their best. This booklet uses the 5 2 1 0 messages to guide parents as they teach their children about healthy habits. Page 3 has information for parents on the 5 2 1 0 messages.

January 2012

About the Nutrition Council

The Nutrition Council's mission is to advance child health through nutrition education. Agency staff dietitians and volunteers have served families in the Greater Cincinnati community for more than 30 years. Our efforts focus on building a community that supports a healthy lifestyle for all children and their families. For more information visit www.nutritioncouncil.org or call 513-621-3262.

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5 OR MORE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Fruits and vegetables are an important part of healthy eating and most kids don't get enough of them. Fill half your child's plate with colorful fruits and vegetables. Serve a fruit or vegetable with every snack and meal.



2 HOURS OR LESS OF SCREEN TIME

Too much time in front of a television or computer screen can be harmful to your child's health and development. Set limits on screen time – no more than 2 hours a day of watching TV, playing video games or using a computer.

Do things together as a family – go for a walk, read a book or play a game.



1 HOUR OR MORE OF ACTIVE PLAY

Young children need at least 1 hour of active play everyday. Be active with your child – you're their role model! Find fun activities to do together like tossing a ball, dancing in the living room, jumping rope, taking a walk or playing in the park.



0 SUGARY DRINKS

Most kids today get too many calories from sugary drinks like regular soda pop, fruit drinks, Kool-aid and sports drinks. The best drink choices are water and fat-free milk or low-fat (1%) milk. Save sugary drinks for special occasions, not an everyday choice.

Nutrition Basics

Healthy eating is an important part of helping kids stay well and be their best. The USDA's *Choose MyPlate* has lots of useful information about making healthy food choices. See page 14 for information about *Choose MyPlate*.

Parents are the best teachers for healthy eating. When parents offer kids foods low in fat, sugar and salt and high in vitamins, protein, minerals and other nutrients they teach their children the importance of healthful eating.

Use the ABC's of Healthy Eating to help kids learn to eat and enjoy healthy foods.

A **availability** – Have healthy foods ready when kids are hungry so they are fast & easy for kids to choose. Keep fresh fruit on the counter. Have ready to eat veggies on hand for grab and go snacks.

B **behavior** – Kids learn by watching you. Eat healthy foods and your kids will too. Let them see you enjoying a juicy piece of fresh fruit, a fruit smoothie or crunchy vegetables with dip.

C **ontrol** – As a parent, you decide **WHAT** foods to offer and **WHEN**, let your child decide **HOW MUCH** to eat. Remember a child's appetite will vary. If you offer healthy foods then your child can choose foods that help them grow and be their best.



5 Or More Fruits & Vegetables

Fruits and vegetables are important for a growing child. They are packed with vitamins, minerals, dietary fiber and other compounds that promote good health for kids and adults. Eating 5 or more fruits and vegetables each day helps keep everyone in the family healthy and feeling their best. Here are some ideas for serving a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables for your family to enjoy.

5 Tips to Eat More Fruits & Vegetables

1. All forms count. Choose fresh, frozen, canned or dried fruits and vegetables. Select canned, frozen and dried varieties with no added sugar, fat or sauces.
2. Serve Soup for dinner – tomato, bean and minestrone are good choices.
3. Add chopped broccoli, shredded carrots or frozen mixed vegetables to cooked rice, pasta or soup.
4. Keep raw fruits and vegetables handy and ready to eat.
5. Add bananas, strawberries, raisins or other fruit to dry cereal or yogurt.

How to Get Your Child to Eat More Fruits and Vegetables

- **Let them see you eating healthy!** Serve vegetables and fruits that you like. Kids learn by watching you enjoy different fruits and vegetables.
- **Offer new vegetables a few times.** Kids don't always take to new foods right away. Give them a taste at first and be patient with them.
- **Kids eat more fruits and vegetables if they are ready to go!** Help your children choose healthy snacks, make sure fruits and vegetables are easy to find and reach.
- **Let kids in the kitchen!** Your child can help prepare fruits and vegetables. Young children can tear lettuce, add ingredients to a salad or stir fruit mixtures. Older children can measure, peel and help cut fruits and vegetables.
- **Dip it!** Kids love to “dip” finger foods. Good dip choices include salsa, light ranch dressing, bean dip, humus, yogurt.

