



Parent's Healthy Lifestyle Handbook

*What parents need to know to become their
child's best advocate for a healthy lifestyle*

What is the Parent's Healthy Lifestyle Handbook?



- A tool to use to encourage parents toward a healthy lifestyle
- Who will use it?
 - Providers - enhance existing programs
 - Schools, after-school programs, daycares, churches, etc
 - Parents - provide a guide in their homes



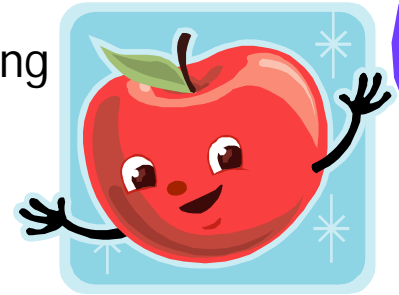
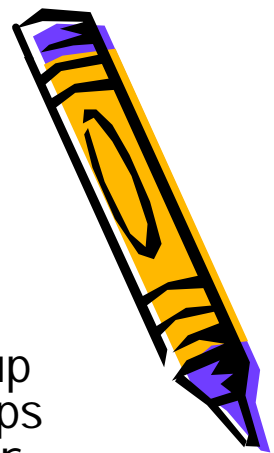
Top Ten List for Healthy Families

1. Be the decision maker of the healthy lifestyle of your family
2. Model a healthy lifestyle for your family
3. Visit your healthcare provider and dentist regularly
4. Set boundaries for your children
5. Get at least 60 minutes of exercise daily
6. Limit the television/video game screen time to 2 hours daily
7. Read and model reading for your family daily
8. Do not use food for reward
9. Avoid tobacco in any form
10. Get proper amounts of sleep daily



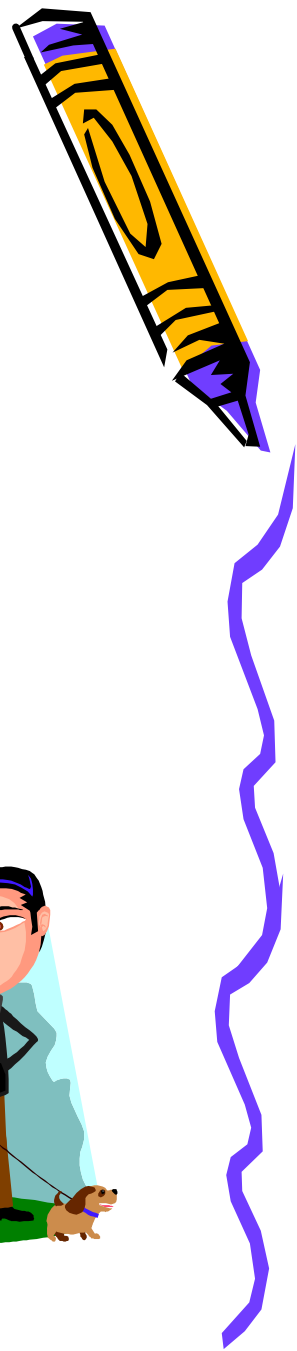
Be the decision maker of the healthy lifestyle of your family

- Good nutrition and a balanced diet will help children to grow up healthy. Whether a toddler or a teen, you can take these steps to improve nutrition and encourage smart eating habits in your household.
- Eat as a family whenever possible
- Mix a variety of fruits, vegetables and grains in planning
- Practice what you preach by eating healthy yourself
- Try to avoid battles over food
- Limit fat intake
- Limit sugar based foods and drinks
- Don't force kids to eat — make eating a pleasant experience
- Avoid using food as a reward
- Make kids involved in the process of making meals whenever possible
- Make meal time calm and pleasant — no arguments while eating!



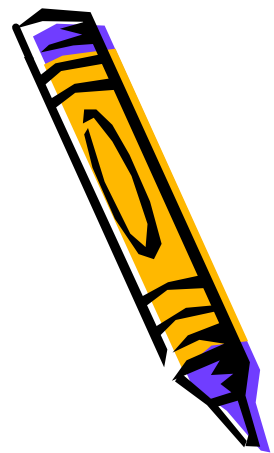
Model a healthy lifestyle for your family

- Be a role model for your kids
- When you make good choices, so will your children
- Have a conversation with children about your choices
- Be truthful with children
- Be available to listen and answer their questions
- Be patient with kids

