

# Healthy For Life

A Guide for Families



## Shaping Habits for Life

Nemours Health and Prevention Services (NHPS) is committed to helping people make healthy lifestyle choices and is working with schools, child care centers, primary care providers, youth-serving organizations, and communities to arrest the growing obesity rate in Delaware.

The alarming fact is that 37% of children in Delaware are overweight or obese. Parents play a critical role in stopping this trend by helping children make healthy choices and develop healthy habits that will last a lifetime.

*5-2-1-Almost None* is our formula for a healthy lifestyle for children and families. As parents, we should strive to provide plenty of healthy foods for children as well as opportunities for physical activity. We also serve as role models for our children, so it is important that we make healthy choices for ourselves, too. Follow the suggestions and tips contained in this booklet for eating well and being physically active and your kids will be on their way to better health!





## What you'll find in this guide:

Keep in mind that the tips offered here can help all kids be healthier, no matter what their age, weight, or fitness level. Read on to:

- Discover the *5-2-1-Almost None* formula for a healthy lifestyle ..... 4-9
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# Kids can't do it alone.

Together we can make  
Delaware's kids the healthiest  
in the nation!

## All about 5-2-1-Almost None

*5-2-1-Almost None* is our formula for a healthy lifestyle. We encourage families to try these recommendations—you may not always meet these goals but every effort counts!



- Eat **FIVE** or more servings of **fruits** and **vegetables** per day.
- Spend no more than **TWO** hours per day in front of a **screen** (TV, video games, recreational computer time).
- Get at least **ONE** hour of **physical activity** per day.
- Drink **ALMOST NO** sugary **beverages** like soda and sports drinks.



## Did you know?

A serving of fruit is a  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of chopped fruit, a  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of dry fruit, one medium fruit, or a  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruit juice.

A serving of vegetables is one cup of leafy greens,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of chopped raw or cooked vegetables, or a  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of vegetable juice.



## Did you know?

Children who watch more than 10 hours of TV per week are less likely to do well in school.

Children who have a TV in their bedroom read less and do less homework.



## Did you know?

One hour or more of physical activity a day is best for ensuring a strong and healthy body.

Physical activity gives us energy, helps with concentration, and is a natural mood lifter.



## Did you know?

One 20-ounce bottle of soda has about 18 teaspoons of sugar.

You'd have to bike for an hour to burn off the calories in that 20-ounce bottle.

Children spend more of their own money on candy and soda than on anything else.

## Strive to eat at least FIVE servings of fruits and vegetables a day.



Fruits and vegetables are an important part of a growing child's healthy diet. Most fruits and vegetables are full of nutrients and naturally low in calories and fat, making them a healthy choice any time. And, they are full of water and fiber, which makes them filling.

### Are canned, frozen, or dried fruits and vegetables as healthy as fresh ones?

Yes! Most frozen, canned, and dried fruits or vegetables can be as nutritious as fresh produce. Try to choose products without added sugars, salt, sauces, or seasonings.

### Tips for Success:

- Offer new fruits and vegetables and old favorites together. It can take more than 10 tries for kids to like a new food, so if they don't like it the first time, try it again soon.
- Have fruits and vegetables in children's view on the counter or in the fridge; pre-cut to make it easier to grab and go.
- Ask kids to help choose different vegetables and fruits for the menu.
- Get kids involved in washing, chopping, and cooking fruits and vegetables. They love to eat what they help prepare.
- Make sure there are *fruit or vegetable options* at every meal.
- Be creative: add fruits and vegetables to pancakes, cereal, oatmeal, scrambled eggs, pasta, tacos, and sandwiches.



## Strive to spend no more than TWO hours per day in front of a screen.

Screen time includes television, video games, and recreational computer time (not related to schoolwork). Today, many U.S. children are spending six hours per day in front of a screen—just think what they’re missing!



### How do I motivate my child to turn off the TV or computer?

Encourage children to engage in activities that strengthen their bodies and their minds and, whenever possible, participate in these activities with your children.