Quick & Easy Snack Ideas

For simple snacks, try these choosy eater pleasers.

- Apple slices with peanut butter.
- Carrot sticks with humus.
- Canned fruit packed in juice.
- Celery stuffed with peanut butter and raisins.
- Sliced cucumber sandwich: Make a cucumber sandwich with turkey, cheese or egg salad between 2 cucumber slices.
- Fruit kabobs with cheese and fresh fruit. Use a coffee stirrer or pretzel sticks for the “skewers”. Add fresh or canned fruit pieces and cheese cubes to make your kabob!
- Frozen smoothie pops. Pour your favorite Fruit Smoothie into paper cups; add a popsicle stick or plastic spoon and freeze.



Hours or Less of Screen Time

There are some simple things a family can do to help kids succeed in school and stay at a healthy weight. Reducing the amount of time spent sitting in front of a screen—TV, computer or video games—is one of those simple things.

Why Limit Screen Time?

Children watch an average of 4 hours of TV a day. Less screen time helps your child be healthy by....

- Having more time to be active and play.
- Building your child's mind through creative play.
- Spending more time as a family reading, playing games and enjoying hobbies together.
- Not watching commercials for unhealthy foods.
- Limiting snacks in front of the TV.

What can you do?

Set rules about screen time.

- No TV in child's bedroom
- Turn off TV during mealtimes.
- Set viewing limits and choose age-appropriate shows.
- Don't let the TV entertain (babysit) your child during the day.
- Make a list of fun activities to do instead of watching TV.
 - Read Together
 - Play Board Games
 - Dance
 - Outdoor Activities

Tips to Limit Screen Time

- Limit screen time to less than 2 hours a day
- Make one day a week a "No TV" day
- Go for a walk or play a game instead of watching TV
- Turn off the TV during meals and snacks
- Read as a family every day.



Hour or More of Active Play

Young children need at least 1 hour (60 minutes) of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day to stay healthy. Adults need at least 30 minutes of physical activity a day. Being active together is a fun way to enjoy time together as a family and to set a good example for your children.

Why be physically active?

Active play every day helps...

- Students with learning at school
- Adults and kids keep a healthy weight
- Build and maintain healthy bones, muscles and joints
- Boost energy and promote sound sleep
- Teach kids how to use their muscles and how to get along with others

Tips to set your family in motion:

- Make physical activity part of your daily routines – park farther away from the door when shopping; take the stairs instead of the elevator; have kids lead activities during television commercials.
- Plan time every day to do something active as a family – put on music and dance after dinner; play an active game after school or after naps; take a walk together before lunch or after dinner.
- Teach kids to have fun being physically active by doing activities you enjoy!

Did you know?

Moderate physical activity means:

- Doing activities where you breathe hard like hiking or dancing

Vigorous physical activity means:

- Doing activities where you sweat like running, aerobics or basketball

One hour or more each day of physical activity

- Can be done 10 -15 minutes at a time throughout the whole day

Fun Activities for families...

- Take a walk together
- Kick a ball to each other
- Put music on and dance
- Play catch
- Toss a Frisbee
- Visit a local playground or recreation center
- Ride bikes
- Pretend to be an animal or a bird
- Play active games like Simon Says, tag or follow the leader



Sugary Drinks

Drinking more water and less sugary drinks is one simple thing that can have a big impact on your family's health.

Why Water?

- Water is the #1 thirst quencher.
- Water is the most important nutrient of all.
- Water is needed to fuel for your child's body.

Go Easy on Juice

- Offer water instead of juice between meals and with snacks.
- Offer 100% juice – not “fruit drinks”.
- Limit juice to 4 – 6 ounces per day for children under 6 years old.
- Encourage your child to eat whole fruit.
- Too much juice can cause tooth decay, diarrhea and weight gain.

