

Keep kids healthy

“Texas exceeds the national average for school-age children at risk or who are overweight,” and there is less physical activity in schools. Additionally, “Texas has the 6th highest rate of adult obesity in the U.S.”

Family support is a key factor in developing and shaping quality lifelong healthy decisions in children. Other factors like psychology, tools and level of fun and participation are also worth mentioning. For parents to make a lasting impact on their children they must lead by example, promote and support healthy lifestyles at home, create a nurturing environment, provide positive feedback for good choices and behaviors around nutrition and physical activity such as praise and reward, setting appropriate goals and remembering that it’s all fun and games.

Also “Set goals for health, not weight..., goals for a nurturing environment, healthy eating and for physical activity

Physical Activity is any form of bodily movement. It is recommended that adults accumulate 30mins or more of moderate intensity phys. activity on most if not all days of the week while, children should accumulate 60mins and up to several hours of age–appropriate phys activity on all if not most days of the week. This should include moderate and vigorous phys activity with the majority of the time being spent doing intervals (ages 5-12)

Playing hopscotch, tossing a ball back and forth, and dancing, in addition to organized sports, are some good ways for your child to be active and learn important life skills along the way.

Some examples of activities listed by intensity of physical activity (see box). Your children can always step up the intensity by working harder!

- Be a physically active role model and have fun with children. Since adults need 30 minutes of daily physical activity, play together! Then, make sure the child gets in another 30 minutes for a total of 60. Another 30 minutes is probably good for you, too.
- Walk with children at every available opportunity—if possible to school or to the store on errands. Take a walk with family or friends after dinner instead of watching TV or playing computer games.
- Plan active weekends. Include biking, hiking, skating, walking, or playing ball. Take a trip to the park, swimming pool, or ice skating rink. If you work on weekends, arrange a physically active play date for your child.
- Offer to join children in their favorite physical activities, or enroll children in a group exercise program.
- Include children in active chores such as dog walking, house cleaning, car washing, and yard work.
- Limit physically inactive behavior such as TV watching and computer time.

- Avoid using TV as a child-sitter or pacifier. Offer active alternatives to screen time—jumping rope, playing hide-and-seek, or running an errand. Children love it when you are active with them and share in what they do.
- Keep TVs out of children’s rooms.
- Give your children gifts that encourage physical activity—active games or sporting equipment.
- Talk with your schools about ways to incorporate non-competitive physical activity during the day.

According to www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines An easy and fun way to keep children active and eating right is to create a weekly calendar of healthy lifestyle activities. Use some of the ideas in this chapter to start building a healthy family (or "friends") plan that works for everyone’s schedule. Let everyone choose a weekly activity and take charge of it. Also, check out the kid friendly recipes in part IV, "[Recipes and Resources](#)," to help empower children to prepare their own foods, with adult supervision, of course!

Fun Family Health Quiz:

1. Low-fat or fat-free means no calories. True/False
2. Fast foods are always an unhealthy choice and you should not eat them when dieting. True/False
3. Skipping meals is a good way to lose weight. True/False
4. Eating after 8 p.m. causes weight gain. True/False
5. Fad diets work for permanent weight loss. True/False
6. High-protein/low-carbohydrate diets are a healthy way to lose weight. True/False
7. Starches are fattening and should be limited when trying to lose weight. True/False
8. Certain foods, like grapefruit, celery, or cabbage soup, can burn fat and make you lose weight. True/False
9. Lifting weights is not good to do if you want to lose weight, because it will make you “bulk up.” True/False
10. “Going vegetarian” means you are sure to lose weight and be healthier True/False

Answers: 1-10 False

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