

Healthy Weight

INITIATIVE

NEWSLETTER

SPRING CLEANING

It's that time of year again to spring clean your home. This year why not try cleaning up your diet as well? Spring is the perfect time to start making healthier choices when it comes to what you eat. A large variety of colorful fruits and vegetables are in season and should be taken advantage of. The USDA recommends that **adults eat 1 ½ - 2 cups of fruit per day and 2 - 3 cups of vegetables per day.** For **older kids, the recommendations are 1 ½ - 2 cups of fruit per day and 2 - 3 cups of vegetables per day.** Changing dietary habits can be difficult. Try starting with replacing one snack a day with a healthy snack of fresh fruit or vegetables.

Also remember that cleaning your home counts as a physical activity and will contribute towards a healthier life. Thirty minutes of aerobic physical activity 5 days of the week is recommended for adults while children are advised to be physically active for one hour per day. Ballroom dancing with the vacuum or doing the foxtrot with your feather duster will count toward your 30 minutes of activity and can be a fun way to take care of chores.

In Season Fruits

- Apricots
- Cherries
- Grapefruit
- Honeydew
- Kiwi
- Limes
- Mangoes
- Oranges
- Pineapple
- Strawberries

In Season Vegetables

- Asparagus
- Artichokes
- Arugula
- Beets
- Broccoli
- Carrots
- Chives
- Collard Greens
- Fava Beans
- Fennel
- Kohlrabi
- Leeks
- Lettuce
- Mint
- Mustard Greens
- New Potatoes
- Parsley
- Peas
- Radishes
- Scallions
- Spinach
- Swiss Chard



PICKY EATERS VS. VEGETABLES

Getting children to eat their vegetables can be a frustrating task for any parent. On average, it takes ten times of trying a food before a child begins to like it. For some picky eaters it may be difficult to get them to even try new foods, especially vegetables. Here are some tips to increase the amount of vegetables in your kids' diet!

1. KEEP IT SIMPLE

Most often picky kids like plain foods. Vegetables like peas, green beans and corn served plain and in small quantities will be less intimidating for children to try. The more often kids see a certain vegetable on their plate, the more likely they are to try it eventually.

2. ALLOW KIDS TO PLAY WITH THEIR FOOD

The more interaction kids have with vegetables, the better. Try cutting vegetables into fun shapes to increase their appeal. Calling vegetables by fun names and turning eating vegetables into a game could be another way for kids to try vegetables. For example, you could call broccoli "trees" and pretend to be dinosaurs to see how many "trees" you can eat.

3. KIDS IN THE KITCHEN

Letting kids help prepare vegetables may help to encourage them to try vegetables. Simple things like washing vegetables can give kids a sense of accomplishment and in return they may be more willing to try a bite of something that they helped with.

4. OUT OF SIGHT - OUT OF MIND

Chances are that if picky eaters cannot see the vegetables in their dish, they will most likely eat it without complaint. When adding vegetables to a dish, try sautéing the vegetables until it is soft, then put it in a blender and blend until it is smooth. This could be used with spaghetti sauce or pizza sauce to make chunky tomatoes smooth. You could also try adding spinach to the sauces and blend them in. Blending vegetables into soups is another great way to hide vegetables.

5. MAKE VEGETABLES LOOK LIKE OTHER FOODS

Some vegetables when prepared a certain way can resemble other foods that are more kid friendly. Spaghetti squash could replace spaghetti noodles. The look is similar and when covered in sauce can be indistinguishable from the noodle version. Cauliflower that is cooked and blended can be prepared like mashed potatoes. Black beans can be mashed and mixed with ground beef to put in tacos or casseroles.

6. COUNT ON THE THINGS THEY LIKE

If there is a certain vegetable they will eat, it is ok to serve it often. Getting kids to eat any kind of vegetable improves their nutrition and gets them vitamins and minerals that they need. Things like cheese and low-fat ranch dressing are also kid friendly items and serving them with vegetables can encourage children to at least try them.

7. BE A GOOD EXAMPLE

Children often reflect behaviors they see in others. By eating vegetables in front of children, they will see that it is ok to eat them. Children often want to be like "big kids" and if eating vegetables is a trait of a "big kid" they may be more likely to try them.

8. KEEP IT POSITIVE!

Try to avoid forcing kids to eat vegetables. Using vegetables, or really food in general, as punishments/rewards can establish bad eating habits in children and can lead to more problems down the road. Remember, it can take TEN times trying a food before a child will like it. If early on they associate that food with a negative emotion or experience then getting to the tenth try will be even more difficult to accomplish. By encouraging vegetables instead of forcing them you can establish positive attitudes towards food and your child's health can benefit from it.

Whatever you do, don't give up! Taste buds will change over time and eventually trying a vegetable will turn into liking a vegetable. Experiment with different ways of serving vegetables until you find one that works. For more information about improving vegetable intake and sneaking vegetables into meals visit the following sites:

<http://www.thesneakychef.com/>

<http://www.momlifetv.com/article.php?id=58>

<http://woodbridge-va.patch.com/articles/eat-your-vegetables-tips-from-a-former-picky-eater-2>



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HEALTHIER BEVERAGES



This just in from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation: healthiest beverage options for children- water and milk! Experts say water is best to keep the body hydrated and in top shape. Non-fat and low-fat milk ranks among the best drinks for children due to the rich vitamin and mineral content. Great for growing bodies! Skip the whole milk or flavored milk unless it is no more than 130 calories per 8 ounces. To get the scoop on other healthy (and not so healthy) beverage options go to: <http://www.rwjf.org> and search “beverage recommendations for children.”

