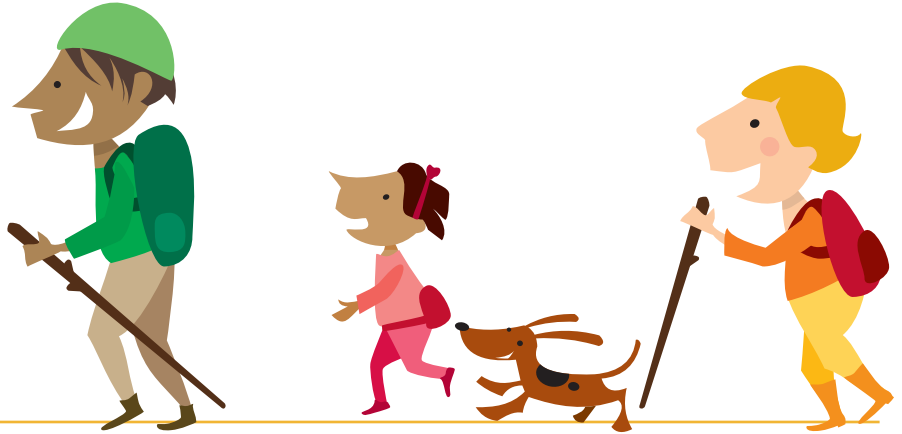


# parent tips

## Healthy Habits, Healthy Families

From cooking healthier to increasing physical activity, learn fun ways families can support each other in making better choices.



### Eat Right

Use this helpful checklist to prepare homemade, healthy meals for your family—even on a budget!

#### Food 411:

- Before you go grocery shopping, plan ahead. Look through your refrigerator and cabinets to see what foods you already have in the house.

Make a list of meals you can make with those items. (Get ideas from our [Weekly Meal Planner!](#))

Add foods you need to buy to the list. Try our [Grocery List](#) template.

- When shopping, use weekly ads and the store bonus cards for sale prices. Remember, store brands are usually cheaper!

Cook once, eat twice! Skip seconds and enjoy leftovers at another meal. This helps you save money and keeps **portion sizes** in check.

- Use in-season fruits and veggies to cut costs. If fresh produce is unavailable, buy canned without added sodium (salt) or frozen without added fat.
- Rather than paying more for pre-cut chicken, buy a whole chicken and cut it up. Remove the skin before cooking.
- Make food in large batches. Then split meals into family size portions and freeze to use later in the month.

For more information on [healthy substitutions](#), tips on [eating well when you eat out](#), and great [family recipes](#), visit the **We Can!** Eat Right webpage at <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/eat-right/index.htm>.



## Get Active

It may be easier than you think to motivate your kids to get moving! Here are some steps you can take to set healthy goals for your family:

- 1. Don't make big changes all at once.** If you usually drive everywhere, try walking to a friend's house down the street. In a couple weeks, walk a little farther—maybe to school or to the store.
- 2. Ask your kids for ideas.** Get everyone involved by having your children choose physical activities for the family to try together. [Here are everyday ideas to rev up activity.](#)
- 3. Focus on fun!** Plan physical activities you can do as a family, like playing in the park or at a community center, or even going ice skating.
- 4. Explain the benefits of healthy habits.** Kids may not think about the ways eating fruits and veggies or being active now helps to prevent diseases when they grow up. So, focus on the things that matter to them today. Here are some ideas:
  - Choosing healthy foods will give them energy to play sports and do activities with their friends.
  - Being active and eating healthy can help them from getting sick and missing time and activities with friends.

For more tips to help your family move more, visit the **We Can!** Get Active webpage at <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/get-active/index.htm>.



## Reduce Screen Time

It's easy for kids to get distracted by TV, computers, and video games. So, set a good example by setting rules that limit their screen time.

First, track your family's screen time with the [We Can! Screen Time Chart](#).

Limit screen time to no more than two hours each day—suggest active fun instead!

[Here are some things you can do as a family.](#)

- Turn off the TV during family meals and talk to your children about their day.

**Find more tips** on how you can reduce your family's screen time on the **We Can!** Reduce Screen Time webpage at <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/reduce-screen-time/index.htm>.

**We Can!** is a program from the National Institutes of Health that offers resources for parents, caregivers and communities to help children 8-13 years old stay at a healthy weight through eating right, increasing physical activity, and reducing screen time.

To learn more, go to <http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov> or call 1-866-35-WECAN.

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