"Weigh to Go"

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Childhood Obesity: Make weight loss a family affair

Children can't change their exercise and eating habits by themselves. They need the help and support of their families and other caregivers. Successful prevention and treatment of childhood obesity starts at home.

Childhood obesity is usually caused by kids eating too much and exercising too little. So creating new family habits around healthy eating and increased physical activity can help a child lose weight and can also improve the health of other members of the family.

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Change Family Behaviors

Many behaviors contribute to childhood obesity, whether it's the time spent in front of the TV or computer or the types and amounts of food they eat. These behaviors or habits are hard to change within a family, especially if members aren't ready, willing or able to make changes. Small, progressive steps can help. Keep in mind the following helpful hints.

It's not a race. The first rule of change is to not make changes too quickly. It takes time and dedication to develop new, healthy ones.

Think small. Small, gradual changes are easiest to follow and add into your daily lives. And small changes can make a big difference over time. Pick a few small changes that seem doable. For example, turning off the TV during dinner, switching from soda (a soda contains 10 teaspoons of sugar and 150 calories) to low-fat milk or water, or taking a walk after dinner once a week.

Set individual and family goals. Set specific goals for each family member and then determine family goals. For example, your child's goal might be to eat fresh fruits and vegetables for afternoon snacks and the family's goal might be to eat out at a fast food restaurant **only** once a month.

The new changes might take some time getting used to. But stick to the plan as best you can and evaluate your progress. Sometimes goals need to be adjusted if they don't work for the family. It's better to create a new plan than to stick to one that isn't working.

Create a Healthy Weight Environment

As you work toward healthy habits and behaviors, create a home environment that supports these efforts. For example, make sure healthy foods are readily available. Serve fruits and vegetables with meals and remove high-calorie, high-fat foods from the home, buying them only occasionally.

A healthy-weight environment also means that exercise and physical activity are built into the day's routine. Encouraging the kids to play outside (they can ride a bike or play a basketball game with friends) is a good way to keep kids active. Organize family outings that involve physical activity, such as walking to the library or playing at a park.

Parents can also set rules for the home that help support a healthy lifestyle. For example, limiting the time spent watching TV, on the computer or playing a video game encourages children to find other more active pastimes.

Other ways to create a healthy-weight environment:

- Remove sugar-sweetened drinks from the home.
- Offer more whole-grain foods with meals and snacks.
- Reduce the number of meals eaten out at fast food and other restaurants.
- Sit down together for family meals without TV that last at least 30 minutes.
- Remove TV's and computers from children's bedrooms.
- Include children in active chores, such as washing the car or walking the dog.

As your family establishes healthy behaviors be sure that all members including parents stick to the plan. For example, if you take the TV out of your child's bedroom, make sure to take the TV out of your bedroom as well. Consistency is the key to creating a healthy-weight home.

Be a Positive Role Model

The best way to get your child on board with the new, active lifestyle is to commit to the changes yourself. Your actions teach your child what to eat, how much to eat and when to eat. You also encourage your child to be physically active every day if you make it a priority yourself. Here's how you can be a positive role model:

- ✔ Eat more healthy, nutritious foods.
- ✔ Control your portion sizes.
- ✔ Limit the number of treats and high-calorie snacks you eat.
- ✔ Be physically active every day.
- ✔ Limit the amount of time you spend watching TV or playing computer/video games.

Reward Successful Changes

Rewards for successful behavior changes keep your family motivated and more inclined to stick to the plan. Make a list of how your family has succeeded in changing certain eating and activity habits. Then celebrate your success. Rewards should be given regularly, on a daily or weekly basis.

Celebrating progress can be as simple as offering your child praise and attention. Planning an activity the family likes to do together, such as skating or swimming, is a good option. Don't use food as a reward or punishment. You might lay the groundwork for food related power struggles.

A Challenge for Today's Family

Making changes can be tough, especially when today's families juggle busy schedules, time and money issues and other stressors and demands on daily living. But if your family works together and supports each others efforts, then success is more likely. Soon the new changes will be added into your family's everyday life and will be just the way things are done. Once healthy habits become routine, you're well on your way to keeping a healthy weight and improving your health as a family.

Tips for Encouraging Healthy Eating in Your Home

Control what comes into your house! What's in the house is what is eaten. Keep health food in sight. Fruit in a bowl on the table, chopped up veggies in bags at the front of the fridge, healthier snacks at the front of the cupboard.

Three bite rule. Everyone takes three bites of a new dish. The first bite to try, the second bite to decide and the third to really know.

Kids cook. Have children help when you cook. As they gain more skills, let them plan a meal and make it on their own. Do this on a regular basis. For example, once a month they are responsible for a meal or a healthy snack.

Explain portion sizes with objects. Put a deck of cards on a dinner plate to represent 3 ounces of meat. 4 dice for 1 ounce of cheese, a ping-pong ball for 2 tablespoons of peanut butter, $^1/_2$ baseball for $^1/_2$ cup of ice cream and 1 baseball for a cup of rice. Let your kids actually use these examples to place them in plates or bowls, so they get a sense of portion size. Hands on learning is a great way to help kids remember portion sizes!

