



Healthy Weight: A Family Affair

Of course you want your family to be healthy. And you likely know what it takes to be at a healthy weight: a balance of healthy eating and activity. But if you're like many families, it can be hard to add even one more thing to your daily lives.

What if being a little more healthy as a family was just a little bit easier? And what if your family joined in the changes gladly? Does this sound like a dream world? It doesn't have to be.

Make a plan for your family, by your family

Where to start? For many people, it helps to make a plan. Think about your goal, break it into smaller steps, and think about what could get in the way of reaching your goal.

Ask yourself and your family some basic questions. Think about all the possible ways you can reach your goals—together. Then agree on a few steps you'll start with and when. If for some reason these steps don't work, don't worry. Making a change for good takes time, and practice. Think about what worked and what didn't work, and try again.

KEEP IT SIMPLE AND SPECIFIC

Here are the types of things to include in your family's healthy weight plan.

- **Why does your family want to be at a healthy weight?** Ask your children why they want to be more active or eat healthier. Your family's reasons are the most important part of this plan.
- **When is a good time to start?** For example, if you have a lot going on as a family with the holidays or with school schedules, now might not be the best time to make a change. Think about when a better time might be.
- **What steps could you try?** Include all of your family's ideas about this. Maybe you make a fun challenge to eat one fruit or vegetable more a day. Or play active games two times a week instead of watching TV. Find common ground, then agree on a few steps that seem doable to all of you.
- **How will you prepare?** For example, you might agree to not buy certain foods, such as soda or chips. Or you could make sure you have healthy snacks ready for the kids to grab.
- **What might get in the way of these changes?** Maybe you wonder if your children will ignore you. Or you think you might get too busy. What might be hard for your children? Try asking them things like if they'll get tired of eating fruit. Plan for these barriers and how you all can get around them.
- **Who can help support you?** Maybe you have a family member or friend—or even a teacher—who can support your family as you make these changes. And who knows? You might inspire them to make changes too.
- **How will you celebrate small successes?** Maybe it's a family movie night. Or it might be a special family cheer or song. Try to think of rewards that aren't food.

Your ideas

You're ready to create your plan. As you think of your ideas, circle a few ideas that seem easiest to start with.

Your family's healthy weight plan	
Your reasons to be healthy:	
A good time to start:	
What might get in your way:	
Some possible solutions:	
Who can support you:	
How you'll track and celebrate your progress:	

Now that you've got your plan, you're ready to get started—as a family. Try taking that first step and see how it feels. Talk with each other about how it's going. You can change your plan along the way to suit what works best and helps you all reach your goal to be a healthy family.

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