

Promoting Healthy Eating & Physical Activity in Elementary School Children:



A Resource Packet for Parents

Introduction

This packet, for parents of elementary school children, was developed by the Youth Education Committee of the Maryland Healthy Eating and Active Lifestyle Coalition. The mission of the Coalition is to coordinate efforts and resources to increase the number of Maryland residents, adults and children, who eat healthy and engage in physical activity regularly.

The Elementary School packet includes a sheet of tip cards that can be cut out and carried in a purse or wallet. The cards cover such topics as active play, family meals, snacks and children's serving sizes. A list of additional resources is included as well. Specific questions on your child's health should be discussed with a doctor or registered dietitian.

Nutrition and Physical Activity Tip Cards

Active Play Goes a Long Way!

- Use the stairs
- Take a walk
- Play ball
- Go swimming
- Fly a kite
- Dance
- Run and jump
- Go sledding
- Walk the dog
- Pull a wagon
- Rake leaves
- Wash the car
- Skip, hop, leap



HAVE FUN!!

When Out on the Town...

- Order the small-size soda, fries, or hamburger instead of the super-size
- Have a side salad or baked potato for fries
- Drink low-fat milk or water instead of soda
- Have your chicken grilled instead of fried



Keep Serving Size on Your Mind...

Each day aim for:

- Grains—6oz
- Veggies—2 1/2 cups
- Fruit—1 1/2—2 cups
- Milk—3 cups
- Meat & Beans—5oz



Use these size guides:

- 3 oz meat = deck of cards
- 1 cup pasta = tennis ball
- 1 oz cheese = 4 dice



Make Meal Time, Family Time!

- ◆ **Get everyone involved**—have kids help with preparing and cleaning up the meal.
- ◆ **Make connections**—share favorite moments of the day during meals.
- ◆ **Spend more time at the table**—prepare simple meals like sandwiches or make-your-own pizza.



Have a Healthy Snack Attack!



Mix up a low-fat milkshake or a fruit smoothie

Add fruit to low-fat cottage cheese or low-fat yogurt

Try popcorn, pretzels, or raisins instead of chips or cookies



Dip veggies in low-fat salad dressing



Buy individual size portions of your favorite snacks

Start Good Habits Today!



Be a role model—when you eat fruits and veggies, your kids will more likely try them.



Keep the peace—turn off the TV and make mealtime as quiet and relaxing as possible.

Make food a neutral party—try to avoid the “clean your plate or else” expression and keep food from becoming a reward or punishment.

Additional Resources

Child Nutrition and Health - USDA, Food and Nutrition Information Center

<http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/etext/000008.html>

Children on the Move: Physical Activity for Early Childhood – Patricia Kimbrell, MA

<http://www.cnr.berkeley.edu/cwh/PDFs/Kimbrell.pdf>

Community Nutrition Action Kit (Grades 3-6) – USDA, Team Nutrition

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/cnak.html>

Eat Smart, Play Hard - USDA, Food and Nutrition Service

http://www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/collection/collect_parent.html

Food and Nutrition Fun for Children: A Resource List – USDA, Food and Nutrition Information Center

<http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/pubs/bibs/gen/childlit.html>

Food, Family and Fun: A Seasonal Guide to Healthy Eating – USDA, Team Nutrition

http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Students/Food_Family/index.html

Health Eating & Physical Activity Across Your Lifespan: Helping Your Child: Tips for Parents – Weight Control Information Network (WIN)

<http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/child.htm>

Healthy Habits for Healthy Kids: A Nutrition and Activity Guide for Parents – WellPoint Health Networks and the American Dietetic Association

http://www.wellpoint.com/healthy_parenting/index.html

Healthy Kids, Healthy Families – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/physicalactivity/brochures/pdf/parent.PDF>

Helping Your Child Eat Healthy Foods and Be Ready to Learn (Ages 5-7) – Bright Futures Nutrition Family Fact Sheet

<https://www.brightfutures.org/nutritionfamfact/pdf/BWEng/MC57bw.pdf>

Helping Your Child Eat Healthy Foods and Be Ready to Learn (Ages 8-10) – Bright Futures Nutrition Family Fact Sheet
<https://www.brightfutures.org/nutritionfamfact/pdf/BWEng/MC810bw.pdf>

KidsHealth - Nemours Foundation
<http://kidshealth.org/>

Let's Play: Innovative Games and Activities for Kids – West Virginia Department of Education
http://wvde.state.wv.us/ctrc/shownews.html?news_id=21#

Milk Matters Calcium Education Campaign – National Institutes of Health
<http://156.40.88.3/milk/milk.cfm>

MyPyramid for Kids - USDA, Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion
<http://www.mypyramid.gov/kids/index.html>

National Child Care Information Center - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
<http://nccic.org/>

Nutrition Explorations - National Dairy Council
<http://www.nutritionexplorations.org/>

Parenting Corner - American Academy of Pediatrics
<http://www.aap.org/parents.html>

Resources for Parents – USDA, Team Nutrition
<http://teamn nutrition.usda.gov/parents.html>

There's a Rainbow on My Plate Activity Book for Kids – Produce for a Better Health Foundation
http://www.5aday.com/html/kids/rainbow_downloads.php

We Can! Ways to Enhance Children's Activity and Nutrition - National Institutes of Health
<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/>