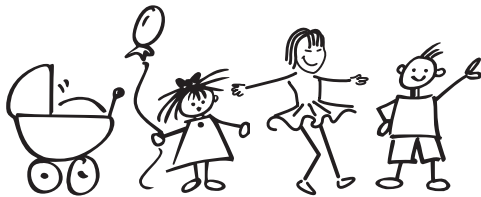


raising healthy **kids**

How to Help Your Kids Grow Up Healthy

RAISING HEALTHY KIDS STARTER KIT



We build strong kids,
strong families,
strong communities.



Plus de vie à la vie
des jeunes, des familles
et de la communauté.

YMCA

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**WE WANT OUR KIDS
TO EAT HEALTHIER.
WE WANT THEM TO
BE ACTIVE. WE WANT
THEM TO GROW UP
WELL SO THAT THEY
LEAD HEALTHY, HAPPY,
HELPFUL, PRODUCTIVE
LIVES AND BUILD THE
NEXT GENERATION
OF HEALTHY ADULTS.**



THE YMCA KNOWS ABOUT PARENTS' HOPES FOR THEIR CHILDREN—AND THE BARRIERS THAT KEEP FAMILIES FROM GETTING THERE. THAT'S WHY THE YMCA IN CONSULTATION WITH PARENTS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY AND THE SEARCH INSTITUTE CAME TOGETHER TO CREATE THE RAISING HEALTHY KIDS KIT.

This kit grew out of conversations with parents and children. Families told us about their high value of health, the barriers that keep them from healthy living, and ideas that could help them raise healthy kids. Researchers analyzed the findings and compiled a 190-page summary. Project leaders used these findings to develop the *Raising Healthy Kids Kit*.

RAISING HEALTHY KIDS IS ABOUT:

- Doing simple things that will improve the health of each family member.
- Having fun while eating healthier and being active.
- Becoming closer as a family.
- Helping kids learn to make good choices.
- Living more meaningful lives as you become healthier together.

Together you can take the right steps toward living healthier, more productive lives. The *Raising Healthy Kids* resources will help you integrate small simple steps into your life and put you and your family on the path to a healthier lifestyle.

HOW TO USE THE RESOURCES

The *Raising Healthy Kids* resources include five tools that will help you eat healthier, be active, and teach positive, healthy attitudes to your children. The five tools include:



1

1. This interactive *Starter Kit* provides ideas on how to raise a healthy family.



3

2. A *Growth Chart* to hang on a wall to mark your child's height as he or she grows.

3. A *Daily Calendar* with 365 easy ways to eat healthier as a family and get more physically active.



4

4. *On-the-Go Cards* that include discussion starters on health, fitness, and nutrition.



5

5. *Raising Kids Who Read*, a booklet that reinforces the vital parent or adult-child relationship, and supports children's ability to read for fun and to become lifelong learners.



2

Keep each tool in a different place to ensure that you can make the best use of each. For example, you might want to keep the *On-the-Go Cards* in your purse, your briefcase, or your backpack. Hang the *Growth Chart* on the wall to start measuring your child's height to see how your child grows. Display the *Daily Calendar* in a prominent place in your home so that you look at it every day. Keep the *Starter Kit* in a convenient location so you know how to get started and can reference what to do when you need to keep things going. Keep the *Raising Kids Who Read* booklet in a convenient place for easy reference when at the library or bookstore with your child.

TIPS FOR USING EACH TOOL

Each of these five tools can help you and your family take positive steps toward health. Consider some of these ideas as you use each tool:

- *Starter Kit*

Use this kit for helpful information and interactive activities to raise healthy kids.

- *Growth Chart*

Children enjoy seeing how tall they're growing. Periodically mark their height on this chart. Have your children pick an idea from the chart for your family to try together.

- *Daily Calendar*

Consider trying an idea each day with this daily calendar. On busy days, use a sticky note to mark ideas to try later when you have more time.

- *On-the-Go Cards*

Use cards one at a time to get conversations going. On the front of the card think about how you would answer the question. Then ask your child the question and share your thoughts together. Turn over the card. Use the questions on the back to prompt further discussions and thoughts on the topic. Talk about how to take action and make healthy changes together.