#### Tips for Success:

- *Encourage reading and crafts.* Have books, magazines, and puzzles readily available.
- *Give your kids a screen time allowance.* Help them to choose only the shows they really want to watch.
- *Go to the playground* or take a walk around the neighborhood. Do it together as a family—it’s a great opportunity for conversation and physical activity.
- *Ask kids to help* make dinner, work in the garden, or just turn on some music and have fun together.
- *Turn off the TV* during dinner and enjoy each other. Have every person (including you) share the best and worst parts of the day with each other.

## Strive to get at least ONE hour of physical activity every day.

Physical activity is any body movement that uses energy. Most kids and adults don't spend enough time moving their bodies every day. At least 60 minutes of physical activity daily is recommended for kids and at least 30 minutes daily is recommended for adults. Kids should try to get their hearts pumping and get breathless from physical activity at least once a day.



Regular physical activity helps us to have strong and healthy hearts, bones, and muscles, and to achieve or maintain a healthy weight. People who are active may have an increased ability to learn, feel more energetic, and sleep better.

### Tips for Success:

- *Be active together.* Use physical activity as family bonding time. Talk with your kids while walking the dog or shooting hoops.
- *Insert physical activity into the things you already do.* Park farther away from store entrances. Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- *Set up a safe area in your home* where active play is OK—nasty weather is no excuse.
- *Set your weekend in motion* by planning active family fun. Try a hike, a walk through the zoo, a dip in the local pool, or toss a frisbee in the park.
- *Choose activities at different levels of intensity*, like slow walking and fast dancing.



## Strive to drink **ALMOST NO** sugary beverages.

Sugary beverages include regular sodas, non-100% fruit juice drinks and lemonades, sweetened iced teas, sports drinks, and coffee drinks. It is best to choose water, fat-free milk, 1% milk (for children aged two and older), or 100% fruit juice (if limited to a ½ cup per day).

Sugary beverages contain little nutritional value, while drinks such as fat-free milk and 100% juice are rich in vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients.



Kids today are drinking too much soda. Soft drink consumption has more than doubled since 1971. The average teenage boy drinks two 12-ounce sodas per day, adding up to more than 700 cans per year. The average teenage girl drinks 1.4 12-ounce sodas per day—that's more than 500 cans per year.

### Tips for Success:

- *Change what you drink with meals.* Serve water or fat-free milk during mealtime and snacks.
- *Start at home.* When you go shopping buy healthy beverages instead of sugary drinks. Your children learn from you so let them see you choose healthier beverages.
- *Limit 100% juice* to a ½ cup per day. Water and fat-free or 1% milk should be the primary beverages for kids aged two and older.
- *When thirsty... THINK WATER.* Keep water on hand to quench thirst instead of reaching for convenient, but sugary, drinks. Add flavor to your water with citrus slices.

## What is BMI?

Body Mass Index (BMI) is a number calculated from a child's weight and height that is a reliable indicator of body fatness for most children and teens.

Based on age and gender, the BMI number indicates one of the following categories:

- Obese
- Overweight
- Healthy weight
- Underweight



If a child is overweight, it is usually because the child has too much body fat. Children who have too much body fat have higher risks of health problems and are more likely to become overweight or obese adults. Obesity can lead to diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and many other serious problems. Children who are underweight may also have health concerns.

Although rare, the BMI may be high because a child is very muscular. Being muscular does not increase the risk of health problems in children. It is best to talk to a health care provider to find out more about your child's BMI. For a good explanation of BMI and an online BMI calculator for children and teens, go to: [www.kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition\\_fit/nutrition/bmi\\_charts.html](http://www.kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition_fit/nutrition/bmi_charts.html)

Once I know my child's BMI category . . .  
what should I do?



## If your child is . . .

### Overweight or obese

If your child has a reported BMI that is above the healthy weight range, you should discuss the results with your child's doctor. You can help by

- making healthy lifestyle choices by following *5-2-1-Almost None*.
- focusing on healthy lifestyle changes for the whole family, rather than just one child.
- avoiding forced participation in a sport or physical activity that the child doesn't like.

**Don't put your child on a weight-loss "diet" unless directed to do so by your doctor.**

### Healthy Weight

If your child's BMI suggests a healthy weight, you can help your child to stay in the healthy range by

- making healthy lifestyle choices by following *5-2-1-Almost None*.
- focusing on healthy lifestyle changes for the whole family, rather than just one child.
- asking your child's doctor to measure BMI at yearly check-ups.

