

## Healthy Lifestyles for Children & Adolescents

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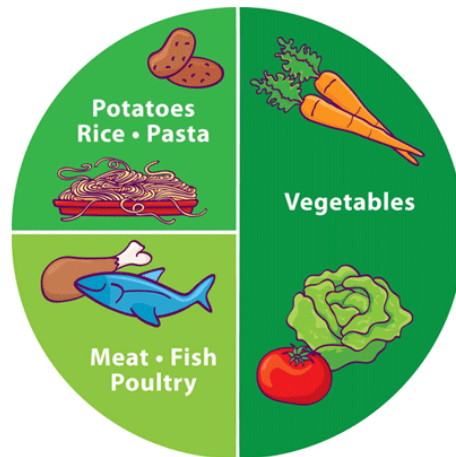
Children and adolescents can learn to make healthy food and lifestyle choices if encouraged and supported by family. Young people are more likely to make healthy changes if the whole family is involved.

### Healthy Eating

- **Balanced diet:** Include mostly wholegrain breads and cereals, vegetables and fruit with moderate amounts of lean meats and reduced-fat dairy foods.
- **Avoid skipping meals:** Ensure regular meals – include three main meals with 2-3 optional snacks.
- **Water is the best drink:** Limit sweet drinks such as juice, cordial and soft drinks to less than once per day.
- Keep the fridge and pantry stocked with plenty of healthy snack options.
- Limit treats such as cakes, chips and takeaway foods.
- Eating at a table without television, telephone or computer screens as a distraction can help to reduce overeating. Eating as a family at least once a day provides the opportunity for positive role modelling.
- Encourage your child to have a healthy attitude to food by referring to foods as 'everyday' and 'sometimes' foods rather than 'good' and 'bad'. It's also important for them to learn feelings of hunger and fullness, and recognise eating out of boredom or feeling upset.
- Try not to reward children with food.

**Remember that a healthy diet is determined not just by what is eaten, but also by how much.**

**It can be helpful to consider the portions on a plate using this picture as a guide.**



### Getting Active

- Limit screen time: Reducing sedentary behaviours such as watching television, playing video games or using a computer can provide more time for physical activity. The National Physical Activity Recommendations suggest no television or electronic media for children 0-2 years and less than one hour per day for children 2-5 years.
- Alternative activity: Not all children and adolescents enjoy competitive sports. Alternatives such as a daily walk with the family dog or bike ride to and from school may be of more interest for some young people.
- Unstructured play: Being active is important for all young people. Playing outside, dancing to music and going for a walk with the family are all good opportunities for young children to be active.

### Activity Ideas

- Playing outside
- Walking to school
- Swimming
- Walking family dog
- Dancing
- Riding bike or scooter
- Visit local park
- Weekend sport – i.e. soccer, football, tennis, netball
- Rollerblading

Name and Phone: .....