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FamilyConsumerSciences

September 2011

RAISING KIDS, EATING RIGHT, SPENDING SMART, LIVING WELL



A PUBLICATION OF NORTHERN KENTUCKY FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES AGENTS

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Give infants and toddlers a good start

Recent findings indicate that even infants and toddlers are now at risk for becoming obese. Current national figures for infants and toddlers show that one in 10 is overweight, and more than 20 percent of children between the ages 2 and 5 are already overweight or obese.

Early obesity can lead to adult overweight or obesity and the chronic diseases that stem from weight management issues. Reversing this alarming trend is critical for parents or care-givers to ensure health for children as they grow up. Recommendations include the following:

- Be a role model by eating and enjoying healthful foods
- Offer nutrient-dense foods
- Limit or avoid sugary drinks, including soda and juice
- Reduce fast food meals; choose healthy options instead
- Provide milk and water with meals and/or in between
- Eat home-cooked meals so that calories and ingredients are better controlled
- Serve healthful snacks such as fruits, raw vegetables and nuts
- Allow occasional treats
- Serve small portions; learn the serving size of different foods
- Follow a schedule for meals

Active play, at any age, along with diet, is important to well-being and overall health. Even infants need time for free floor play with appropriate supervision to stimulate their movements, develop coordination and strengthen muscles. Every day, caregivers should encourage toddlers to be active so they develop good habits of playing and exercising that will carry over as they grow older. Children also must get enough sleep; lack of sleep is a risk factor for obesity. Caregivers and parents should limit screen time and instead encourage activity.

And caregivers should remember that diets are not the answer, particularly for children. Instead, help children establish healthy eating habits and an active lifestyle from the start.

For more information, read the UK extension publication "Home Is Where the Health Is" available online at <http://www.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/fcs7/fcs7188/fcs7188.pdf>.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Timely Tips..... 1

Eating Right 2

Spending Smart..... 2

Raising Kids 3

Living Well..... 3

Cook's Corner..... 3

County Information 4

It behooves a father to blameless if he expects his child to be.

Smart snacks for families and children

The recent announcement by global fast-food giant, McDonald's that it will offer a healthier Happy Meal® signifies a major shift in eating behavior and consumer trends. By reducing portion size of fries, including apples and offering a low-fat dairy option in Happy Meals®, McDonald's is showing a willingness to address childhood obesity. (Two bags of apples can be substituted for apples and fries.) Because many children eat fast-food meals regularly, it is definitely a step in the right direction to add fiber, calcium and other critical nutrients, even in small amounts, and to reduce fat by 20 percent in these hugely popular meals.

Families can take a cue from the fast-food restaurants, which increasingly are offering healthier side dishes and snacks. One of the best options is to limit fast food meals so they are an occasional, infrequent treat. Another long-term strategy is to eat at home and to pack a healthy lunch that includes nutritious snacks for all members of your family, especially children. Providing smart snacks is important as children head back to school and need the right sort of fuel to help them stay alert and healthy while they are learning. According to the American Dietetic Association, children who eat balanced snacks pay attention longer in class, make fewer mistakes on tests and generally have fewer behavioral problems.

Having a steady supply of snacks that do not include high levels of processing, sugars and salt will help your child's palate remain acclimated to fresh, natural foods. Remember to offer appropriate serving sizes of these foods, which should supplement, not replace, regular mealtimes.

Smart snacks include options such as the following:

- Non-sugared cereal
- Graham crackers
- Fruit (leave the skin on when possible for extra fiber)
- Pretzels or plain popcorn
- Nuts
- Cheese, sliced or cubed
- Yogurt, kefir or low-fat pudding
- Whole grain bread or crackers
- Raw veggies, such as carrots, cucumbers, pepper, etc.
- Raisins and other dried, non-sweetened fruit
- Cottage cheese
- Hard-boiled eggs
- Low-fat milk



Parents should also set rules for snacking.

For example:

Teach your kids to ask before they help themselves to snacks.

Eat snacks at the table or in the kitchen, not in front of the TV.

Serve snacks in a bowl, offering appropriate serving sizes. Don't let kids eat snack foods directly out of the bag or box.