- *Raising Kids Who Read*

Use the "Ask" and "Act" sections at the end of each of the 8 basic developmental needs. Select a new book this week from the suggested readings and have fun reading with your child!



CREATIVE IDEAS FOR USING THE RAISING HEALTHY KIDS TOOLS

	STARTER KIT	GROWTH CHART	DAILY CALENDAR	ON-THE-GO CARDS	RAISING KIDS WHO READ
WHERE TO USE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·At home (in your family room, kitchen, or bathroom) ·When you're waiting (for a doctor or dentist appointment, swim lesson, hair cut, etc.) ·On public transit during your commute 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·Child's bedroom wall ·Hallway ·Bathroom ·Family room ·Kitchen ·Inside a closet door 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·In a prominent place in your home ·Table ·Countertop ·Top of your TV ·Kitchen ·Family room 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·In the car ·On public transit ·While you're waiting in line, or waiting for an appointment or a sporting event to start 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·At home ·At the library ·At the bookstore
WHEN TO USE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·A little each day ·During a work break ·When the kids are in school ·To get you started ·For ideas when you're stuck 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·On January 1st ·On your child's birthday ·After your child's annual physical ·On the first day of school ·Following a significant milestone (e.g. scoring the winning run) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·Every morning to start your day ·After school ·After dinner ·Any time you're together as a family ·As a topic at the dinner table 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·When you're on the go ·When you're waiting and need something to fill the time ·When the kids are bored ·While you're taking a walk ·Before bed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·When you need ideas on how to encourage your child to become a reader and lifelong learner ·When you are looking for suggestions on new books to borrow or purchase



When you use the *Raising Healthy Kids Day by Day Calendar* and the *Raising Healthy Kids On-the-Go Cards*, you will notice ideas on different-coloured paper. Each colour focuses on a specific area that is important to our overall health. For example:

RED

MEANS HEALTHY ACTIONS—

Red pages will give you ideas on how to get physically active.



ORANGE

IS ABOUT HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS—

The people in your life greatly impact the health choices you make. These pages give ideas on how to make your relationships healthier and how to help your kids feel good about themselves and others.



YELLOW

FOCUSES ON FOSTERING A HEALTHY SPIRIT—

When you're confident and content, you are more likely to live in healthier ways. Nurture your spirit with these ideas.



GREEN

SIGNALS HEALTHY EATING—

Good nutrition gives your body the fuel that it needs. These pages give creative ways to eat healthier.



BLUE

IS ABOUT HEALTHY BALANCE—

The key to health is balance. Use these ideas to create a healthy balance to your lifestyle.



PURPLE

MEANS HEALTHY HABITS—

Develop health habits that improve your eating habits and your physical activity levels.



FOLLOW CANADA'S GUIDE TO HEALTHY LIVING

Eating well with *Canada's Food Guide* by Health Canada highlights what you need to do to be healthy, focusing on two areas: healthy eating and physical activity.

The recommended number of daily servings in *Canada's Food Guide* differs by age and in some cases by gender. For more information, interactive tools or your free copy of the guide visit Health Canada's website (www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php).

For healthy eating, Health Canada recommends having:

- 3-8 servings (depending on age and gender) of grains each day,
- 4-10 servings (depending on age and gender) of vegetables and fruits every day,
- 2-4 servings (depending on your age and gender) of milk products each day, and
- 1-3 servings (depending on your age and gender) of meats and alternatives every day.

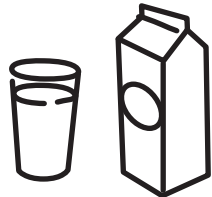
The key to eating healthy is to eat a variety of healthy foods and to eat food from all four food groups. Health Canada also encourages us to read food labels and to cut back on unhealthy foods.

For physical activity, check out *Canada's Physical Activity Guide to Healthy Active Living* (www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide/index.html).

HEALTH CANADA SUGGESTS:

To be active every day as a step towards better health and a healthy body weight. *Canada's Physical Activity Guide* recommends building 30 to 60 minutes of moderate physical activity into daily life for adults and at least 90 minutes a day for children and youth. You don't have to do it all at once. Add it up in periods of at least 10 minutes at a time for adults and 5 minutes for children and youth. Start slowly and build up.

