

Eat more fruit and vegies

Did you know?

- ★ 56% of primary and 80% of secondary school students do not eat the recommended daily amount of vegetables.
- ★ Research shows that watching a lot of TV is associated with children and teenagers drinking more soft drink and not eating enough fruit and vegetables.
- ★ Fruit and vegetables are a great source of vitamins, minerals and dietary fibre.
- ★ Eating fruit and vegetables every day helps children and teenagers grow and develop, boosts their vitality and can reduce the risk of many chronic diseases - such as heart disease, high blood pressure, some forms of cancer and being overweight or obese.

How many serves do kids and teens need?

All of us need to eat a variety of different coloured fruit and vegies every day – both raw and cooked. The recommended daily amount for kids and teens depends on their age, appetite and activity levels – see table below.

Age (years)	Fruit (serves/day*)		Vegies (serves/day#)	
	girls	boys	girls	boys
2-3	1	1	2½	2½
4-8	1½	1½	4½	4½
9-11	2	2	5	5
12-18	2	2	5	5½

* One serve of fruit is 150 grams (equal to 1 medium-sized apple; 2 smaller pieces (e.g. apricots); 1 cup of canned or chopped fruit; ½ cup (125ml) 99% unsweetened fruit juice; or 1½ tablespoons dried fruit).

One serve of vegetables is 75 grams (equal to ½ cup cooked vegetables; ½ medium potato; 1 cup of salad vegetables; or ½ cup cooked legumes (dried beans, peas or lentils))



Fresh fruit is a better choice than juice

While whole fruit contains some natural sugars that make it taste sweet, it also has lots of vitamins, minerals and fibre, which makes it more filling and nutritious than a glass of fruit juice.

One small glass of juice provides a child's recommended daily amount of vitamin C. Unfortunately, many children regularly drink large amounts of juice and this can contribute to them putting on excess weight.

“Children may need to try new fruits and vegies up to 10 times before they accept them”

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Eat fewer snacks and select healthier alternatives

Did you know?

- ★ Around 1 in 5 young people in NSW report eating potato crisps or other salty snacks at least 4 times per week.
- ★ Over a quarter of young people in NSW eat confectionary at least 4 times per week.

Healthy snacks help kids and teens refuel

Healthy snacks in between main meals help kids and teens meet their daily nutritional needs.

Young children have smaller stomachs than adults, so they need to eat every few hours to keep up their energy levels and get the right amount of nutrients. Teens get particularly hungry during periods of fast development and snacks are important.

Snacks based on fruit and vegies, reduced fat dairy products and whole grains are the healthiest choices.

It is important to limit snacks that are high in sugar, salt or saturated fats – such as chips, cakes and chocolate – which can cause children to put on excess weight. These 'extra foods' should only be offered occasionally.

“Stock the pantry, fruit bowl and fridge with healthy snacks”



Ideas to help kids and teens ‘snack smart’

The simplest way to limit unhealthy snacks is not to buy them. Instead, stock the pantry, fruit bowl and fridge with healthy snacks, and include them in lunchboxes.

Commercial snack foods available in the supermarket have varying nutritional value. When choosing grain-based snacks, look for the healthier options which are high in fibre and whole grains – and look for products with the Heart Foundation Tick.

Put a clear limit on the number of less healthy snack foods eaten each week, such as lollies; chocolate; donuts; some fruit, cereal and muesli bars; potato and corn chips; hot chips; and savoury and sweet biscuits.

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Schools and healthy kids

Schools can do a lot to promote and encourage healthy eating and physical activity for their students. This can happen at a whole-of-school level or in individual classrooms.

Here are some ideas to consider:

- Review and refresh approaches to teaching nutrition and physical activity in Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE). Visit our **Live Life Well @ School** web page at www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/campaignsprogramslivelifewell@school.aspx for more information.
- Ensure that the food the school provides in the canteen and during school activities meets the requirements of the **Fresh Tastes @ School – NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy** and offers food and drinks that are nutritious and low in added sugar, salt and saturated fat.
- Develop a **healthy lunchbox** policy to promote the importance of eating a nutritious lunch and snacks.
- Schedule a **fruit, vegetable and water break** during the day to encourage students to eat fruit and vegetables and drink water.
- Include **‘energisers’** during class time to encourage children to get moving.
- Create **activity boxes** with a variety of physical activity equipment that classes or individual children can use during recess or lunch breaks.

“Encourage students to have a water bottle on their desks”



- Develop **homework activities** based on the Personal Development Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) curriculum that encourage children to eat more fruit and vegetables, prepare healthy snacks, drink water instead of sweetened drinks and switch off the TV and computer and be more active.
- Establish a **school vegetable garden** and involve students in all aspects of growing and nurturing the produce – they’ll quickly get enthusiastic! Vegies from the garden can be used in food preparation lessons or provided to the school canteen.
- Include regular articles promoting physical activity and healthy eating in the school **newsletter** and include links to the Healthy Kids website (www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au) so parents and children can find more information.

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5 ways to a healthy lifestyle



Did you know?

- ★ National surveys found that the combined level of overweight and obese children in Australia has more than doubled in recent years.
- ★ A major study revealed that the number of overweight and obese children in NSW was almost 1 in 4 children in 2010.
- ★ Obese children have a 25% - 50% chance of going on to be obese adults.

Our busy lifestyles can be hard on our family's health. Rushing to and from school and work can make it difficult to find time to be physically active and eat well.

We can also slip into the habit of choosing unhealthy snacks and takeaway foods or spending our free time in front of the TV or computer.

However, these choices can be dangerous for our health and our children's health – both now and in the long-term.

That's why it's so important to stop, take stock and make a conscious decision to follow a healthy lifestyle.

