



With one in three children in the United States being overweight or obese, many children are now at risk for health problems once seen only in adults. These include type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure. National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month is the perfect time to promote strategies to learn about and engage in activities that promote healthy eating and greater physical activity. If we do our part, we can reduce childhood obesity and help our children have a healthier future.

Tips for healthier habits

- **Eat and Drink Healthy:** Make water your drink of choice (supplemented by age-appropriate low-fat milk servings) and make it easy for everyone to fill half their plates with fruits and vegetables. Offer 2 or 3 fruit and vegetable choices at every meal. Use both fresh and frozen options for variety. Place a full pitcher of water on the table and allow older children to fill their own glasses.
- **Spend Time Outdoors:** When possible children should have at least an hour a day of unstructured play outside and participate in 20 minutes or more of vigorous physical activity at least three times a week. Make it a family event and participate in activities with your kids. Go for a walk after dinner.
- **Spend Time Together:** Eat as a family whenever possible. Let your children help with meal planning, preparation, and clean-up. Enjoy each other's company and spend one-on-one time every day with your children.
- **Reduce Screen Time:** Limit time spent in front of a television, computer, cell phone or video games to two hours or less per day. Turn off screens during meals and spend time talking as a family.
- **Get Enough Rest:** Both children and adults need to keep a regular sleep schedule. Make a habit of going to bed and getting up in the morning within one hour of the same time each day. Children need 10-12 hours and adults need 7-8 hours of sleep per night.

Check out the links below for more information and tip:

www.cdc.gov/Features/ChildhoodObesity/index.html

<https://healthfinder.gov/NHO/SeptemberToolkit.aspx>

For more information on National PTA's Healthy Lifestyles program and what your PTA can do, go to:

www.pta.org/programs/content.cfm?ItemNumber=4280&navItemNumber=4216