TRIPS FOR KIDS

Trips For Kids (TFK) is an organization founded in 1988 targeting at-risk youth aimed to instill confidence, inspire achievement, and grow environmental awareness through the simple act of bike riding and having fun. In addition, these youth may acquire a bike of their own through TFK’s Earn-A-Bike program. Nationally, there are over 80 chapters of TFK, but only one in Alabama. If you are interested in starting a chapter in your area, contributing financially, or donating bikes, you are encouraged to visit their website: tripsforkids.org for more information.



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES AVAILABLE

Physical activity is the cornerstone of achieving a healthful life in people of all ages, including children and adolescents. Studies show that children who are active have stronger bones and muscles, have decreased risk for developing obesity, diabetes and heart disease, and also show improved concentration, memory, and classroom behavior. Only 60 minutes of physical activity per day are needed to obtain these benefits. National guidelines recommend that most of the 60 minutes be moderate to vigorous aerobic activity. This would include activities like jogging, playing soccer, or jumping rope. Strengthening exercise should also be included in everyone’s physical activity routine. Strength building exercises work against resistance, like lifting free weights, doing push-ups, or playing tug-of-war. Additionally, bone strengthening exercise is key to maintaining optimal health. Most aerobic exercises are also considered bone-strengthening like running and playing basketball or volleyball. There are many programs that focus on increasing physical activity and are centered on evidence based practice. These programs may be included into your current afterschool curriculum to promote physical and mental health of each participant. Below are a few examples:

1. GO FAR (Go Out For A Run)- is an 8 to 10 week fitness program designed for children of all ages and abilities. The focus of GO FAR is to promote healthy eating habits, positive character traits, goal setting, and successfully and safely completing a 5k run or walk/run. Cost of the program includes a onetime GO FAR curriculum fee of \$275, Webinar fee of \$45 and a GO FAR gear cost of \$15-\$25 per participant per season. For more information on this organization see: <http://www.gofarclub.org>

2. Adventure to Fitness- a completely free curriculum that incorporates activity with learning. The curriculum is designed for children of all ages and abilities. To access the lessons, just create an account for your teacher login (parents can create accounts, too). The episode library contains lessons on topics ranging from geography to nutrition- 30 fun minutes of exploration, movement, and fun. For more go to: www.adventuretofitness.com

Consider adding these curricula and others to strengthen your afterschool program. For a more information on nutrition and physical activity visit ADPH’s webpage: www.adph.org/nutrition. See the Healthy Weight Initiative link to learn more about recommendations for daily physical activity and additional resources to improve your current afterschool service.

Healthy Weight Initiative
Alabama Department of Public Health

The RSA Tower

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NEWS AND EVENTS

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HEALTH WEEK

National Women's Health Week is a weeklong health observance coordinated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It empowers women to make their health a priority and encourages them to take the following steps to improve their physical and mental health and lower their risks of certain diseases: visit a health care professional to receive regular checkups and preventative visits, get active, eat healthy, and avoid unhealthy behaviors (ex. smoking and texting while driving.)

When: May 12-18

Where: Nationwide

ALABAMA EMPLOYEE HEALTH & FITNESS DAY - ONE MILE WALK

Alabama Department of Public Health, State Employees' Insurance Board and Governor's Commission on Physical Fitness & Sports are hosting this employee's wellness walk at the state capitol. The goal is to promote the benefits of a healthy lifestyle to employers and their employees through worksite health promotion activities and environments.

When: May 17

Where: the Capitol

What time: 10:30 AM to 12:15 PM

NATIONAL PHYSICAL FITNESS AND SPORTS MONTH

National Physical Fitness and Sports Month is a great time to spread the word about the benefits of getting active for people of all ages. Physical activity improves muscle strength

and supports bone and heart health. This May challenge yourself, family and friends to get active!

When: the month of May

Where: Nationwide

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH WORKSHOP AT AUM

This wellness workshop covers topics on fitness, health, classroom management, bullying, ten legal duties of a coach, adapted activities, and literacy, large group activities and motivating middle school girls. Registration is \$30.00 and includes Certification for 6 CEUs and a CD with all workshop handouts. Contact Breeana Boyd at AUM: 334-244-3472 or email bboyd1@aum.edu

When: June 13

Where: Auburn University in Montgomery Wellness Center

What time: 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

2013 SUMMER PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH EDUCATION CONFERENCE

This conference is free to attend, but you must register and make arrangements for overnight accommodations and transportation. You may either register through STI (title: 2013 Summer Physical Education Conference, # SPEHC2013) or you may register with Laurie Auffant (Laurie.Eldridge-Auffant@adph.state.al.us). Deadline is July 15. You may also contact Nancy Ray nray@alsde.edu for more information on this workshop.

When: July 29-31

Where: Alabama 4-H Conference Center