Best Drinks For Children

The best drinks for kids are milk & water.

- Children between 1–2 years old should drink whole milk and/or breast milk.
- Young children (preschoolers) should drink 2 cups of fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk each day. Older children need 3 cups of low-fat or fat-free milk a day.
- Save flavored milks such as strawberry or chocolate for a special treat.

Choose Less Sugary Drinks

- Keep a pitcher of water in the refrigerator.
- Offer water at meals with a squeeze of lemon or lime.
- Serve water at snack time.
- Provide water between meals when your child is thirsty.
- Buy fewer sugary drinks like Kool-Aid®, sports drinks, fruit punches and lemonades.

Sorta Pop

Makes 2 servings

This is a great way to stretch juice.

Ingredients you'll need...

1 cup 100% fruit juice

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup sparkling seltzer water, chilled

Instructions:

- In a small pitcher, combine juice and sparkling water.
- Stir gently to mix.
- Serve immediately, over ice or chilled if desired.

Nutrition information per serving: 60 calories, 0 gm protein, 14 gm carbohydrate, 0 gm fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 0 gm dietary fiber, 9 mg sodium, 60% vitamin C.



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Eat Together Family Meals are Important

Why Eat Together...

- *Improve the quality of everyone's diet.
- *Build family traditions.
- *Provide an opportunity for communication.
- *Influence children's behavior.

How to Eat Together...

Set a goal. Try eating meals together at least three times a week to start and build from there.

Have a plan. Keep ingredients for healthful meals on hand. See the chart on page 15 and the recipes that follow for ideas.

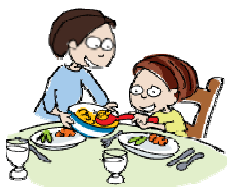
Get the family to help. Older children can help prepare some foods; younger children can set the table and everyone can help with dishes.

Make it simple.

- Prepare quick and easy foods.
- Make it nutritious – offer simple fruit and vegetables, like apple slices, carrot sticks and sweet bell pepper strips. Offer low-fat milk and cheese and lean meats.
- Choose colorful foods that look good and taste good.

Make it fun.

- Focus on the meal and each other...turn off the TV
- Play a mealtime conversation game.
- Talk to your child. Ask questions like: what is your favorite vegetable? What did you eat at lunch today? What made you laugh today?
- Encourage your child to try new foods.



Ideas for Helping Picky Eaters

Picky eating is common for many young children. It can be frustrating for parents who are trying to help their child learn to eat healthy foods. Here are a few ideas that may help encourage children to eat more foods.

Serve foods that you enjoy.

- You can't guess what your child will eat. But your child will learn to like the foods he or she sees you eat and enjoy. Trying new foods takes time so be patient.
- As a parent, you should decide what foods to offer your child for meals and snacks.
- Offer food your child likes along with foods that are unfamiliar.

Have meals and snacks at about the same times each day.

- Don't wait for your child to say "I'm hungry".
- Don't let him eat or drink on the run.
- Don't let him have drinks all the time. Serve water when he is thirsty between meals.

Stay positive and give encouragement.

- Put 4 or 5 foods on the table. Be encouraging. For example say: "You can find something to eat" or "You don't have to eat if you don't want to."
- Teach your child to turn down food politely – to say "yes, please" and "no, thank you".

Sit with your child and eat your meal.

- Children learn by watching parents. When your child sees you eat healthy foods it will help him or her learn to eat them too.
- Let your child dish out his or her food. Encourage children to take small amounts of food. Have them try 2 or 3 spoonfuls to start.

Overcoming Food Jags

- Young children often get into "food jags" eating the same foods day after day. As a caregiver, don't make a big deal about food jags – they seldom last long and children still manage to grow well.