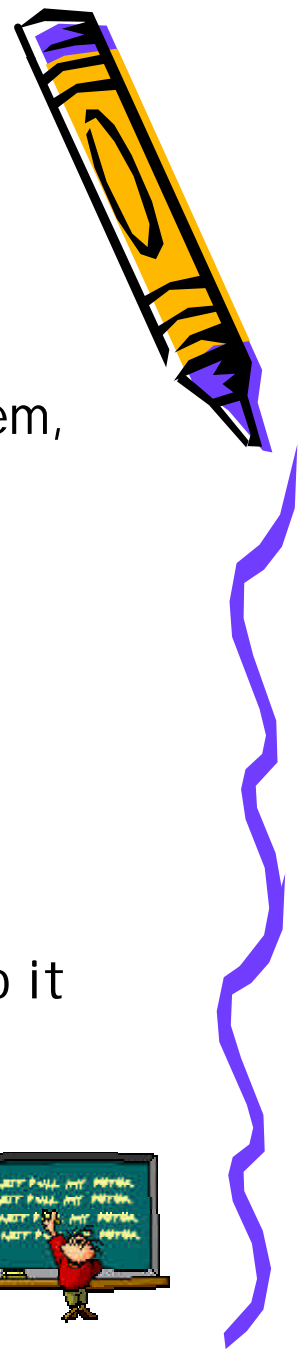


Visit your healthcare provider and dentist regularly

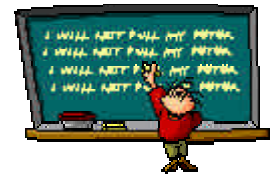
- Staying healthy is a preventative process
- It's a chance for the doctor to see that your children are growing and developing normally
- It's also a chance for you as parents to talk with the doctor about any questions you may have
- This will give your children the opportunity to learn the importance of doctor/dentist visits



Set boundaries for your children

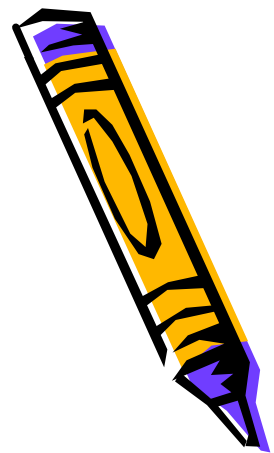


- Children want you to care about what is healthy for them, and they like you to set boundaries! YES, SET BOUNDARIES! From portion sizes to limits on hourly television watching and bedtimes, enjoy everything in moderation.
- Careful with this one... this is **not** a democracy... nor a dictatorship!
- Choose your battles
- Take time to observe your child's individual needs, e.g. growth spurts
- Easy does it, bring changes in one at a time and stick to it
- Allow for special occasions and changes in the home routine, e.g. a recital, big game (win or lose) and such



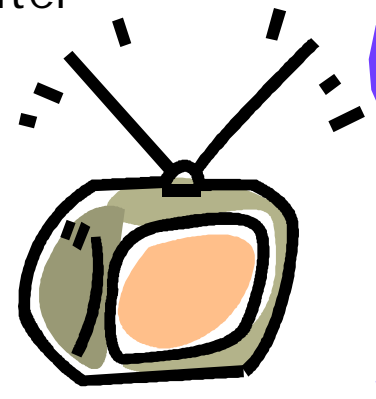
Get at least 60 minutes of exercise daily

- Exercising regularly keeps the body and mind in shape. Try to exercise at least 60 minutes a day
- Regular exercising leads to increased energy and metabolism. In addition, it is a great stress reliever
- Dancing is a good way to have fun with the kids. If the kids see mom and dad exercising, then they are more likely to join in. Be a role model — lead by example



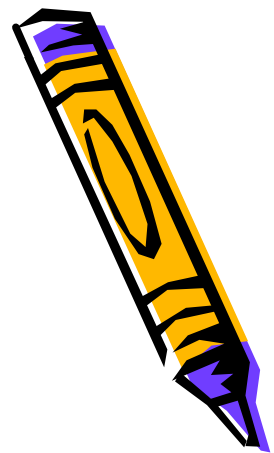
Limit the television/video game screen time to 2 hours daily

- Limit TV, computers and video games to 2 hours a day
- This allows more time for your children to play, exercise, read and do much more
- Turn off TV during meal time
- Develop a family media plan, don't have the TV on constantly, choose which show to watch, monitor video game playing times
- Use TV schedule's and ratings as a guide to what you allow your children to watch
- Set an example, by limiting your screen time too!
- Preview video games and monitor your children's computer activities by keeping the computer in a common area
- Become a computer literate
- Educate children to avoid chat rooms