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Community organisations and healthy kids

Local councils and community organisations can play an important role in creating opportunities for kids and families to lead healthy, active lives.

Here are some ideas to consider:

- Provide and maintain parks and publicly accessible facilities, such as playgrounds or walking and cycling paths, to encourage community participation in physical activity.
- Provide healthy eating and physical activity information materials through community venues, such as local libraries, sporting organisations and facilities and at shopping centre promotions. Healthy Kids fact sheets are available to order for free* or download from www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/factsheets.aspx
- Work with local sporting organisations and facilities to promote healthy canteens and healthy catering at events and venues - replace foods that are high in added sugar, salt or saturated fat with healthier alternatives.
- Ensure that events hosted by your council or community organisation provide healthy catering. For more information, visit www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/healthycatering.aspx
- Provide drinking fountains in appropriate locations and venues throughout the community to encourage people to drink water instead of sweetened drinks.
- Establish an 'active' toy or sporting equipment library to help families and children to be physically active.



- Develop a directory of local physical activity opportunities for families and children that includes sporting and recreational activities in the local area.
- Work with the local media to promote healthy eating and physical activity messages and opportunities.
- Work with local sporting organisations to provide options for 'active' community events, such as walks, fun runs and community sports fairs.

* Ordering fact sheets is available to NSW residents only.

For more information and ideas on healthy eating and physical activity, go to www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au

Choose water as a drink

Did you know?

- ★ Children and teenagers who regularly drink soft drinks and other sweetened drinks are more likely to be overweight.
- ★ In NSW, 45% of boys and 38% of girls in Year 6 drink two to six cups of soft drink per week.

Water

Drinking water is the best way to quench your thirst. Even better, it doesn't come with all the sugar and energy (kilojoules) found in fruit juice drinks, soft drinks, sports drinks and flavoured mineral waters.

Drinking water instead of sweetened drinks may also prevent dental problems, while the fluoride found in tap water can help strengthen teeth and bones.

Milk

Milk is a nutritious drink for kids and teens and a great source of calcium, which is important for growing strong bones and teeth.

From 2 years of age, children should drink reduced fat milk. It contains much the same nutrients as full cream milk but is lower in unhealthy saturated fats and lower in energy (kilojoules).

Children under 2 years of age should not drink reduced fat milk as they need the extra energy (kilojoules) for their growth and development.



Fruit juice

Giving kids and teens whole fruit to eat is a better choice than offering fruit juice to drink.

While whole fruit contains some natural sugars that make it taste sweet, it also has lots of vitamins, minerals and fibre, which makes it more filling and nutritious than a glass of fruit juice.

One small glass of juice provides a child's recommended daily amount of vitamin C. Unfortunately, many children regularly drink large amounts of juice and this can contribute to them putting on excess weight.

“Drinking water is the best way to quench your thirst”

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Get active each day

Did you know?

- ★ In NSW, about half of primary and just over half of secondary school students do at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day.
- ★ Secondary school boys are more active than secondary school girls.

Why get active?

Regular physical activity is an important part of getting healthy and staying healthy.

Encouraging kids and teens to be active from a young age sets good habits early on and helps them develop the skills they need to stay active throughout their lives.

Regular physical activity helps kids and teens to:

- grow and develop healthily
- build strong bones and muscles
- improve balance and develop skills
- maintain and develop flexibility
- achieve and maintain a healthy weight
- improve cardiovascular fitness
- reduce stress and feel more relaxed
- improve posture
- boost confidence and self-esteem
- have fun with their friends and make new ones.

Kids and teens who don't get enough physical activity are at a greater risk of becoming overweight or obese. This makes it harder for them to be active and keep up in sport or play.



Being overweight can also make kids more prone to conditions such as asthma, flat feet and joint sprains. In the long term, it can contribute to conditions such as high blood pressure and cholesterol, heart disease, Type 2 diabetes and liver disease.

Research tells us that the warning signs for these conditions can be present in overweight teenagers as young as 15 years of age.

“Physical activity doesn’t all have to happen at the one time. It can be accumulated throughout the day”

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Turn off the TV or computer and get active

Did you know?

- ★ Spending too much sedentary or 'still' time watching TV, surfing online or playing computer or electronic hand-held games is linked to children becoming overweight or obese.
- ★ Children who watch TV for more than 2 hours every day are more likely to have an unhealthy diet, less likely to eat fruit and less likely to be physically active.
- ★ More than half of primary and about three quarters of secondary school students exceeded the recommended screen time guideline.
- ★ Children are more likely to snack on foods that are high in sugar, salt or saturated fat when they're watching TV.

How much time in front of the screen?

When kids and teens spend time in front of small screens – whether it's the TV, computer or hand-held games – it takes away from the time they could spend playing sport, games or being active.

Australian guidelines recommend that kids and teens spend no more than 2 hours each day on small screen entertainment.

While computers and TV can be valuable for education and learning, the health benefits, skills and enjoyment that kids and teens get from being physically active are just as important.

“Set limits for computer games and being online”



Tips for parents

- Before you switch on the TV or the computer for your children, stop and think – could they spend the time being active and have some 'small screen' time later on?
- Set limits on TV viewing. If there is a specific program that your child wants to watch, turn the TV off once it has finished. Alternatively, record the program and watch it together later on.
- Set limits for computer games and being online – no more than 2 hours a day and not during daylight hours when they could be outside and active.
- Don't allow a TV or computer in your child's bedroom. Keep them in a common area of the family home so you can monitor use.
- Have a list of active indoor and outdoor games or activities for your children, so you can suggest alternatives to watching TV or playing on the computer.

For more information and ideas on healthy eating and physical activity, go to www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au