Go, Slow and Whoa Foods

Lots of kids want to know which foods to eat to be healthy or lose weight. One of the most important things we can learn to eat healthier is the difference between "Go, Slow and Whoa" foods. Check out which foods get the green light to eat any-time and which foods get the red light as occasional treats.

Go foods—Eat almost any time.

- Vegetables without fat and sauces
- Whole grain breads, pastas and cereals
- Skim or 1% milk
- Low-fat yogurt
- Baked chips
- Low-fat cheese
- Extra lean ground beef
- Frozen fruit bars
- Fruit

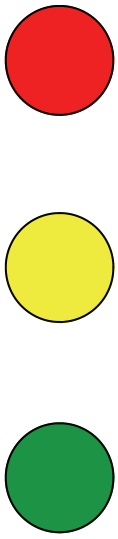
Slow foods—Eat sometimes.

- Oven-baked French fries
- Processed cheese spread
- Low-fat dressings
- Broiled hamburgers
- 100% fruit juice
- Low-fat hot dogs
- White bread

Whoa foods—Eat once in a while.

- Fried vegetables
- Sweetened cereal
- Chicken nuggets
- Full-fat cheese
- Fried hamburgers
- Ice cream
- Crackers
- Chips
- Sodas
- Cookies

Match the pictures to the red, yellow or green circle by using what you learned above.



Word Search

H E A L T H Y D O P I K E L J
S E L B A T E G E V L M D C K
C T L S D I U Y S I I L A X G
F F N T X U B Q M T K O O I S
C S K A Q A D R Y H C W H A Q
S Y P J T G O N O C Z F W X J
N G W W K R A J A V R A V D Y
O K U D O L O S P L O T E R L
I W C G M L I P B I J B Y B J
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P C L U B H I P K K S L A O G
N N A T G T T D Y Z Y F L P B
G Q L C J Q V J T K W M C O C

ANYTIME
FRUIT
GOALS
HEALTHY
IMPORTANT
LOWFAT
MILK
OCCASIONAL
PORTIONS
SLOW
VEGETABLES
WEIGHT
WHOA

Food Pyramid Worksheet

Name: _____

Check how you did yesterday and set a goal to aim for today!

Write in your choices for today	Food/Activity	Tip	Serving Size/Goal	What makes a serving?	Did I meet my goal? (Circle yes or no)
Breakfast:	**Grains**	Make at least half your grains whole grains.	6 to 11 servings a day.	$^1/_3$ to $^1/_2$ cup of brown rice 1 slice of bread 1 cup of cereal	Yes No
Lunch:	**Vegetables**	Color your plate with all kinds of great tasting veggies.	3 to 5 servings a day.	5 to 7 cooked baby carrots 1 or 2 small broccoli spears $^3/_4$ cup of vegetable juice	Yes No
Snack:	**Fruits**	Make most choices fruit, not juice.	2 to 4 servings a day.	5 to 7 strawberries $^1/_3$ to $^1/_2$ cup of melon $^1/_2$ cup of sliced fruit	Yes No
Dinner:	**Milk**	Choose fat-free or low fat.	2 to 3 servings a day.	1 cup yogurt 1 cup milk	Yes No
	Meat and Beans	Choose lean meat, chicken or turkey. Vary your choices – more fish, beans and	2 to 3 servings of 2-3 ounces a day.	1 or 2 chicken drumsticks $^1/_4$ cup of turkey	Yes No
Physical Activity:	**Physical Activity**	Doing chores around the house is a good way to get exercise.	Get at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day.	Build more physical activity into your daily routine at home and school.	Yes No

How did you do today? ❒ Awesome ❒ Okay ❒ Not so awesome

My food goal for tomorrow is: _____

My activity goal for tomorrow is: _____

Kentucky UNBRIDLED SPIRIT

Symphony of Fruit Pizza

Ingredients:

1 English muffin
$^{1}/_{3}$ cup strawberries, sliced
$^{1}/_{4}$ cup canned mandarin oranges, drained
$^{1}/_{4}$ cup red grapes, quartered
2 tablespoons whipped fat-free strawberry cream cheese

Directions:

Toast the English muffin until golden brown. Spread cream cheese on toasted muffin. Arrange sliced strawberries, grapes and orange slices on top of cream cheese. Slice into quarters and "Yummy Fruit pizza!"

Candied Grapes

Ingredients:

5 cups grapes
1 box sugar free/fat free Jell-O (any flavor)

Directions:

Wash grapes thoroughly. Pour wet grapes into a mixing bowl. Mix in dry Jell-O until all grapes are covered. Serve and ENJOY!

Apples with Dip

Ingredients:

8 ounces fat-free cream cheese
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1 $^{1}/_{2}$ teaspoons vanilla
2 tablespoons chopped peanuts
$^{1}/_{2}$ cup orange juice
4 apples, cored and sliced

Directions:

Place the cream cheese on the counter to allow it to soften, about 5 minutes.

To make the dip, combine the brown sugar, vanilla and cream cheese in a small bowl. Mix until smooth. Stir in the chopped peanuts.

Place the apples in another bowl. Drizzle orange juice over the apples to prevent browning. Serve the sliced apples with the dip.

This information is for educational purposes, it is not intended to replace medical advice from your healthcare provider. Please consult your healthcare provider for advice about a specific medical condition.