

# IT'S ALL IN THE FAMILY



## Helping your child develop healthy habits: Tips for parents

1. A good family motto for healthy habits is...more love, less food. A child who receives affection and has enough to do is less likely to overeat.
2. Encourage your child to exercise and play daily. Join your child in playing games like hide-and-seek, Frisbee, jumping rope, hiking, and roller skating. Limit activities such as watching television or playing computer and video games.
3. Set a good example and teach your child to eat slowly and chew food well. Children learn from adults and model their habits. What do YOU eat? How physically active are YOU?
4. Do not insist that your child eats everything on their plate. For younger children, use a child-size or luncheon plate and serve child-size portions. Better in the waste than on their waist!
5. Praise your child for good behavior instead of rewarding him/her with food. Be creative in offering non-food rewards for significant achievements.
6. Ensure that your child eats three meals each day at regular times. Stress the importance of eating a good breakfast and prepare meals for your child. While it is constructive to get children involved in meal preparation, adults should maintain primary responsibility.
7. Limit snacks to one or two daily. Ensure that snacks do not become meal-sized. Encourage calorie-free beverages with each snack.
8. Let your child ask for snacks. Do not get into the habit of asking your child if they want a snack or if they are hungry.
9. Always stock a variety of fresh fruits and other healthy foods in the refrigerator or pantry for quick snacks.
10. Keep "empty calorie foods" out of the house. These are foods that are high in calories and low in nutritional value such as chips, candy, or soda pop. Do not expect your child to be able to limit these foods if others in the household eat them on a regular basis. These foods are NOT part of a healthy diet!