



A PARENTS' GUIDE TO **HEALTHY EATING**

PARENTS HAVE THE POWER to teach healthy habits. Studies show parents are powerful role models when it comes to eating habits and physical activity.



You can set your child on the path to a bright, healthy future by simply teaching him/her about the importance of eating a healthy breakfast and daily physical activity.

- Eating breakfast regularly has been linked with greater intakes of fiber, calcium, iron, vitamin C, vitamins and minerals, and lower intakes of fat, cholesterol, and sodium.
- Children and adolescents who eat breakfast have healthier weights and decreased risk of being chronically obese both in the short term and long term. ^[1]

Healthy learners do better in school. Research shows that starting each day with a healthy breakfast can help improve academic achievement.

- Children who eat breakfast are less likely to be absent or tardy.
- Studies suggest eating a healthy breakfast can improve cognitive functions (e.g., memory and concentration) and performance on standardized tests. ^{[2][3]}

School breakfast programs and physical activity in school also help children grow and learn.

- Children who participate in school breakfast show improved attendance, punctuality, behavior, and standardized test scores.
- Students who are physically active tend to have better grades, school attendance, cognitive performance (e.g., memory), and classroom behaviors (e.g., on-task behavior). Participation in extracurricular physical activities such as interscholastic sports has been associated with higher grade point averages (GPAs), lower dropout rates, and fewer disciplinary problems. ^{[4][5]}



HEALTHY CHOICES ARE GREATLY INFLUENCED BY FAMILY AND FRIENDS.

By making healthy food available, cooking together at home, and talking to children about healthy food choices, parents can help teach habits that last a lifetime.



A WEEK OF HEALTHY BREAKFAST

5-DAY

SHOPPING LIST

EGG BREAKFAST MUFFINS (6 muffins)

6 eggs
1 bell pepper
1 tomato
6 oz cheese
½ cup spinach
A pinch salt & pepper
1 pack paper muffin cups



BERRY SMOOTHIE (1 serving)

1 cup low-fat milk/skim milk
1 cup fresh or frozen unsweetened strawberries or other berries
4 ice cubes



BREAKFAST PARFAIT (4 servings)

2 cups pineapple, fresh or canned
1 cup berries (your choice) fresh or frozen (thawed)
2 cups low-fat/fat-free vanilla yogurt
1 banana
¼ cup raisins
1 handful granola



BREAKFAST PIZZA (1 serving)

½ whole grain English muffin
2 tbsp tomato sauce or salsa
1 egg
1 tbsp milk
2 slices bell pepper
1 oz low-fat shredded cheese



BREAKFAST BURRITO (4 servings)

1 ½ cup black beans
4 tortillas, whole corn
2 tbsp red onions
½ cup tomatoes
½ cup salsa (low sodium)
4 eggs (cooked)
4 tbsp plain yogurt, non-fat
2 tbsp cilantro



FOLLOW TWO EASY RECOMMENDATIONS AND SEE THE POSITIVE IMPACT ON YOUR CHILD.

1. Teach the importance of having a nutritious breakfast every day.
2. Stay physically active as a family.

TEACH THE IMPORTANCE OF EATING A NUTRITIOUS BREAKFAST EVERY DAY:

- Be a good example. Take a few minutes to eat breakfast yourself or have breakfast with your family.
- Try to serve a balanced breakfast that includes at least 3 out of 5 food groups (grains, fruits, vegetables, protein, and dairy).
- Plan ahead. Prepare the night before by getting dishes ready, cutting up fruit, or packing a grab-n-go option.
- Learn about your school's breakfast program and encourage your child to have breakfast in school. Most schools offer a healthy breakfast for free or at a low cost.
- Wake up ten minutes earlier to allow time to prepare breakfast at home, or for your child to arrive to school in time to enjoy a healthy school breakfast.



HERE ARE SOME EASY TIPS TO MAKE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PART OF YOUR FAMILY'S DAILY ROUTINE:

- Take family walks or go on bike rides after dinner.
- Use the stairs instead of the escalator and elevator.
- Walk your child to school.
- Ask your child to help with chores around the house.
- Have your child participate in sports or take lessons.
- Play games that get everyone in the family up and moving.



STAY INVOLVED TO HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN HEALTHY HABITS.

- Attend school meetings and events.
- Have fun trying new, healthy recipes together.
- Set expectations at home by limiting screen time and encouraging your child to keep a healthy routine.
- Talk to your child about his/her daily food choices and physical activity.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Stay connected by talking about healthy choices, as well as your child's interests, relationships, and goals in school. The following conversation starters can help you keep the conversation going at home.

- Are you able to focus and learn in school? How can we create a healthy routine that supports your learning?
- Are you eating a healthy breakfast every day? How can we make sure your day gets off to a great start?
- Do you think we are healthy here at home? Are there healthy foods you think we can try cooking? Is there an activity that can help keep us physically active as a family?

RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

For more resources, easy tips, and information for busy parents, visit:

- NYSED *Think Breakfast!*:
<http://www.thinkbreakfast.com/>
- Team Nutrition:
<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/>
- NYC School Food:
<http://www.schoolfoodnyc.org/>

[1] Rampersaud GC, Pereira MA, Girard BL, Adams J, Metz J. Breakfast habits, nutritional status, body weight, and academic performance in children and adolescents. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*. 2005;105(5):743-760, quiz 761-762.

[2] Basch CE. Healthier Students Are Better Learners: A Missing Link in Efforts to Close the Achievement Gap. New York: New York. Columbia University; 2010. http://www.equitycampaign.org/i/a/document/12557_EquityMattersVol6_Web03082010.pdf. Accessed October 10, 2016.

[3] United Dairy Industry of Michigan. Adapted from FRAC: Breakfast for Health. Fall 2011. www.frac.org

[4] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The association between school-based physical activity, including physical education, and academic performance. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2010.

[5] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Student Health and Academic Achievement Web site. http://www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/health_and_academics/index.htm Accessed February 28, 2014.

