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Healthy on the Job! Workplace Wellness Newsletter

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Focus: Family
Wellness

The Importance of Family Meals

According to the 2003 National Survey of Children's Health, "Teens who regularly have meals with their family are less likely to get into fights, think about suicide, smoke, drink, use drugs, and are more likely to have later initiation of sexual activity, and better academic performance than teens who do not." The same study concluded that in addition to belonging to a healthy social environment, children who eat with families are more likely to eat the suggested amount of fruits, vegetables and dairy products and are less likely to develop disordered eating habits. But the family meal

is about more than just food, says Robin Fox, an anthropologist who teaches at Rutgers University: "If it were just about food, we would squirt it into their mouths with a tube. A meal is about civilizing children. It's about teaching them to be members of their culture." Don't fret if your family has been less-than-routine about eating meals together. According to Nancy Gibbs, research has shown that "family dinner gets better with practice." With



each meal together it is likely that the conversation will improve, the foods choices will be made wiser, and the tension will decrease. So if you don't already, start making family meals a priority, and your kids will likely thank you for it.

Source: "Family Meals."
Child Trends Data Bank.
2003.

Deskercise!

- Stretch the Hams: From a standing position, extend one leg out in front of your other leg about 10 inches, lifting your toes and digging your heel into the ground. Bend the back leg slightly, and put both hands on the thigh of your back leg to support your weight. You should feel the stretch in the back of your front leg. Hold for 10—15 seconds. Now push the toes of the front leg down to the floor and hold for another 10—15 seconds. Repeat on the other side.
- For more deskercises, visit: <http://uclivingwell.ucop.edu/deskercise>

Remember to always consult your doctor before beginning an exercise program.

Don't let the longstanding tradition of family meals fade away because of hectic schedules. If soccer practices and dance recitals make it hard to eat dinner together, try making sure everyone is together for breakfast !

Preventing Obesity and Overweight in Adolescence

Obesity and overweight are serious health risks in today's society, and lately they are affecting more kids than ever. According to *HealthDay* reporter Serena Gordon, new studies have shown that "by the time

children reach their teens, their level of physical activity drops significantly." In previous generations, kids walked or biked everywhere, whereas today their parents typically drive them around. If you worry that your teen could slip into the

trend of inactivity, encourage him or her to exercise! Explain that just thirty minutes a day will help stave off weight gain and offer many health benefits. Don't forget to be a good role model, you should exercise too!



Recipe of the Week

Chicken Broccoli Stir Fry

Makes 4 servings

Total time: 25 minutes

1/3 cup orange juice

1 Tablespoon low-sodium soy sauce

1 tablespoon Schezaun sauce

2 teaspoons cornstarch

1 tablespoon canola oil

1 lb. Boneless chicken breast, cut into 1 inch cubes

2 cups frozen broccoli florets

1 6-ounce package snow peas

2 cups shredded cabbage

2 cups cooked brown rice

Mix orange juice, soy sauce,

Schezaun sauce, and cornstarch in small bowl. Set aside. Heat oil in wok or large fry pan, then add chicken. Stir fry for about 5-7 minutes. Add cabbage, broccoli, snow peas and sauce mixture. Cook for about 5 minutes until vegetables are heated through. Serve over brown rice. Sprinkle with sesame seeds.

Nutrition information: Per serving: 340 calories; 8 g fat; 65 mg cholesterol; 35 g carbohydrates; 28 g protein; 5 g fiber; 240 mg sodium.

For more healthy recipes, visit Fruits and Veggies More Matter and search the recipe index at <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov>

Healthy Habits at Home

Cut back on juices! They may seem like a good substitute for fruits and veggies, but they pale in comparison. For example, while an apple has 81 calories and 4 grams of fiber, one serving of apple juice has 117 calories and 0 grams of fiber! Most processed juices contain little more than water and sugar. Instead of adding this drink to kids' diets, encourage them to eat five servings of fruits and vegetables a day, and if they insist on a sugar-packed juice punch, allow them only one four-ounce serving per day.

Top web sites for additional info!