### Underweight

If your child has a reported BMI that is below the healthy weight range, you should share and discuss the results with your child's doctor. You can help by

- making healthy lifestyle choices by following *5-2-1-Almost None*.
- focusing on healthy lifestyle changes for the whole family, rather than just one child.

**Don't put your child on a weight-gain "diet" unless directed to do so by your doctor.**

## Nemours HealthyQuest

Nemours HealthyQuest is an easy-to-use website to help you find places in communities throughout Delaware to enjoy fun physical activities and tasty, healthy foods.



HealthyQuest is as  
easy to use as  
**1-2-3!**

**Step 1:** Log onto <http://healthyquest.nemours.org>.

**Step 2:** Enter your zip code. You will find a map of your community with nearby resources to help your family stay active and healthy, including:

- Swimming pools
  - Dance classes
  - Hiking trails
  - Playgrounds and parks
  - Camps
  - Fitness centers
  - Weight management programs
  - Cooking classes
  - Farmers' markets
- ...and much more

**Step 3:** Click on each option for more details, including cost, address, driving directions, public transit access, and instructor qualifications.



## Pack a Healthy Lunch

Kids have many meals away from home so you can't always be there to guide them at mealtime. However, you can create a balanced meal that they can take to school, child care, or wherever they may need to take a packed lunch. Use the checklist below as a guide—include one item from each category.



*Whole grains:* Pack breads, wraps, crackers, pretzels, pasta, and cereal.



*Protein:* Include lean meats, chicken, turkey, tuna fish, beans, hard-boiled eggs, low fat cheese, peanut butter, nuts, seeds, and yogurt.



*Fruits:* Apples, bananas, plums, mandarin oranges, grapes, and raisins are easy to pack. If packing canned fruits be sure to choose items packed in juice or light syrup.



*Vegetables:* Carrot sticks, broccoli, cucumbers, and cherry tomatoes are good options.



*Beverages:* Milk (1% or fat-free for children aged two and older), water, or 100% fruit juice (limit to ½ cup or 4 to 6 ounces each day).

## More Online Resources

Free, online resources for helping parents and youth stay healthy are available at:

- **KidsHealth**—This website for kids, teens, and parents offers an array of doctor-approved health information, including many articles, tips, and games on nutrition and physical activity. Visit [www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)
- **Get Up and Do Something**—This locally-produced website provides tools and information to help Delaware families lead healthier lives. Visit [www.getupanddosomething.org](http://www.getupanddosomething.org)
- **We Can! (Ways to Enhance Children’s Activity & Nutrition)**—This community-centered program from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) provides practical tips and materials to help children be physically active and practice healthy eating habits. Visit the We Can! website at [www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/index.htm](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/index.htm)
- **Fruits and Veggies: More Matters**—This online initiative of The Produce for Better Health Foundation offers user-friendly cooking advice, nutrition information, and shopping tips. Visit [www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org)
- **VERB**—Created by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the VERB campaign helps “tweens” get creative and have fun with physical activity. Visit [www.verbnow.com](http://www.verbnow.com)
- **Kidnetic**— This website for kids offers cool games, do-it-yourself recipes, and helpful hints on how to be more active. The site also offers the Kidnector – a tool that lets kids connect with their parents on healthy lifestyles issues. Visit [www.kidnetic.org](http://www.kidnetic.org)



## About NHPS

Nemours Health and Prevention Services (NHPS), a non-profit organization based in Newark, Delaware, works with families and community partners to help children grow up healthy. Our goal is to drive long-term changes in policies and practices that promote child health and to leverage community strengths and resources to have the greatest impact on the most children. One of our initial areas of emphasis is childhood obesity prevention through promotion of healthy lifestyles, the centerpiece of which is the *5-2-1-Almost None* campaign.

NHPS is a division of Nemours, one of the nation's largest pediatric health systems, operating the Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children and outpatient facilities throughout the Delaware Valley and Northern and central Florida. NHPS expands Nemours' reach beyond clinical care to consider the health of the whole child within his or her family and community.



**Together we can make Delaware's kids the healthiest in the nation!**

[www.GrowUpHealthy.org](http://www.GrowUpHealthy.org)

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