



5210 Tips for Families

Additional resources, skills, and strategies for parents are available at no cost through the online Thrive Initiative programming. Visit the Thrive website <https://thrive.psu.edu>, and sign up today!

5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables.

Fruits and vegetables provide a lot of nutrients and water without a lot of calories. They also contain fiber and a variety of phytochemicals that help prevent cancer, heart disease, and other diseases. Young children often reject new foods at first — it may take several exposures to a new food before it is accepted, so keep trying!

- Prepare meals and snacks at home using fruits and vegetables and let children help in the kitchen so they learn how to make healthy foods.
- Eat together as a family and model healthy eating to your children.
- Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables and other healthy foods at planned times throughout the day.
- Let children choose whether and how much they eat.

2 or fewer hours of recreational screen time.*

Screen time is free time spent in front of screens — like televisions, video games, and the internet. It is possible to get enough physical activity and still engage in an unhealthy amount of screen time — so encourage your family to find other fun ways to spend their free time!

**review guidelines on parenting strategies to encourage quality screen time (AAP, 2015).*

- Same parenting rules apply to screen time — set limits.
- Role modeling is critical — limit your own screen time.
- Children learn better from live interactions than from passive videos — talk to your children!
- Content matters — review what your children are watching and don't just set a timer!

1 or more hours of physical activity.

Moving your body is a great way to burn calories, improve your mood, boost your energy, prevent cancer and cardiovascular diseases, and help you sleep better at night — plus, it can be a lot of fun! Look for activities your family can enjoy together so everyone can reap the benefits and help keep one another on track!

- Use activities instead of foods as incentives — a trip to the park, sledding hill, laser tag arena, skating rink, batting cage, or community pool can be great alternative to the ice cream shop to celebrate a job well done.
- Walk or bike as a family to get where you're going.
- Set up activity dates with like-minded families or sign up your family for a charity walk — if you're accountable to someone else you may be more likely to stay active.

0 sweetened beverages.

It is important to drink fluids to stay healthy, but sweetened beverages add extra sugar and calories to the diet. Watch out for drinks with the following ingredients: sugar, honey, sweetener, syrup (e.g., corn syrup, brown rice syrup), and/or ingredients ending in "-ose" (e.g., glucose, dextrose).

- Make water the norm for quenching thirst — drink water when you are thirsty and offer water to thirsty children.
- Sparkling water, still water with slices of lemon, and fruity herbal iced teas are fun alternatives to plain water.
- Nonfat and 1% milk and 100% fruit and vegetable juices contain beneficial nutrients and calories, so think of them as foods that contribute towards your family's healthy diet.