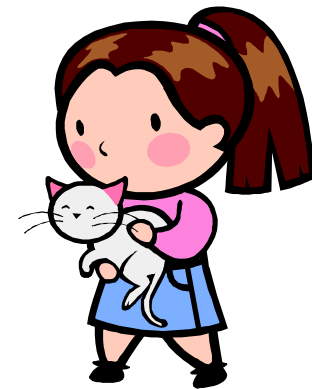
Read and model reading for your family daily

- Reading to your children and having your older children read to you are ways of increasing the parent-child bonding experience
- Your child will cherish the journey you've taken together
- When you are driving to those endless practices, try reading signs on the way. In the grocery store, try reading signs and package labels. It not only helps keep you focused, it will keep the children from being distract



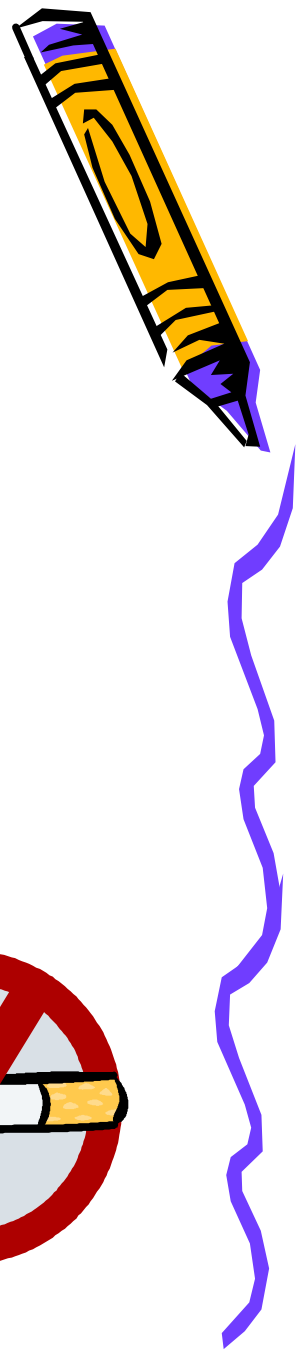
Do not use food for reward
Make exercise fun !

- Use alternatives such as school supplies or books as rewards instead of food (sugary snacks, candy, fast foods, etc.)
- Exercise should be fun for everyone.



Avoid tobacco in any form

- If smoke is in your house, it is in your kid's body
- Second hand smoke can cause poor health conditions including asthma, respiratory infections and cancer
- Talk to children about smoking
- Educate your child to say 'no'
- Be a good role model



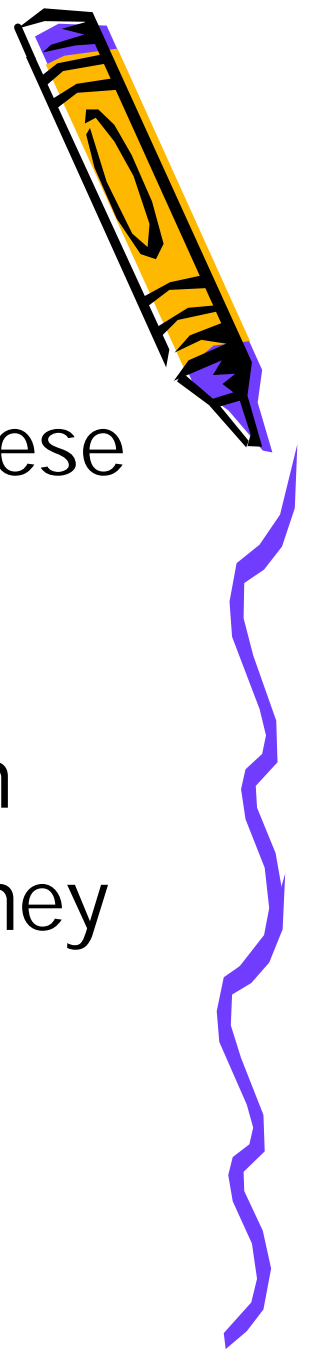


Get proper amounts of sleep daily

- Sleep is important especially in growing children
- Children need an average of 10 hours of sleep each night
- Include a calming-down period in the routine
- Stick to a bedtime, alerting your child both half an hour and 10 minutes beforehand
- If possible, play soft, soothing music
- Tuck your child into bed snugly for a feeling of security
- Don't put kids to bed angry no matter what issues are pending
- Kiss children goodnight and let them know you love them
(We all need to know we are loved at the end of the day)



Future Additions to complete the Handbook



- Specific information related to these first ten healthy lifestyle topics
 - Exercise, nutrition, sleeping, etc.
- Top Ten List for a great Education
- Top Ten List for talking about Money with your kids

