



## 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables

Educate the families in your care about nutrition recommendations for children and the importance of incorporating a variety of fruits and vegetables into their child's diet – regardless of their child's weight status. Provide support to help families apply their knowledge – use motivational interviewing to help them identify barriers preventing them from serving or eating fruits and vegetables, help them problem solve ways to overcome those barriers, and encourage them to set realistic goals they can monitor to improve their fruit and vegetable intake over time.

- Support a healthy introduction of solid food, which includes promoting exclusive breastfeeding for six months and explaining neophobia to caregivers so they know to expose young children to new fruits and vegetables repeatedly!
- Promote healthy eating behaviors – teach caregivers how to recognize hunger and fullness cues; encourage them to make nutritious foods available at regular times and allow children to choose whether and how much to eat; and deter them from restricting access to palatable foods, using foods as rewards and punishments, and coercing children to eat.
- Consider hosting a farmers' market at your healthcare center to increase patient access to fruits and vegetables and send the message that nutrition is important for good health!

## 2 or fewer hours of recreational screen time<sup>+</sup>

<sup>+</sup> review guidelines on parenting strategies to encourage quality screen time (AAP, 2015)

Teach youth and caregivers that recreational screen time is free time spent in front of screens – like televisions, video games, and the Internet – and that it is possible to get enough physical activity and still engage in an unhealthy amount of screen time.

- Encourage parents to remove screens from children's bedrooms and turning off phones and TVs during mealtimes. Explain that children under two years should have NO screen time.
- Promote national Screen-Free Week, usually in early May, in your healthcare center. See [www.screenfree.org](http://www.screenfree.org) for details.
- Ask youth to brainstorm active ways to spend their free time. Consider compiling a master list of responses from children in different age groups and making it available to all.

## 1 or more hours of physical activity

Explain age-specific physical activity recommendations to your patients and their caregivers. Use motivational interviewing to help empower ALL family members to be more active – and have fun at the same time!

- Encourage parents to use activities instead of foods as incentives – a trip to the park, sledding hill, or community pool is a great alternative to the pizza shop to celebrate a job well done!
- Consider keeping a list of activities available for youth in your community and distributing it to your patients.
- Promote stair use in your healthcare center – increase their appeal with colorful paint, carpeting, music, and artwork.

## 0 sweetened beverages

Help children and caregivers understand the importance of drinking fluids to stay healthy while avoiding the extra sugar and calories from sweetened beverages. Coach them to look out for drinks with sugar, honey, syrup (e.g., corn syrup, brown rice syrup), sweetener, and/or ingredients ending in "ose" (e.g., glucose, dextrose).

- Encourage caregivers to make water the norm for quenching thirst by drinking water when thirsty and offering water to thirsty children.
- Present the idea that nonfat and 1% milk and 100% fruit and vegetable juices contain beneficial nutrients as well as calories – they are like foods that can contribute towards a healthy diet rather than beverages to drink when thirsty.
- Lead by example – drink water yourself and make it freely available to visitors in your healthcare center!

Contact the Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness at 1-877-382-9185 or [www.militaryfamilies.psu.edu](http://www.militaryfamilies.psu.edu) for help identifying programs and resources targeting nutrition, physical activity, and screen time!