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Foods to Keep On Hand

Grain Group



Whole grain cereal



Mini Bagels



English Muffins



Whole wheat bread



Oatmeal/Oats



Instant Brown Rice



Pasta



Tortillas

Vegetable Group



Pasta Sauce



Frozen Vegetables



Potatoes



Canned Vegetables



Fruit Group



Canned Fruits



Applesauce



Dried Fruit

Milk Group



Low-fat Milk



Plain Yogurt



Lower Fat Cheeses

Protein



Peanut butter



Chicken



Lean Ground Meat



Canned Beans



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Kid Friendly Fruit & Vegetable Snack Recipes

Walking Salad

Makes 2 servings

Ingredients you'll need...

- 1 pita pocket bread, whole wheat
- 1 cup romaine lettuce leaves, torn
- 2 tablespoons sunflower seeds, unsalted
- 1/2 cup broccoli flowerets, chopped
- 1/4 cup shredded carrots
- 1/4 cup reduced fat cheddar cheese, shredded
- 1/4 cup raisins
- 2-3 tablespoons Low-fat Ranch dressing

Instructions:

- Cut pita pocket bread in half.
- In a large bowl, mix together the remaining ingredients.
- Divide mixture into 2 portions. Place in the pocket of each pita.
- Enjoy!

Nutrition information per serving: 240 calories, 7 gm protein, 7 gm fat, 42 gm carbohydrate, 6 gm fiber, 4 mg cholesterol, 2 mg iron, 55 mg calcium, 330 mg sodium.

Very Berry Yogurt Parfait

Makes 1 serving

Ingredients you'll need....

- 1/2 cup low fat vanilla yogurt
- 1/2 cup fresh (or frozen), unsweetened berries* (like strawberries, blueberries or mixed berries)
- 2 tablespoons low fat granola cereal or crumbled graham cracker

Instructions:

- Spoon about half of the yogurt into a small cup. Add about half of the frozen berries.
- Repeat step 1 to make a second layer.
- Sprinkle cereal or graham cracker crumbs on top. Enjoy!

Nutrition information per serving: 190 calories, 2.5 grams fat, 36 grams carbohydrate, 7grams protein, 3 grams fiber, 20% calcium, 30% vitamin C.

* Substitute other fruits if desired. Canned peaches, mandarin oranges and mixed fruit are good too!

Skillet Pizza

Makes 2 servings

Ingredients you'll need....

- 1 English muffin (whole wheat if desired)
- 2 tablespoons pizza sauce
- 1 ounce (1/4 cup) shredded mozzarella cheese

Choose your favorite toppings:

turkey pepperoni, sliced olives, chopped green pepper, zucchini, mushrooms, crushed pineapple

Instructions:

- Split English muffin in half. Top each muffin half with pizza sauce. Put on desired toppings; sprinkle cheese evenly over each muffin half. Place in nonstick skillet.
- Cook on medium heat. Cover skillet; cook until cheese melts & crust is crisp, 5-7 minutes. Serve immediately.

Nutrition information per serving: 240 calories, 14 grams protein, 32 grams carbohydrate, 7 grams fat, 1 gram dietary fiber.

Apple Smiles

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients you'll need....

- 1 apple
- 2 tablespoons peanut butter
- 1/4 cup dry cereal (toasted oats, Chex or Crispix) (Can substitute raisins or mini marshmallows for cereal)



Instructions:

- Core apple and cut into 8 wedges (or use apple wedger if available).
- Spread peanut butter on apple wedges. Place dry cereal (or raisins or marshmallows) on peanut butter for teeth.
- Eat and smile!

Nutrition information per serving: 73 calories, 2 gm protein, 8 gm carbohydrate, 4 gm fat, 1 gm dietary fiber, 0 mg cholesterol, 46 mg sodium.



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Family Meal Ideas

15 Minute Chili

Makes 10 cups

Ingredients you'll need...

