



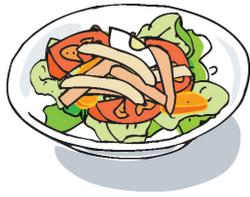
Helping Youth Make Better Food Choices

The tips at right are based on strategies and approaches used by nutrition, health and public health professionals who work with children, youth and families. These professionals shared their ideas for helping youth make better food choices in keeping with the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* as part of an **Action for Healthy Kids** research project that involved over 1,400 respondents nationwide.

Please refer any child with a special dietary need or health condition to an appropriate health care professional.

Action for Healthy Kids is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to addressing the epidemic of overweight, undernourished and sedentary youth by focusing on changes in schools. Through volunteer Teams in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, and a network of 60 national Partner organizations, Action for Healthy Kids works to improve children's nutrition and increase physical activity, which will in turn improve their readiness to learn. For more information, visit www.ActionForHealthyKids.org

Tips for Parents and Caregivers



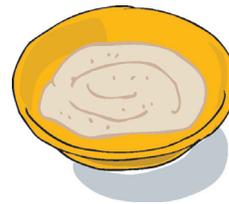
Parents are role models. If you want your kids to drink their milk, you have to drink yours, too!

Eat family meals. Kids are more likely to eat more healthful foods at the family dinner table.

Set attainable goals! Set short-term goals that the entire family can reach — one good habit at a time.

Stop the clean plate club. The meal isn't done when the plate is clean; it is when the belly tells the brain that it's full.

Provide variety. Expose kids to a variety of low-fat and fat-free dairy, fruits, vegetables and whole grains.



Start young. Likes and dislikes are formed early. Teach kids about healthful foods from infancy.

Encourage the "one-bite taste." Don't force a child to eat. Taste for new foods occurs over time.



Food as fuel. Help kids think of their stomachs as gas tanks. Don't overflow your gas tank... or your belly!

Educate kids on the connection between healthy eating and energy, body image and school performance.



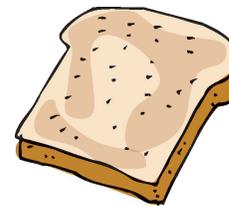
Use your tools. Learn how to read food labels, MyPyramid charts, shopping lists and recipes.

Set TV limits. Allow no more than two hours a day of screen time, including computer and video games.



Garden to table. Teach kids where their food comes from. Visit a farm! Plant a garden!

Get their hands dirty. Involve kids in food planning, selection, preparation and cooking.



Portion distortion. Teach youth about realistic food portions using age-appropriate serving sizes.



Make it real. Show kids how much sugar is in soda or an energy drink by measuring it with sugar cubes.

Discourage dieting. Explain to kids that not eating "junk" food is a change in habits, not a diet.