This *Raising Healthy Kids Kit* gives creative ideas, conversation starters, and suggestions regarding how to incorporate the recommendations from Health Canada. All you have to do is use the *Growth Chart*, the *Daily Calendar*, and the *On-the-Go Cards*, and you will be taking a positive step toward health.



HELP YOUR CHILD GROW UP HEALTHY—IN EVERY WAY

Although eating well and being physically active are both essential to helping your child grow up well, there are other elements that are important to raising healthy kids.

Researchers at Minneapolis-based Search Institute have surveyed more than 2.2 million young people in Canada and the United States since 1989 and outlined 40 Development Assets that are proven to raise children well. They have found that young people who have more Developmental Assets are:

- More likely to act in positive ways that we value—such as maintaining good health, helping others, and exhibiting leadership.
- Less likely to get into trouble—such as having problems at school, getting into fights, and using tobacco or alcohol.
- More likely to bounce back after difficulty—such as coping after the death of a grandparent, dealing with a bully, getting injured, or having parents divorce.



RESEARCHERS HAVE IDENTIFIED 40 DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS THAT HELP KIDS GROW UP WELL.

**(See the list “40 Developmental Assets for Middle Childhood”.)
Keep this Starter Kit handy and start building assets today.**

The 40 Developmental Assets clearly make a difference in helping kids make healthy choices. When researchers examined kids with 10 Developmental Assets or less, they found that only 27 percent paid attention to healthy nutrition and exercise. Kids with more Developmental Assets made more healthy choices. Forty-eight percent of kids with 11 to 20 Developmental Assets valued healthy nutrition and physical activity. That percentage jumped to 69 percent of kids with 21 to 30 assets and 88 percent of kids with 31 to 40 Developmental Assets. (Learn more about the assets by visiting www.search-institute.org/assets.)

Because of the power of Developmental Assets, researchers recommend that all kids have 31 or more of the Developmental Assets. As a parent, you can do a lot to build assets in your child, and you do not have to do it alone. (In fact, you are likely to be more successful if you find other people who will build assets with you, such as a grandparent, teacher, friend, or coach.) Connect with other asset builders in Canada. Sixteen asset-building community initiatives are building assets in Canada. (See www.search-institute.org/community for a community near you.) In addition 30 Canadian communities in seven provinces have researched the Developmental Asset levels of the young people in their area. Many of these communities are now doing creative things to raise healthy kids.

40 DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS FOR MIDDLE CHILDHOOD

Search Institute has identified the following building blocks of healthy development that help children grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.

EXTERNAL ASSETS

Support

1. Family support—Family life provides high levels of love and support.
2. Positive family communication—Parent(s) and child communicate positively. Child feels comfortable seeking advice and counsel from parent(s).
3. Other adult relationships—Child receives support from adults other than her or his parent(s).
4. Caring neighbourhood—Child experiences caring neighbours.
5. Caring school climate—Relationships with teachers and peers provide a caring, encouraging school environment.
6. Parent involvement in schooling—Parent(s) are actively involved in helping the child succeed in school.

Empowerment

7. Community values children—Child feels valued and appreciated by adults in the community.
8. Children as resources—Child is included in decisions at home and in the community.
9. Service to others—Child has opportunities to help others in the community.
10. Safety—Child feels safe at home, at school, and in her or his neighbourhood.

Boundaries and Expectations

11. Family boundaries—Family has clear and consistent rules and consequences and monitors the child's whereabouts.
12. School boundaries—School provides clear rules and consequences.
13. Neighbourhood boundaries—Neighbours take responsibility for monitoring the child's behaviour.
14. Adult role models—Parent(s) and other adults in the child's family, as well as non family adults, model positive, responsible behaviour.
15. Positive peer influence—Child's closest friends model positive, responsible behaviour.
16. High expectations—Parent(s) and teachers expect the child to do her or his best at school and in other activities.

Constructive Use of Time

17. Creative activities—Child participates in music, art, drama, or creative writing two or more times per week.
18. Child programs—Child participates two or more times per week in co curricular school activities or structured community programs for children.
19. Religious community—Child attends religious programs or services one or more times per week.
20. Time at home—Child spends some time most days both in high-quality interaction with parents and doing things at home other than watching TV or playing video games.

INTERNAL ASSETS

Commitment to Learning

21. Achievement motivation—Child is motivated and strives to do well in school.
22. Learning engagement—Child is responsive, attentive, and actively engaged in learning at school and enjoys participating in learning activities outside of school.
23. Homework—Child usually hands in homework on time.
24. Bonding to adults at school—Child cares about teachers and other adults at school.
25. Reading for pleasure—Child enjoys and engages in reading for fun most days of the week.

Positive Values

26. Caring—Parent(s) tell the child it is important to help other people.
27. Equality and social justice—Parent(s) tell the child it is important to speak up for equal rights for all people.
28. Integrity—Parent(s) tell the child it is important to stand up for one's beliefs.
29. Honesty—Parent(s) tell the child it is important to tell the truth.
30. Responsibility—Parent(s) tell the child it is important to accept personal responsibility for behaviour.
31. Healthy lifestyle—Parent(s) tell the child it is important to have good health habits and an understanding of healthy sexuality.

Social Competencies

32. Planning and decision-making—Child thinks about decisions and is usually happy with results of her or his decisions.
33. Interpersonal competence—Child cares about and is affected by other people's feelings, enjoys making friends, and, when frustrated or angry, tries to calm her or himself.
34. Cultural competence—Child knows and is comfortable with people of different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds and with her or his own cultural identity.
35. Resistance skills—Child can stay away from people who are likely to get her or him in trouble and is able to say no to doing wrong or dangerous things.
36. Peaceful conflict resolution—Child attempts to resolve conflict nonviolently.

Positive Identity

37. Personal power—Child feels he or she has some influence over things that happen in her or his life.
38. Self-esteem—Child likes and is proud to be the person he or she is.
39. Sense of purpose—Child sometimes thinks about what life means and whether there is a purpose for her or his life.
40. Positive view of personal future—Child is optimistic about her or his personal future.

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If you have children of other ages, download the free list of the 40 Developmental Assets for the age of your child. Visit www.search-institute.org/assets/assetlists.html.

RAISING KIDS WHO CARE

Healthy, active, happy kids are kids who care about themselves and care about others. Here are some things that you can do as a parent and as a family to help your children become more socially responsible:

- Encourage your children to share and help. Even very young children can help to set the table or decide what veggies to have for a snack.
- Do something together for your community. Get active together and collect litter from your local playground or consider donating or volunteering at a local food bank sorting food.
- Be respectful of yourself, of your partner and of your children.
- Say thank you.
- Let your children make choices: "Would you like to go to the park to play or for a bike ride?"
- Help your children to express all their emotions, even the scary ones like anger and sadness without hurting themselves or others.





ARE YOU READY?

It all starts in the home with both grown-ups and kids. Use this section of the *Raising Healthy Kids Starter Kit* to look at your home environment and to jump start your creativity to develop healthy habits that will lead to a healthier way of living for the entire family. Take the first step with “The Family Checklist”.

READY

- Grown-ups, read the introductory pages of the *Raising Healthy Kids Starter Kit* as a guide to understand what’s important and how to get the most from these resources.
- Kids, draw your family’s home (see page 16).
- As a family, complete the *Home Assessment* (see page 18).

SET

- Make a *Raising Healthy Kids Tracking Poster* (see page 26).
- Set family goals – write them down (both parents and kids should agree on the goals).
- Plan weekly Raising Healthy Kids Family Huddles.
- Kids, pick activities for the week.

GO

- Have fun with activities.
- Keep track of progress on the *Raising Healthy Kids Tracking Poster*.
- Set new goals or revise old goals.
- Keep going weekly.
- Meet to review or set goals.
- Kids, pick activities for the week, or create new activities and/or modify activities (ensure there is at least one activity each week you do together as a family).
- Participate in a variety of activities (try something new – work this into your weekly plan).
- Celebrate everyone’s successes and progress.

DRAW YOUR HOME

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Paper, crayons, coloured pencils or markers.

WHAT TO DO:

- Draw a picture of what your home looks like to you.
- Include family members participating in physical activities.
- Draw some of your favourite healthy foods (fruits and veggies).
- Talk about the drawing as a family:
 - What does home mean to you?
 - What does healthy home and healthy kids mean to each of you?
 - Discuss ideas and actions that can improve the healthiness of your home.

HOW HEALTHY IS YOUR HOME?

Have fun with this *Home Assessment Checklist* and turn it into a game in which everyone can participate.

WHAT TO DO:

- Give everyone a job (one person keeps time, another records the points, another runs to get items while another adds up the scores).
- Keep track of the score.
- Complete the assessment again in a few months.
- Measure the difference in the scores and talk as a family about what you can do to make a difference in the future.



GET STARTED

- Find a piece of paper and use a pen or pencil to write down your points.
 - Use a clock or stop watch and begin. Good luck and have fun!
1. **Open the refrigerator and as quickly as you can, count out the different types of fruits and vegetables.**
Add one point for each type (e.g. add one point for apple, one point for celery, one point for orange, one point for carrots, etc.).
 2. **As fast as you can, find a ball or Frisbee™ that could be tossed around outside for a game of catch.**
(Add two points if found in under two minutes, one point if under five minutes.)
 3. **Are there stairs in your home or building?**
If yes, quickly go as a family and walk up and/or down the stairs. Count the total number of stairs in your home or building. Add one point if everyone walks the stairs every day.
 4. **Give one point for every family member who ate breakfast yesterday morning.**
 5. **Did everyone in the family play or participate in physical activity as a family over the past three days?**
If yes, add one point.
 6. **Over the past week, did you eat a meal together as a family?**
If yes, add one point for each family meal.
Give an extra point if the meal was healthy (contained foods from all four foods groups in *Canada's Food Guide* – grains, vegetables or fruit, milk products and meats and alternatives).

7. **Start the time; or note the time on a clock.**

As quickly as possible, have the whole family put on their walking shoes and, as briskly as possible, walk around the block. Stop the timer when you get back to your home. Note the total time it took to take the brisk family walk. It took ____minutes. Make this family walk a part of a daily routine. (Add one point for completing the activity.)

8. **How many televisions and computers are in your home?**

Give your family one point for each television or computer if it is currently turned off.

9. **Take seven food items out of your cabinet and bring them to the table.**

Sit down as a family and look for the food labels on each item. How many items have added sugar or fructose? (Subtract one point for each product.) How many food items list whole grains as an ingredient? How many list a fruit or vegetable as the first ingredients? (Add one point for each product.)

10. **Add one point for each positive, kind, comment you made to each other during the *Home Assessment Game*.**

ii. **Tally the family's total points and then discuss the activities.**

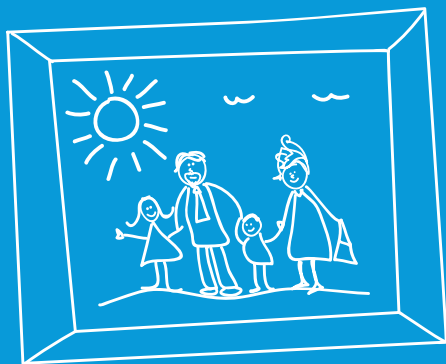
Ask some of the following questions:

- What did you learn from the activity?
- What can your family change or do differently to improve the health of your home?
- Who will do something different, and what will he or she do?
- What changes as a family can you make over the next week, month or three months?

Write down today's date, total score and the short-term goals you have discussed as a family. Mark on the calendar the next date you plan to complete this activity as a family.

PLAY EVERY DAY, EAT HEALTHY AND FAMILY TIME

It can be easy and fun raising healthy kids. The *Raising Healthy Kids Kit* has been developed to assist you with simple activities, ideas and knowledge that will support your family's healthy behaviours. Many of the following tips are incorporated in the *Raising Healthy Kids Daily Calendar* activities, *On-the-Go Cards* and *Growth Chart*, and are highlighted here as an introduction to enhancing the health of your family.



PLAY EVERY DAY

When the whole family makes play a priority, you might not even notice how it all adds up to enough physical activity to have health benefits.

Adding short periods of light activity to your day helps:

- You stay at a healthy weight
- Protects against disease, and
- Gives you more energy

WHAT'S THE KEY TO SUCCESS?

- Look for ways to make everyday chores and routines more active. For example, “run” an errand rather than riding in the car, race to meet the school bus or put on music and dance while cleaning up after dinner.
- Plan 10-minute activity breaks throughout the day so it all adds up.
- Discuss the activity routine that works best for each family member.
- Support each other and do at least one activity a week as a family. For example, go for a family hike or walk or rake leaves together – plan and be creative.
- Spend time outdoors – enjoy the sunshine, fresh air and nature.
- Incorporate more intense activities into your schedule several days a week. For example, running, biking, basketball, hockey, skating, swimming, or tennis.



EAT HEALTHY

Following *Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating* will provide the best guideline for ensuring your family eats the foods necessary to maintain a healthy weight and prevent disease. You will find helpful tips throughout the *Raising Healthy Kids* tools. The following tips will start you on the right path.

EATING TIPS

- **Colour your meals** – when there is lots of colour on your plate you can feel confident that you are making healthy choices. The orange carrots, green spinach, red tomatoes and purple cabbage all tell you you're preparing something that is great for your health!
- **H₂O is the way to go** – drinking water is one of the simplest and most important things you do for your health. Make water your first choice every time and you will do your body good and at the same time cut lots of sugar and calories from your daily diet.
- **Mix it up** – plan meals and snacks that include foods from all four food groups. Aim for more than two colours on your plate!
- **Just the facts** – reading the nutritional facts on food labels and beverage packaging is key to taking control of your family's health.
- **Watch for saturated fat** – choose foods with mono, poly or unsaturated fats (olive oil, canola oil, safflower oil). Avoid foods with trans fats that include hydrogenated oils or modified oils.

Try the following activities to practise healthy eating habits as a family:

- **Check your cabinets.** Take out a few food items and sit down as a family to review the recommended serving size on each package. Measure out the recommended serving size so everyone has a visual idea of what the serving size looks like. Ask how the serving size compares to the one that you normally eat. Talk about how you can adjust in the future.
- **Eat breakfast as a family** tomorrow and measure out the cereal and milk poured into each person's bowl (as recommended on the box).

- **Decorate special water glasses** for every member of the family. Use washable stickers, decals, paint or glue. Wash cups together each night and let the cups air-dry overnight.
- **Create your shopping list** with your children. Help your children learn to make good choices about the food your family eats.
- **Have a grocery store scavenger hunt.** Have each family member find the items on your grocery list, read the label and then only add those items with three or more grams of fibre and less than five grams of sugar per serving.
- **Make a plate chart.** One half of the plate should be for fruits and vegetables. One quarter should be for starch and grains (pasta, rice or bread). The last quarter should be for protein (nuts, fish, cheese or meat). Draw some of your favourite foods into each of the appropriate sections.
- **Add fresh or frozen fruits to cereal, pancakes or oatmeal.** Add fresh or frozen vegetables to spaghetti sauce, casseroles or other recipes.
- **Order pizza** easy on the cheese, and with extra vegetables (broccoli, red or green peppers, spinach, etc.). Try a whole-wheat crust!
- **Have all family members identify their favourite fruit and write each one down in a list.** Fill the family fruit bowl and keep it on the counter or table.
- **Play a game of “fruit-and-vegetable tag.”** The rules are that you must call out the name of a fruit or vegetable before sitting down to prevent being tagged and you can’t use any name that has already been called out.
- **Conduct a sugar experiment.** Have each person in the family select their favourite drink and read the label for how much sugar is in a serving. Then, use a measuring spoon to put that amount of sugar into a zip lock bag. (Hint: four grams of sugar = one teaspoon.) Mark each bag with the name of the drink and leave on the counter to remind everyone how much sugar they’re consuming each time they pour a glass of that beverage.

FAMILY TIME

Eating together as a family can strengthen your relationships at home and help you learn to be a better friend at school. The family meal is about being together and supporting one another. It's a great time to catch up on family news and discuss plans for better health.

JUST THE TWO OF US

Sharing time together one-to-one, even if it's only for 10 minutes a day, with other family members helps develop and strengthen relationships.




FUN ACTIVITIES TO PRACTISE AS A FAMILY

1. **Hand out paper and coloured pencils, crayons to each child.**
 - Draw three activities that you enjoy doing with a parent or adult (for the kids) and parents write or draw activities they like do with the family.
 - Compare lists and drawings to create personal activities for your family to enjoy in the future.
2. **Create “date nights” for each child and grown-up.** Grown-ups schedule time to take each child out for a one-on-one activity (a walk, bike ride, movie, dinner – use your imagination).
3. **Set aside at least 10 minutes of “special time” for each child every night at bedtime.** Use the time to read, talk about the day or sing a song together. Notice something that your child did during the day that made you proud. Tell your child that you love him/her. Hug your child.
4. **Schedule a monthly lunch date.** Go to a special place for a meal, or just go for a walk to the bagel store before school. Remember to make healthy choices in the restaurant you choose.
5. **Go for a walk together** – if you are morning people, walk in the morning before school. If not, an after dinner walk might suit your schedule.
6. **Volunteer together** someplace that interests all of you (e.g. the local food bank, a charity walk/race or at an animal shelter).

RAISING HEALTHY KIDS TRACKING POSTER

What you need – Bristol board or construction paper, markers or crayons.

What to do – Draw a chart (see the following sample). Decorate the chart with words or pictures that describe your favourite healthy foods, physical activities and pictures of family members.

	HEALTHY HABIT	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
PLAY EVERY DAY 	<p>Set your goals together in this column beside the appropriate category. e.g. Walk after dinner three nights this week - beside PLAY EVERY DAY.</p> <p>Eat breakfast four days this week - beside EAT HEALTHY.</p>							
EAT HEALTHY 	<p>Read a book before bedtime two times this week - beside FAMILY TIME.</p>							
FAMILY TIME 								

Use a sticker or check mark to track your success!

NEXT STEPS

- **Together, list healthy habit goals.** For example, eat breakfast four days a week, walk after dinner three nights a week, watch television only three nights this week, etc. Be sure to include a few activities that the family can do together.
- **Turn it into a game.** Set a timer for two minutes or note the time on the clock. Ask your child to tell you about his or her healthy habit goal. Listen without responding for two minutes. Repeat or paraphrase what you heard. Change roles and let the child ask you about your healthy habit goals. Repeat for each family member.
- **Display the *Raising Healthy Kids Tracking Poster* on the fridge or in another common area.** View and talk about progress on a regular basis and reward the family when new habits are achieved. Use rewards that are low cost, healthy and can be enjoyed by the whole family.
- **Use stickers or a marker to place a label on each day of the week a family member practises a healthy habit.** Create a new chart every two to three weeks and update habits as necessary so your family can continue working toward a healthier life together.



TAKING A POSITIVE STEP TOWARD HEALTH

You can make a difference by raising healthy kids. Yes, we are often busy and finances can be tight, yet as parents we know that what we do with our children matters.

Every single step (even the smallest step) helps. When your child tries a new fruit or vegetable, that's a step in the right direction. When you take a quick walk around the block, that's another positive step. When you tell your child that you love her/him, that's a step forward.

Use this *Raising Healthy Kids Kit* to help you and your family to take positive steps toward health. Start talking about healthy eating and physical fitness through the *On-the-Go Cards*. Take one small step with the *Raising Healthy Kids Day by Day* calendar. Measure how your child is growing, and together read the tips on the growth chart. Spend time together reading some of the recommended books in the *Raising Kids Who Read* booklet and start your child on the path to lifelong learning.

Make being healthy fun. Laugh together and read. Be silly. Enjoy being healthy together!

Never has it been more important than now to take a step toward health. With obesity, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and other disease growing at an alarming rate, you can do a lot to protect your family members. Eat healthy. Stay active. Build assets. Help your kids feel good about themselves and others.

It's a continual learning process and continuing to learn together will take you in the right direction. Each step is a positive step toward health.

THE YMCA IN CANADA

As the largest service provider to children and youth in Canada, the YMCA works each and every day to give kids the essential building blocks or assets they need. Our mission of supporting people in spirit, mind and body and fostering a sense of responsibility is integral to everything that we do—from good health and a healthy lifestyle to creating a sense of belonging and building lasting relationships.

Today, the YMCA in Canada works with over 1.8 million people of all backgrounds in over 250 communities through:

- YMCA Health Fitness and Recreation**
- YMCA Child Care**
- YMCA Camping**
- YMCA Employment Programs**
- YMCA Education and Community Programs**
- YMCA International Development**
- YMCA Leadership Development**



raising healthy **kids**

How to Help Your Kids Grow Up Healthy

RAISING HEALTHY KIDS STARTER KIT



We build strong kids,
strong families,
strong communities.



Plus de vie à la vie
des jeunes, des familles
et de la communauté.

YMCA