- 1 pound ground turkey
- 1 cup fresh or frozen chopped onions
- 1 can (16 oz.) pinto beans, drained & rinsed
- 1 can (16 oz.) kidney beans, drained & rinsed
- 2 cans (14-oz. each) stewed tomatoes
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 tablespoon cumin
- 1/2 cup salsa

Instructions:

- In a large pot, brown turkey with chopped onions and seasonings. Add tomatoes. Cook over medium high heat, breaking the tomatoes into small pieces with a spoon.
- Add salsa to turkey mixture. Stir in drained, rinsed beans. Cook until hot.

Nutrition information per cup: 186 calories, 14 gm protein, 22 gm carbohydrate, 7gm dietary fiber, 5 gm fat, 36 mg cholesterol, 456 mg sodium.

Variations: serve over pasta, rice, baked potatoes or in a tortilla.

To make this recipe vegetarian, use soy meat crumbles or substitute another can of beans.

Serving Suggestion:

- Add a side salad, whole grain bread or brown rice and canned pears or other fruit to complete the meal.

Pasta Fagioli

Makes 6 servings

Ingredients you'll need...

- 1½ teaspoons vegetable oil like canola
- ¾ cup chopped onion, fresh or frozen
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic or ½ tsp. garlic powder
- 1 can (14.5-oz.) diced Italian-style tomatoes
- 1 can (15-oz.) tomato sauce
- 2 cups sliced carrots
- 2½ cups water
- 1½ teaspoons dried basil
- 2 cans (15-oz. each) Great Northern beans, drained & rinsed
- 1 cup uncooked pasta like elbow macaroni

Instructions:

- In large a saucepan heat oil for 1-2 minutes. Add onion & garlic; cook for 3-4 minutes.
- Add tomatoes with juice, tomato sauce, carrots, water & basil. Simmer for 5 minutes then bring to a boil.
- Add beans & uncooked pasta; stir gently to combine. Cook until pasta is tender, about 7-10 minutes. Season with salt & pepper if desired. Serve with Parmesan cheese.

Nutrition information per serving(1 cup): 266 calories, 12 gm protein, 45 gm carbohydrate, 9 gm dietary fiber, 3 gm fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 865 mg sodium.

Serving Suggestion:

- Add a lettuce and tomato salad, whole grain bread and fresh grapes* to complete the meal.

***Note: cut grapes in half for young children due to choking hazard.**



More Family Meal Ideas

Southwestern Chicken and Rice

Makes 6 servings

Ingredients you'll need...

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil like canola
- 1 pound skinless, boneless chicken breast halves, cut into bite-size pieces
- 1½ cups salsa
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 2 cups frozen corn kernels, thawed
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 can (15-ounces) black beans, drained & rinsed
- 1 cup shredded reduced-fat Cheddar cheese
- 1½ cup instant brown rice, uncooked

Serve with:

- ½ cup reduced-fat sour cream

Instructions:

- Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add chicken and cook, stirring frequently, until lightly browned, about 3-5 minutes.
- Stir in corn, 2 cups water, beans, rice, salsa, chili powder, and cumin and bring to a boil.
- Reduce the heat; simmer, covered, until rice is tender, about 15 minutes.
- Stir in cheese until melted. Serve in individual bowls and top with sour cream.

Nutrition information per serving: 352 calories, 30 gm protein, 45 gm carbohydrate, 7 gm fat, 7 gm dietary fiber, 54 mg cholesterol, 161 mg calcium, 3.0 mg iron, 621 mg sodium.

From: **The Meal Makeover Recipes** by: Janiee Newell Bissex, MS, RD, & Liz Weiss, MS, RD.

Serving Suggestion:

- Add a tossed salad and fresh grapes* to complete the meal.

***Note: cut grapes in half for young children due to choking hazard.**

Quick Quesadillas

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients you'll need...

- 4 – 6-inch whole wheat tortillas
- ½ cup fat-free refried beans
- ¼ cup salsa
- 1 cup frozen whole kernel corn
- ½ cup shredded low fat cheddar

Serve with:

- reduced fat sour cream
- chopped lettuce
- salsa

Instructions:

- In a small bowl, mix refried beans and salsa. Spread bean & salsa mixture on each tortilla.
- Put ¼ cup corn on each tortilla, spread evenly on the beans & salsa.
- Sprinkle 2 tablespoons shredded cheese over each tortilla and fold in half.
- Place in skillet and cook 2 to 4 minutes or until lightly browned and crisp. Turn over; cook until cheese is melted. Cut each tortilla in half. Serve with desired accompaniments: reduced fat sour cream, chopped lettuce and salsa.

