



April Health Newsletter

Nurse Katie M. Fisher-Walz's "Promoting Physical Activity" Strategies for Preschool Children:

We all, at times, need a bit of encouragement to turn off the television, get off the couch, and go outside and exercise. Children are no exception. Here are some helpful tips to encourage exercise/physical activity in your growing child, and to promote a love of exercise for your child's entire life. ☺



Katie Fisher-Walz's "Promoting Physical Activity" Tips for Preschool-Age Children

"Avoiding Food Traps" Yourself and with your Children

Poison Safety with Preschool-Age Children

"Bunny-Friendly," Healthy Dessert/Treat for Children

Nurse Katie M. Fisher-Walz:

725 W. 2nd Street
Ottumwa, IA 52501

kwalz@sieda.org

641-682-8741 ext. 163

Physical Activity Tips:

1. Get the whole family involved. Go for bike rides, kick a soccer ball, or play catch. Your child learns how to be active from you, so model for your child how to live a healthy lifestyle.
2. Preschoolers have a lot of energy! Turn off the television, and bring your child to the park to climb the jungle gym or play on the swings. Sometimes a change of environment is all a child needs to get excited about exercise! ☺
3. Give your child plenty of unstructured playtime (games without rules or directions); like running, kicking balls, and dancing to burn off that extra preschooler energy! With spring in full-bloom, give your child a box of sidewalk chalk and let them create their own art masterpieces! Show your child how to create a hopscotch board in the driveway, and model to them how much fun hopscotch can be!
4. If you have more than one child, get them playing together! Dancing, playing “follow the leader” or “Simons says,” as well as hide and seek, are all good ways for kids to have fun with each other.
5. Children ages 3-5 years, are at a great age to start organized sports like soccer or T-ball. Age 4 is also a great time to start supervised swimming lessons. If these aren’t available near your home, you can still offer your child toys like plastic bats and balls to make active play fun! ☺

“Avoiding Food Traps” Yourself and with your Children

Food Trap #1: Vacations/Family Gatherings

When on a trip, don’t take a break/vacation from healthy eating.

“Poison Safety” with Preschool-Children:

Poisoning is a danger with preschool-age children, because children this age (1-4 years old) are curious about everything! Younger toddlers will be inclined to put things into their mouths, and preschoolers are curious about items found in drawers and cabinets. Protect your child from an accidental poisoning, by following these helpful tips:

1. Keep all medicines (and vitamins as well) out of the reach of children.
2. Never refer to medicine as "candy."
3. Secure the child-safety cap on all medications after usage. Keep all medications in their original bottles.
4. Store all cleaning products or other dangerous products out of the reach of children and/or in a locked cabinet.
5. Keep the number for poison control 1(800) 222-1222 near your phone.
6. Install a carbon monoxide detector near bedrooms in your home and have your heating system checked very spring.

What You Can Do:

- Plan your meals. If you are traveling a great distance, remember to pack plenty of healthy snacks, to avoid splurging on extra-salty, or sweet, treats like chips and candy bars, at the gas station. Apple slices with peanut butter, wheat crackers, organic fruit snacks, as well as dried fruit, like bananas and strawberries, make great snacks for the road
- Stay active. Schedule time for physical activities such as taking a walk or swimming in the hotel pool. Make sure to take plenty of “stretch breaks” while traveling, too, to avoid leg cramps/pain.

Other Family Gatherings:

In some cultures, when extended families get together, it can turn into a food feast, from morning to night. Practice these helpful tips to keep your diet in check during Easter celebrations!

What You Can Do:

- Eat smaller portions. Avoid overeating whenever you get together with family. Try taking small portions instead, that way you can enjoy all your favorite treats, but not fall off the healthy-eating bandwagon!
- Get family support. Grandparents, aunts, and uncles can have an enormous effect on your child’s health. Let them know that you’d like their help in keeping your child on the road to good health, by including plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables, lean proteins, and whole-grains into your holiday menu plans. Swap white flour for whole-grain flour in Easter cookies, and swap ice cream for frozen yogurt with fresh berries, to boost your meal’s nutritional value.

Food Trap #2: Snack Time

The biggest time for snacking is after school. Kids come home wound up, stressed out, or simply bored, so they reach for food. Make sure that healthy snacks are easy to reach for your child.

What You Can Do:

- Offer healthy snacks such as raw vegetables, fruit, light microwave popcorn, sugar-free gelatin, or fruit snacks.
- You pick the snack. When children are allowed to pick their own snacks, they often make unhealthy choices. Talk to your child about why healthy snacks are important. Come up with a list of snacks that you can both agree on and have them on hand.
- Keep your child entertained. Help your child come up with other things to do instead of eating, such as playing outside, dancing, painting a picture, flying a kite, or taking a walk with you.
- Make sure your child eats 3 well-balanced meals a day. This will help cut down on the number of times he or she needs a snack.

Food Trap #3: Running Out of Time

Finding time every day to be physically active can be very difficult. However, if you plan ahead, there are ways to fit it into even the busiest of daily schedules! 😊

What You Can Do:

- Make a plan. Sit down with your child and plan in advance for those days when it seems impossible to find even 15 minutes for exercise/physical activity. Have a “Plan B” ready that

your child can do after dark, such as exercising to a dance video or playing a game on the Wii system, such as bowling or tennis.

- Make easy dinners. If you run out of time to make dinner, don't run to the nearest fast-food restaurant. Remember, dinners don't have to be elaborate. A sample healthy meal that includes all food groups that you could serve to your child when food-preparation time is limited is: a turkey sandwich on whole-grain bread, low-sodium vegetable soup, half of a banana, a glass of calcium-rich milk, and 4-5 vanilla wafers.

Healthy Eating for preschoolers

Choose **MyPlate.gov**

Get your child on the path to healthy eating.



Focus on the meal and each other.

Your child learns by watching you. Children are likely to copy your table manners, your likes and dislikes, and your willingness to try new foods.

Offer a variety of healthy foods.

Let your child choose how much to eat. Children are more likely to enjoy a food when eating it is their own choice.

Be patient with your child.

Sometimes new foods take time. Give children a taste at first and be patient with them. Offer new foods many times.

Let your children serve themselves.

Teach your children to take small amounts at first. Let them know they can get more if they are still hungry.

Cook together.

Eat together.

Talk together.

Make meal time family time.



“Bunny Friendly,” Healthy Dessert:

Strawberry, Chocolate-Chip Frozen Yogurt Recipe:

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes

Yield: 3-6 servings

Ingredients:

- 1-1/2 cups sliced fresh strawberries
- 3 cups 2% plain Greek yogurt
- 1-1/4 cups sugar
- 1 cup semisweet chocolate chunks

Preparation:

1. Puree strawberries in a blender.
2. Stir strawberry puree, yogurt and sugar together until smooth. Chill 1 hour in the refrigerator.
3. Add mixture to your ice cream maker.
4. When yogurt is almost done in ice cream maker, pour chocolate chunks into ice cream maker. Continue mixing until chips are well-incorporated.
5. Serve immediately or freeze in an air-tight container. Serve with graham crackers, vanilla wafers, or Teddy Grahams.