**"In minds crammed with thoughts, organs clogged with toxins, and bodies stiffened with neglect, there is just no space for anything else."
—Rose Levy, Yogi**

www.getmovinggethealthyj.rutgers.edu Get Moving Get Healthy NJ offers tips for family wellness. Check out the Walk NJ Point-to-Point as an opportunity for families get fit while spending quality time together.

www.getmovinggethealthyj.rutgers.edu/family_merals/html The Family & Community Health Sciences Department features links to fact sheets and articles about the importance of fam-

ily meals and strategies for creating opportunities for families to eat together more often.

www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/ The US Department of Health & Human Services provides the information families need to determine the foods that should be eaten.

www.mypyramid.gov MyPyramid provides menus for healthy family meals and food educational materials.

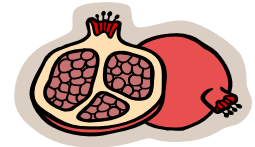
Featured Food—Pomegranate

There's been a to-do about pomegranate lately. It may see like its appearance in everything from candy to martinis is sudden, but it has been in this country since the Spaniards introduced it in 1769. The pomegranate is a round fruit that is red or yellow in

color. The skin is tough, and the inside is filled with red edible seeds and juice. The seeds are the most commonly eaten part of the fruit, but the surrounding pulp is also edible and a bit tangy. When shopping for pomegranate, be sure to test for firmness and shininess of the skin. The

heavier the fruit, the more juicy it will be. Another bonus: the cross-section of the pomegranate bears resemblance to the peace sign. Groovy.

For more information on the pomegranate, visit <http://njaes.rutgers.edu/fchs/featured-food.asp>



**“Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us or we find it not.”
—Ralph Waldo Emerson, American philosopher**

Kids and Body Image

As generations pass, more children are dealing with traditionally adult issues such as body image. According to “Healthy Weights for Healthy Kids,” issued by Virginia Tech, “Our children face more challenges and responsibilities than did past generations. Recent research shows that depression and anxiety are increasing among our youth.” The author goes on to state that one way to promote mental health among our youth is to encourage positive body image. The two most important things to remember when talking to children about body image are that during childhood, kids can be shorter, taller, heavier or lighter than their friends and still be as

healthy; and that encouraging body image should focus on more than just weight.

If you want to promote body image, try these ten tips from Joanne Ikeda, which she published in “10 Ways to Help Kids Like their Bodies and Themselves”:

1. Let them know you love them just the way they are.
2. Compliment them when they treat others with care and respect.
3. Help them develop their talents and skills.
4. Don't allow them to tease or say cruel



Promoting positive body image among youth can influence concepts of self worth and confi-

things to each other.

5. Celebrate the fact that children and adults come in different shapes and sizes.
6. Teach them to talk back when messages promote body dissatisfaction and/or the “perfect body.”
7. Don't trash your own or anyone else's body.
8. Model good health habits.
9. Express satisfaction with your body.
10. Point out things you appreciate in others.

back when messages promote body dissatisfaction and/or the “perfect body.” 7. Don't trash your own or anyone else's body. 8. Model good health habits. 9. Express satisfaction with your body. 10. Point out things you appreciate in others.

Encourage exercise with children, but don't overdo it. Use the talk/sing rule: if they are breathing too heavily to sing, but can still talk, the intensity is just about right.

Fitness for the non-sporty kids

going to enjoy sports. If a child you know is hesitant about joining a sports team, it is important to find out why. By asking, you can discover deeper concerns and begin to help a child work through them. If the child is frustrated with sports because he has lost a game, practice with him at home. If a league is too competitive for a child, try finding her a noncompetitive

one (Remember that most kids are not ready for increased pressure until 11 or 12 years old). Even if it seems futile at first, working with your child to find something active that he or she likes will have great benefits later.

Source: Nemours Foundation. “Fitness for Kids who Don't Like Sports.” 1995-2004. <<http://kidshealth.org>>.

Recommended Calcium Intake by Age

0-6 months	210 mg
6 mo—1 year	270 mg
1-3 years	500 mg
4-8 years	800 mg
9-18 years	1,300 mg
19-50 years	1,000 mg

many cereals. Remember to set a good example by including these foods in your diet!

Source: “Kids and their Bones: A Guide for Parents.” *National Institute of Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases*. NIH Pub. 06-5186, 2005.

