

You are the Experts of your Family!

Families can spend quality time together and enjoy exercising when activities are creative and fun.

Exercise

To increase physical activity in your family, incorporate a variety of activities that fit your children's age levels and abilities. Be physically active as a family together to increase energy and well-being.

Both children and adults need at least an hour of activity each day for a healthy lifestyle. Activities that increase breathing rates will build muscles and strengthen bones.

Drink lots of water to support healthy brain functioning and restore energy.

Nutrition

It is easy to make nutritious choices if healthy snacks are prepared ahead of time. Eat breakfast every day and pack healthy school lunches. Meal plans are a great way for families to make healthy eating choices.

Choose water to hydrate, instead of soda pop or fruit juice. Consuming too much added-sugar can impact children's learning by making it harder to focus and remember information.

A satisfying lifestyle balance includes activities for learning as well as activities just for fun!

Balance

Make time for yourself and activities you enjoy. Relax, have fun with friends, take walks, or plan an activity day. Role model healthy living, self-care, and life balance by showing responsibility while making time for fun as well.

It is important to divide time between responsibilities and pleasure. When we make having fun and quality time a priority, all experiences and activities become more satisfying.

Benefits of Making Healthy Choices:

- ✓ Talk with your child about his or her reactions and feelings to promote the development of emotional awareness. This skill will support your child in making healthy, responsible choices when faced with challenging situations.
- ✓ You and your family need time to relax and enjoy each other. Families benefit from a conscious balance of responsibility and fun!
- ✓ Make sure to eat meals together to strengthen communication and build relationships within your family.

Making Healthy Choices Now = Better Choices in the Future

- Monitor technology use. Aim for no more than 2 hours a day.
- Instead of driving everywhere, walk or bike when you can!
- Exercising during the day will give you more energy in the evening.
- Spend time with friends. Join together in activities with other families in the community.
- Choose activities the whole family enjoys. Take turns picking out new activities to try.
- Plan for healthy food choices whenever possible.

Visit www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php or Google “Canada Food Guide” for the Health Canada website.

“Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”

World Health Organization, 1948

Children look to adults as role models for healthy choices.

Families are strengthened by spending quality time together.

Meals are a great way to spend time with each other and

Your child will eat healthy snacks if they are available.

Stress Management

Role model healthy coping skills as a parent. When parents manage stress in healthy ways, it will promote similar habits in their child.

- Consider lifestyle choices and healthy ways to show your child how to manage stress and emotions (music, exercise, art, etc).
- As a family, think about how you take care of yourself when you feel busy. Consider all aspects of your health to prevent becoming overwhelmed or over extended.
- If stress becomes overwhelming, connect with a family support agency in your community.
- Be aware of how your thinking impacts your actions. Try to think optimistically and keep your thoughts positive.
- Take time for yourself! Schedule time each day to do something just for you.

Finding Balance:

- It's ok to say 'no' or re-schedule to avoid the stress of over-commitment.
- Make time for hobbies. Do things you love to “recharge your batteries.”
- Work *together* to get chores done around the house. Each family member is capable of helping each other in some way.
- Schedule family time and keep it as a commitment to family wellness. Find activities where the family can laugh together. Look online for ideas or go to your local library for books on fun, new things you can try with your family.
- Take time before bed to relax and wind down (dim the lights, read a book, sip herbal tea). Relaxing with a bed time routine will promote better sleep throughout the night.
- Make time to spend time with friends. Parents who have friends and supports to turn to will be less likely to transfer stress to their children.