Changes in Debt and Change in Marital Satisfaction

Brief Description: Recently married couples report debt as one of their top concerns. This study assesses how changes in consumer debt (e.g., credit card debt) relate to changes in marital satisfaction.

Consumer debt assumption is associated with recently married couples' cutting back on spending time together and arguing about money more frequently. These changes predict declines in marital satisfaction. Paying off or remaining free from consumer debt is related to stable, or even increased, marital satisfaction.



Implications: Although some newlywed couples may bring substantial consumer debt into their marriage, they can enhance their marital happiness by paying it off. Couples who have no consumer debt at the beginning of their marriage should avoid accumulating it.

This resource area was created by the: Personal Finance (<http://www.extension.org/pages/12903/financial-security-for-all-community-page>) community.

(continued from preceding column)

Healthy eating involves a certain amount of creativity and effort. For example, if your child asks for a snack after breakfast, offer a plain hard-boiled egg, which is high in protein and other nutrients and low in both calories and price. If the request arises in the afternoon, offer sliced tomatoes and cheese. During the summer and early fall, teach your child where food comes from by going to the garden (or visit one) and let the child pick which fresh vegetables he or she wants to eat. Letting children make decisions about their intake can make them feel empowered and receptive to healthy eating.

Many groceries have expanded their fruit selection and regularly stock items that used to be hard to find or exotic. When in season, look for kiwi, gooseberries, currants, figs, papaya, mango, pineapple, pomegranates, plumcots, apricots and other unusual and seasonal fruit to break up the year-round standards of apples, oranges, pears and bananas. Introducing your family to variety and seasonality will make them savor each tasty and nutritious bite.

Source: Ingrid Adams, UK extension specialist for nutrition and weight management

School Sports — Keeping Active All Year Long

It is the Surgeon General's recommendation that children and teens get at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. As school begins again this fall, your child or grandchild may have asked to get involved with a school sport. This is a great opportunity to help your child stay physically active, as well as make friends and most importantly have fun! Choosing the sport to get involved in can be a tough decision. This could be because children or teens may have never played an organized sport or perhaps their friends are playing a different sport.

There are different types of sports often offered at school. Some sports are team sports where there are several people playing together. Examples of these sports are football, soccer, baseball, and volleyball. There are also sports where you work as an individual for the good of the team. Examples of these sports are cross country, track and field, gymnastics, and tennis.

In most schools, there are certain sports played in the fall and others played in the spring. Please check with the school to find out more about the sports offered. Remember that sports are meant to be fun — even if your child does not like a sport after he has joined, she should stay with it until the end of the season, and try a different one next year.

Reference: Kids Health. *Choosing the Right Sport for You*, January 2011.

Source: Nicole Peritore, Program Coordinator for Get Moving Kentucky, University of Kentucky College of Agriculture



Smart Tips: Move more!

Following the four steps below, you can see how easy it is to get 30 minutes of movement into a day! Try for even more minutes!

1. Take a walk (10 minutes).
2. Choose the stairs instead of the elevator (5 minutes).
3. Park further away and walk (5 minutes).
4. Dance with your children (10 minutes).

Source: Healthy Choices for Healthy Families



Cook's Corner

Recipe: **Fall Apple Crisp**-Yield 9 servings

- 7 cups sliced, peeled, apples (about 3 pounds, Granny Smith work well)
 - 1/3 cup apple juice
 - 1/2 cup flour
 - 1/4 cup sugar
 - 1/4 cup packed light brown sugar
 - 1/2 cup oats
 - 5 tablespoons butter, cut into small pieces
 - 3 tablespoon silvered almonds
1. Preheat oven to 375°F.
 2. Slice and peel apples.
 3. Toss with apple juice to coat.
 4. Combine flour, sugar, and oats in a bowl.
 5. Cut in butter using two knives until mixture is crumbly.
 6. Stir in almonds.
 7. Pour apple mixture into 8-inch square baking pan.
 8. Sprinkle with crumb mixture.
 9. Bake for 45 minutes or until topping turns golden brown.

Nutrition facts per serving: 190 calories; 8 g fat; 31 g carbohydrate; 2 g protein; 2 g fiber; 67 mg sodium

Source: www.extension.org

Source: Healthy Choices for Healthy Families