

# Healthy Habits - Healthy Kids

## Help Them Make Good Choices



Adopting healthier eating habits and staying active can help improve children's academic achievement and lower the risk for obesity and related diseases. However, making healthy lifestyle choices can be challenging for parents, especially if a child is a picky eater.

### Discuss what it means to be healthy

Parents should engage in conversations with their children that explain that being healthy requires proper exercise and a well balanced diet.

### Eat dinner as a family

Rather than preparing different dishes for every member in the family, caretakers are encouraged to create one healthy dish that everyone will eat. This can help model the positive eating behaviours you want your children to engage in.

### Let your child pick which healthy food is on their plate

When caretakers are purchasing groceries, allow children to pick out the fruits and vegetables they are willing to try. Children are more likely to eat foods they pick out, rather than foods they are forced to eat.

### Make it a family effort

If you want your child to pick up healthier habits, encourage your family to be supportive and start making healthier habits themselves. It can encourage the child to pick up these habits sooner if they realise everyone in their family is supportive and making the same choices.

### Provide praise

It's incredibly important to tell children that their efforts are appreciated. Any and all attempts at trying new foods should be celebrated. Providing positive feedback about their willingness to try the food will increase the chances of them trying it again.

### Keep it natural

When choosing snacks, make sure to keep it simple. A bag of fruit and vegetables will be healthier and provide more natural energy than any other snack. Also, try to reduce the amount of juice and milk your children consume. Water is the most beneficial and healthiest drink you can offer your child.

### Helpful resources

Resources like the NHS Change4life webpage provide families with a variety of tips and suggestions on how to promote healthy habits at home. ChooseMyPlate, which is an American government website, also has guidelines to help with the correct portion sizes for children and adults. This can help parents monitor how much their children are eating and what is recommended for children according to their age.

