

## Tips for Parents - Getting Your Kids to Eat Well

*Parents face many challenges raising children today. Encouraging kids to eat nutritiously is a big one, but here are some tips to help.*

Books tell you. Your doctor tells you. The media tells you. Your child needs good nutrition for their bodies to grow strong and the minds to develop healthily, right? But encouraging healthy eating can seem far from easy at times. It's important to be a role model for your children with your own healthy habits and avoid the temptation to resort to such techniques as nagging, bribing or eventually giving-up trying!

No one likes a nagging parent – especially a teenager! If you feel your child or teenager is not getting adequate nutrition, here are a few tips to help encourage healthy behaviors at home.

- ✓ Convenience is key! Keep the fridge and cupboards stocked with healthy, easy, grab-and-go choices in single-serving baggies or containers.
- ✓ Buy healthy versions of traditional kid-friendly foods – baked tortilla chips, not fried or low-fat cookies and crackers.
- ✓ Eat one or more meals each week as a family to reinforce mealtime as a social gathering: a place for food, manners and family interaction.
- ✓ Encourage breakfast for energy and optimal mental functioning at school. Have several healthy options ready for a picky child.
- ✓ Eliminate soda from the home and encourage milk, juice and water. Mix your own “soda” using soda water and a splash of 100%-juice.
- ✓ Be a role model for your children and practice the behaviors you'd like them to adopt. *Believe it or not, they are watching!*
- ✓ Don't forget times for special “treats” together – but not everyday.
- ✓ Be flexible. . .and patient. You *will* encounter resistance sometimes. It takes a long time to develop a habit, but even longer to break one.

### *References:*

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