There are unarguable benefits of team sports—they can aid a child in matters of self-esteem, general fitness, and in the friend-making process. But it is also a fact that not all kids are

Kids and their Bones

Bone health is frequently overlooked by parents when it comes to the health of



Osteoporosis has been called “a pediatric disease with geriatric consequences.”

their children, but the bone amassed in childhood is very important to lifelong skeletal health. The two most important habits to encourage while children are young are a nutritious diet and a physically active lifestyle. The diet should include many foods rich in calcium and Vitamin D. Dairy products like milk, cheese and yogurt are high in calcium, as are tofu,

To prevent the spread of germs, wash hands after you use the toilet or help a child use the toilet; change diapers; blow your nose or wipe a runny nose; touch raw food; or clean up saliva, vomit, or bathroom accidents.

The symptoms of food-borne illness—nausea, vomiting, diarrhea—may not sound serious,

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Handle with Care: Bottle Safety

but they can lead to very serious health concerns in children, including kidney failure, meningitis, and even death. It is easy to prevent food-borne illness in your home. It may seem like not much food-borne illness can affect babies since they only ingest one type of food, but there are still many ways they can get sick. When serving formula, be sure to check the “use-by” date and avoid cans

with dents or bumps. If serving breast milk, be sure to write the time and date on the container and discard refrigerated milk after five days and frozen milk after 3-4 months. Anything your baby drinks should be served in a sterilized container. Baby’s mouth can contaminate the bottle, so discard leftover formula/milk. Always keep dirty diapers away from bottles.



Healthy Portions at an Early Age

We all know that portion sizes are out of control in our society. It’s never too early to teach our children about healthy eating habits, especially considering the influences they are inevitably going to come across throughout their lives. Here are the proper serving sizes for children ages 1-3:

Dairy: Milk—1/2 cup; Cheese—3/4 oz; Yogurt—1/2 cup; Milk-based soups—3/4 cup. Be sure to limit the number of servings per day to no more than three cups. Filling up on milk leaves little room for appetite. **Proteins:** Meats—1 oz; Beans or Peas—1/4 cup; Peanut butter—1 tsp; Egg—1. Children prefer meat that is moist or tender. **Starches:** Bread—1/2 slice; Cold

cereal—1/2 cup; Cooked cereal—1/4 to 1/3 cup; Rice or pasta—1/4 to 1/3 cup; Bagel, muffin, biscuit, roll, pancake, waffle—1/2 small. Whole grains provide more fiber, vitamins and minerals than refined cereal and white grains.

Fruits and Vegetables: 4 or more servings of 1/4 to 1/2 cup each day. Two servings should be high in Vitamin C and one should be high in Vitamin A. Remove any seeds, pits, stems or other parts that could choke. Wash thoroughly. **Fat:** Butter, margarine, mayonnaise, salad dressings—serve only occasionally. Cake, candy, potato and



Developing healthy habits is important from a young age, so bring fruit to the beach too!

corn chips, cookies, honey, jam, jelly, pastries, pies, soft drinks, sweet toppings and syrups—serve rarely and restrict if a child is gaining weight too quickly. These are high in calories and low in nutritional value.

Source: Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin, <www.chw.org>.

Finicky eating: for kids 3 and up

Here’s what to expect from kids at the dinner table (from “Color Me Healthy News”):

Ages Three and Four Kids will:
-Hesitate trying new foods
-Verbalize food preferences
-Eat independently
-Be easily distracted in groups
-Eat using mostly fingers
-Ask for more food and drink when desired.

Ages Four and Five Kids will:
-Begin to experiment with new foods

-Require less help at the table
-Eat more comfortably in groups
-Use fork and spoon
-Pour own drinks.

Keep kids involved in their healthy habits—let them pick out a new



Remember, children love colorful and interesting foods!

fruit or vegetable at the market or have them create a snack or sandwich from a selection of healthy ingredients. Establish a daily fitness routine, or host a party centered on physical activities. The more they enjoy it, the more they’ll stick with it!

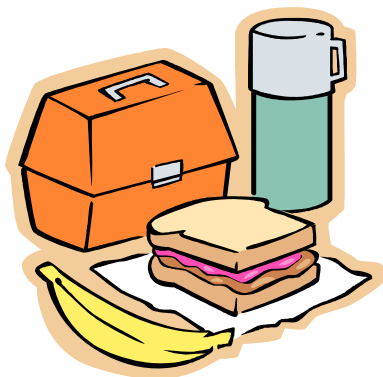
Packing a Healthy Lunch for Children

Foods that are easy to eat are best to pack for a child's lunch. Children like food that is colorful and interesting! Try filling the lunch box with at least 4 of the 5 food groups. Here are a few tips that can help make lunch packing simple:

- When preparing food be sure to wash your hands and your counter before packing lunch.
- Always wash lunch boxes and containers with hot soapy water and allow to dry thoroughly.
- Use containers that are easy for children to open.
- Keep lunch food in the refrigerator until it is time to pack it in the morning.
- Pack lunches in an insulated reusable lunch bag with a frozen ice bag. A small bottle of frozen water can serve as a drink and keep food cold too!
- Throw away leftovers not eaten at lunch time that need refrigeration.