Nutrition information per serving: 147 calories, 6 gm protein, 33 gm carbohydrate, 4 gm dietary fiber, 1 gm fat, 3 mg cholesterol, 381 mg sodium.

Serving Suggestion:

- Add brown rice mixed with salsa for a quick Mexican rice side.
- Serve canned pineapple for dessert.





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More Family Meal Ideas

Oven-Fried Parmesan Chicken

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients you'll need...

4 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves
1 cup nonfat plain yogurt
Non stick cooking spray
1 tablespoon vegetable oil like canola
¾ cup plain bread crumbs
4 tablespoon Parmesan cheese
2 tablespoons flour
1 tablespoon paprika
1 teaspoon onion powder
½ teaspoon garlic powder
pinch cayenne pepper

Instructions...

- Place chicken in yogurt and refrigerate.
- Preheat oven to 450°.
- Spray baking pan with non stick cooking spray and drizzle with 1 tablespoon vegetable oil.
- Mix the remaining ingredients together in a large zip lock bag.
- Place chicken, one piece at a time, in the bag and shake.
- Place chicken on the prepared baking sheet and lightly spray the top with non stick spray.
- Bake 20 minutes or until chicken is fork tender & juices run clear. Turn chicken one time after 10 minutes. Then continue to bake.

Nutrients per serving: 280 calories, 34 gm protein, 16 gm carbohydrate, 4 gm fat, 1 gm dietary fiber, 74 gm cholesterol, 80 mg calcium, 2 gm iron, 316 mg sodium.

Serving Suggestion:

- Serve with baked potatoes and green beans.
- For dessert: slice fresh or frozen unsweetened strawberries and spoon over low fat ice cream.

Stovetop Pasta

Makes 6 servings

Ingredients you'll need...

1 pound lean ground beef
2 large carrots, shredded (about 2 cups)
2 cans (10.75-ounce each) 30% less-sodium tomato soup
2½ cup uncooked pasta
(elbow macaroni or other shape)
½ teaspoon garlic powder
½ teaspoon onion powder
1 teaspoon dried basil
1 cup part-skim mozzarella cheese, shredded
¼ cup Parmesan cheese

Instructions...

- Place a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add ground beef and carrots and cook, breaking meat into smaller pieces, until the meat is no longer pink, about 5 minutes. Drain off fat.
- Add the tomato soup, 2 cans of water, pasta, basil, garlic powder and onion powder; stir until well blended.
- Bring to a boil; reduce heat and cook covered at a low boil until the pasta is tender, about 20 minutes. Stir occasionally.
- Remove from heat. Stir in mozzarella cheese. Serve in individual bowls and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.

Nutrition information per serving: 443 calories, 28 gm protein, 51 gm carbohydrate, 14 gm fat, 4 gm fiber, 58 mg cholesterol, 239 mg sodium.

Serving Suggestion:

- Serve with a cucumber, tomato and onion salad or a lettuce salad, canned peach slices and whole grain bread if desired.



Use Choose MyPlate For Healthy Eating

Use USDA's *Choose MyPlate* to teach your family about healthy eating. Start good eating habits early to help your child grow and be healthy for a lifetime. *Choose MyPlate* reminds parents to offer young children a variety of foods from each of the five food groups. *Choose MyPlate* is based on the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. The three key messages of the Dietary Guidelines are:

Balancing Calories

- Enjoy your food, but eat less.
- Avoid oversized portions.

Foods to Increase

- Make half your plate fruit and vegetables.
- Make at least half your grains whole grains.
- Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk.

Foods to Decrease

- Cut back on foods high in solid fats, added sugars, and salt.
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks

