

Healthy Tip of the Day Radio Clips: Missoula Family YMCA

January 2016, Week 2

Make smart portions a habit. Do you have childhood memories of being forced to sit at the table until you cleaned your plate? Don't perpetuate this poor method of mealtime management! Requiring a child to "clean their plate" sends the wrong message by emphasizing quantity over quality and can lead to overeating. Foster a healthier attitude toward food by focusing on serving appropriate portions of the right foods to begin with.

Sipping Smart. Soda is full of empty calories and artificial sweeteners. Milk and water are the best drink choices for your child. Offer whole or 2% milk to children ages 12 months to 2 years. After 2, ask your pediatrician which milk is best for your child's needs. Juice can be as sugary as soda, so limit juice to 4-6 ounces a day.

Try, Try Again. Kids can be picky eaters. We all can! But don't let refusal of a new food stop you from trying again. Offer new foods multiple times in multiple ways. For infants, you may even need to try 10-15 times over 2-3 months before they become accustomed to the new taste. Be a role model in what you eat, and let your child see you try a variety of foods as well.

Let's all play! Don't let a full day go by without active play. Take trips to the park, play in the yard, go for walks and make physical activity a part of your family's daily routine. Reduce the amount of time children spend in devices that restrain movement, such as strollers and bouncy seats.

Turn off that screen. This year resolve to limit screen time for the whole family, including TV, video games, and computers, to less than two hours a day. TVs and computers placed in children's bedrooms can disrupt sleep, make family time difficult, and be especially dangerous if connected to the internet. If children do have screen time, keep it well-supervised, and try to make it both educational and fun for everyone.