Here are two simple pack able lunch choices:



Peanut butter and jelly sandwich on whole grain bread

Apple slices

Low-fat milk

Oatmeal Cookie

Or

Unsweetened ready-to-eat cereal in a small container

Raisins

Celery or cucumber slices

Low-fat milk

A few thoughts about children's eating habits...

- Children's appetites change from day to day. It is important that young children eat a balanced diet over a period of 3-4 days.
- Young children, such as toddlers and preschoolers, grow more slowly than infants. Don't be alarmed if they are not as hungry as infants.
- Children will be more receptive of trying a new food at home rather than in their lunch box.

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Try these websites for additional information:

<http://njaes.rutgers.edu/>

<http://www.familyfoodzone.com>

<http://www.dole5aday.com/>

<http://www.kidshealth.org>

<http://getmovinggethealthynj.rutgers.edu/>

A Dozen Ways to Stretch Your Back-to-School Budget!

There is no doubt that we are living in tough economic times. With the cost of gas increasing and grocery bills on the rise, families need to watch how they spend their dollars. The end of



the summer means a flurry of shopping activity for many families as they prepare their children for the start of

another year of school. The question is: how can families stretch their school shopping dollars? This is a good opportunity to help children understand how to determine their needs, make decisions, understand the value of money, and a few budgeting basics. Following is a list of suggestions that may help families conserve their time, cash, and energy while shopping for back-to-school items.

1. Start by taking an inventory with your child of clothing and backpacks they currently have. Which clothes and backpacks can be used to start the coming school year? Make a list of items you have and items that are needed before school starts. Can some of the items be purchased at a later date?

2. Know your school's dress code policies and restrictions before you start shopping. Find out what students are permitted to wear to school and about other rules regarding dress and backpacks.

3. Recycle clothing and backpacks whenever possible! For example, denim pants that have a hole in the knee can be cut and hemmed into shorts. Can used textbooks be purchased for college students rather than new ones? Use your network of family and friends to see if they have articles of clothing and books that can be passed-down to younger children.

4. Set a budget for each child's back-to-school needs. Consider shopping without your child. If children shop with you make sure they are aware that their clothing choices must remain within the family's budget.

5. Save gas by doing some comparison-shopping online. Look online for sales, coupons, and offers for free shipping. Online shopping can save gas dollars too!

6. Check for sales at discount department stores and office supply stores before you start out on your shopping trip. Make a plan of how you can shop for what you need in one day if possible. This will save you from using gas by running to the store for one or two items.



7. Consider locating second-hand shops, consignment shops, local church clothing exchanges, and hospital thrift shops. Look for quality clothing at a reasonable price. Thrifty is the new chic this year!

8. Plan to purchase basic items needed to start the school year. Since the weather is still warm at the start of school, delay purchases for winter clothing until it is on sale. Make the clearance racks your first stop when you enter a store. You may be surprised at the values you find there.

9. Resist impulse buying! Stick to your list of needs to avoid over spending.

10. Don't buy everything today your children need for the entire school year. Create a spending plan that coincides with your budget so you can pace out the expenses.

11. Pay for items with cash if possible. Use a credit card if you can pay the amount charged in full, or set aside more than the minimum payment each month until the debt is paid. Get ready for next year's back-to-school expenses by starting a holiday savings club. Holiday savings club payments usually come in early October, which is just in time for cooler weather clothing needs.

12. Prepare family lunches at home to save extra dollars. Make food preparation a family event. Have the children wash their hands and assist in the preparation of snacks and lunch. Follow important food safety guidelines by keeping cold food cold and keeping hot food hot by storing lunch in an insulated food storage bag. Throw away food leftovers that have not been refrigerated after lunch.

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For additional information:

2008. U.S. Census Bureau News, Facts for Features. *U.S. Department of Commerce*. CB08-FF.12.

