



## 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables

Fruits and vegetables can provide youth with a lot of nutrients, water, fiber, and phytochemicals that help prevent diseases and keep their bodies healthy. There are many programs for after-school and community settings that are designed to increase youth fruit and vegetable consumption – contact the Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness at 1-877-382-9185 to identify programs to meet your needs!

- Help youth identify fruits and vegetables they like – visit the grocery store or farmers' market and conduct a taste-test.
- Plan sessions that give youth skills to help them include more fruits and vegetables in their diet – grow a garden, demonstrate how to prepare (e.g., wash, peel) different fruits and vegetables, practice simple recipes, and assemble a cookbook. Consider creating a cooking club or hosting an event where youth can show off all they have learned.
- If you serve snacks during program time, feature a variety of fruits and vegetables!

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

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

Recreational screen time is free time spent in front of screens – like televisions, video games, and the internet. It is possible to get enough physical activity and still engage in an unhealthy amount of screen time.

- Offer screen-free, after-school programming.
- Work to foster youth's love for music and dancing, reading, making art, exploring the outdoors, interacting with others, building, creating, and imagining.
- Promote National Screen-Free Week, which is usually in early May (see [www.screenfree.org](http://www.screenfree.org) for details). Help youth track their screen time and challenge them to reduce it.

## 1 or more hours of physical activity

Active play time is important for many reasons: it gives youth opportunities to move their bodies, use their imagination, practice problem solving, and engage in social interactions that promote self-awareness and empathy. Plus, it increases physical fitness!

- Give youth time to play outside in every season! Ensure access to playgrounds; grass fields; and portable equipment, like balls.
- Organize team games or field days that give everyone a chance to be active, no matter their athleticism.
- Arrange activities to maximize active time and reduce time spent observing others or waiting for a turn.

## 0 sweetened beverages

It is important to drink fluids to stay healthy, but sweetened beverages add extra sugar and calories to the diet. Watch out for drinks with the following ingredients: sugar, honey, sweetener, syrup (e.g., corn syrup, brown rice syrup), and/or ingredients ending in "ose" (e.g., glucose, dextrose).

- Make water the norm for quenching thirst – drink water when you are thirsty and offer water to thirsty youth.
- Ensure that free drinking water is always available and easily accessible during after-school programming.
- Give youth healthy choices by opting not to make sweetened beverages available during after-school programming. Sparkling water, still water with slices of lemon, and fruity herbal iced teas make fun alternatives to plain water.

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 after-school and community-based programs targeting nutrition, physical activity, and screen time!

## References

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