

Twenty Ways to Become a Fitter Family

1. Eat more meals together. Kids who eat family meals are better nourished, do better in school, and even get into less trouble!
2. Overhaul your kitchen. Take a close look at pantry shelves, cupboards, the refrigerator and the freezer. Do you see mostly high calorie, low nutrition easy-grab foods or are there plenty of nutritious choices? Can you look around your kitchen and easily find the ingredients for four or five healthful meals? Make a list of staple ingredients needed to stock a healthful kitchen and head to the store.
3. Not every activity needs to be fueled by food. Eat at home before heading off to a movie, sporting event or amusement park.
4. Make better choices when eating out. Start by saying “no” to super-sized portions.
5. Avoid telling your child to “take one more bite” or “clean your plate.”
6. Be the sports parent who speaks up about the “treats” typically served after games and practice. Offer to put together a list of nutritious snack and beverage choices.
7. Limit access to sweetened drinks. When thirsty, drink water.
8. Teach your child about agriculture by visiting local farms and farmer's markets. Choose locally grown produce when available. Plant a vegetable garden with your child.
9. For short errands, walk or bike with your child.
10. Limit total “screen time” (video games, computer, TV, etc) to a maximum of 2 hours daily.
11. Devise a healthy snack list with your child. Post on the refrigerator.
12. Teach your child to cook.
13. Involve your child at the supermarket by assigning a list of nutritious foods to find.
14. Start each day with a nutritious breakfast. Not only will your child pay attention at school, breakfast plays a role in healthy weight regulation.
15. Encourage your child to play outside whenever feasible. Adults can play too! You're it!
16. On the weekend, live life instead of watching it on TV. Find a new place to hike, bike, cross-country ski or run.
17. Find an indoor swim center that you can use all year long.
18. Discuss food advertising with your child. Write letters to the advertisers that inundate children's programming with low-nutrition food and beverages ads.
19. Teach your child how to read and understand the information on food labels.
20. Be a role model! Show your child how much you enjoy nutritious foods and fun, physical activity.