

When children are in my care, limit time spent in sedentary activities including watching TV, videos, electronic games and computer play.

Encourage child in my care to be involved in active play at least one hour a day. You will notice better behavior, too.

Become an advocate for daily physical activity at schools.

Take a close look at my kitchen – cupboards, refrigerator and freezer. Do I keep high calories, low nutrition snack foods on hand or are there plenty of nutritious choices?

Limit the amount of “liquid-calories” available, such as soda pop, fruit drinks, and other sweetened beverages.

Resist the temptation of making every activity an eating activity.

Give the child in my care a chance to know the signals for hunger and feeling full by setting meal and snack times.

Join in when a child runs, jumps and plays activity. Inactivity appears to be a major reason for weight problems.

If a child is overweight, understand that dieting is not a healthy approach. Instead, help an overweight child grow into his/her weight.

Accept a child at any weight. Children will be more likely to accept and feel good about themselves when parents and other adults accept them.

Listen to a child’s concerns about his or her weight. Overweight children probably know better than anyone else that they have a weight problem. For this reason, overweight children need support, acceptance and encouragement from all adults.

Buy and serve more fruits and vegetables. Let children choose them at the store.

Eat fast food less often.

Role model that you know when you are full, by leaving food on your plate when you have had enough.

Order milk when eating at a fast food place.

Teach children not to tease.

Try not to get discouraged if a child will not eat a new food the first time it is offered. Some kids need to have a new food served to them 10 or more times before they will eat it.

Ask for healthy food choices in vending machines at work and in schools.

Try not to use food as a reward. Promising dessert to a child for eating vegetables, for example, sends the message that vegetables are less valuable than desserts. Kids learn to dislike foods they think are less valuable.

Take advantage of small opportunities to be active: bike and walk rather than drive; take the stairs instead of the elevator.

Do not try to control the amount of food a child eats. It is up to adults to provide healthy meals and snacks. It is up to the child to choose how much food he or she will eat.

Support and suggest initiatives that provide safe and accessible sidewalks, playgrounds, parks, walking and bicycle paths and stairs.

Be active as a family. Assign active chores, such as making beds, washing the car or vacuuming.