



7 Steps to healthy living and healthy weight

There are seven steps for raising confident healthy-weight children who naturally enjoy good health in body, mind and spirit.

1. **Normalize activity.** Active living is basic to good health. Be active with your children. Have fun together in a variety of activities.
2. **Normalize eating.** Establish regular mealtime eating habits - three meals a day and one or two snacks - beginning with breakfast. Stop all dieting and food restriction. Instead, help your children respond to their own internal signals of hunger and fullness, so they eat when hungry and stop when full.
3. **Balance sound nutrition.** In this plan the child first learns to normalize eating patterns and tune in to body signals, then gradually begins to modify food choices, if needed. Good nutrition includes all five food groups - breads and cereals, fruits, vegetables, meat and alternatives, and milk and dairy.
4. **Feel good about yourself.** A nurturing environment in home, school and community promotes all aspects of growth and development for children, in mind, body and spirit.
5. **Communicate feelings.** Promote communications and sharing of feelings from the time children are young. How to listen attentively, calmly and noncommittally and provide feed back.
6. **Feel good about others.** Help your child develop good relationships, not only with their peers, but also with caring neighbors and other adults.
7. **Balance the dimensions of wellness.** As we consider the whole child in body, mind and spirit, keep in mind that weight and eating are only part of wellness, and need to be kept in perspective

Guidelines for parents

How to prevent weight and eating problems

- Be active with your children. Have fun together in a variety of physical activities.
- Promote communication and sharing of feelings.
- Teach positive self-talk, self-acceptance and self-respect. Praise and support each other.
- Promote respect for others and appreciation of diversity.

- Be a role model of normal healthy eating and lifestyle
- Communicate that "Every body is a good body," and avoid focusing on weight or shape in a negative way.
- Promote normal eating and diet-free living.
- Eat family meals together at least once each day if possible, and with the television off.
- Help children develop interests and skills that lead to success, pleasure and fulfillment in areas where appearance is less important.
- Encourage friendships with caring neighbors and other adults.

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Wellness information courtesy of Wellness Proposals