Healthy habits for healthy weights.

WIC Nutrition Education on the road to excellence

FiTKiDS=HAPPYKiDS

Healthy habits for healthy weight.

Give your family a precious gift — good health.

- **Play together inside or outside every day.**
- **Share regular meals and snacks together.**
- **Make family meals a special time to eat and talk together.**
- **Enjoy a delicious rainbow of fruits and veggies together.**
- **Drink milk and water at your meals and snacks.**
- **Turn off the TV and snuggle up to read together.**

Choose one to start the conversation:

1. **How do you feel about your child's weight and height? Do you feel like she/he is growing OK? Do you have any questions that I might be able to answer today?**

2. **I've always worried about my weight — and I really don't want my child to have that problem. Our whole family is trying to change our habits — so that our kids grow up healthy. Here's what we are doing — and it's really making a difference for us.**

Be likeable. Smile and show clients that you like them and understand that they want to be good parents.

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Healthy

How can routines help my family?

Regular meal and snack times make things easier for moms and dads. Kids eat better, too!

- Children need to eat often, like every 2 to 3 hours, but not in-between times.
- Plan for 5 to 6 child-sized meals or snacks a day.
- Children eat slowly – take the time to relax and enjoy this special time together.

Choose one to start the conversation:

1. **Starting routines can be hard with little kids. What kind of eating routines seem to work best for you and your child/children?**
2. **Regular eating routines (like bath and bedtime routines) help parents feel in control – and help children feel secure. Is this something that you have tried?**
3. **If you try making eating more routine, please let me know how it goes for you so I can pass your ideas on to other parents.**

Use emotion. Emphasize the security (for kids) and control (for parents) that come with routines.

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How can family meals help my child?

When you eat and talk together as a family, you teach your child verbal skills, table manners and your family values.

- **Give your child a gift — healthy meals at home — where you create routines and traditions that work best for your family.**
- **Eating at home is a win-win situation — your family gets more nutrition for less money.**

Choose one to start the conversation:

1. **Different families have different mealtime routines and traditions. My children like to use the plastic place mats they made at school. I'd love to hear more about the things you do to make everyday meals special times for your children.**

2. **We've been collecting ideas for easy home-cooked meals that save time and money. Do you have another idea that I could add to our list? Our best ideas always come from parents like you.**

Use emotion.
Discuss family meals as times for family bonding — and sharing family values.

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Meals

What are the best snacks for my child?

Wise moms and dads serve smart snacks so kids get the right nutrients to grow strong.

- **Mealtime foods make smart snacks:**
  - **Fruits and veggies**
  - **Bite-size cheese**
  - **Creamy yogurt**
  - **Low-sugar cereal and milk**
  - **Bread with peanut butter**
  - **Small pieces of leftovers**
- **Think of snacks as mini-meals — more nutrition to help your child grow, play and learn.**

Choose one to start the conversation:

1. **Snacks are an important part of everyday nutrition for kids. (And parents, too!) What food does your child like for snack time at home? How about at child care?**
2. **My kids love peanut butter on bananas. Do you have some easy ideas for smart snacks that I can pass on to other parents?**
3. **I have a list of "kid-tested" snacks from other parents that I can share with you. Do any of these look like they might work for your family?**

Give them exclusive information.
Circle one or two specific snacks on a written list.

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Which milk is best for my child?

Your baby depends on you for the best start possible — and the right milk makes a lifetime of difference.

- **Help children grow and glow with:**
  - **Breastmilk for as long as you can**
  - **Formula (if needed) under 1 year**
  - **Whole milk from 1 to 2 years**
  - **Low-fat or fat-free milk from 2 years and up**
- **Great parents pour nutrition into every glass — make it milk with meals (aim for 16 oz. a day).**

Choose one to start the conversation:

1. **Moms tell me that some kids love milk and can't get enough. Other children won't let the stuff touch their lips. What's the story with your child and drinking milk?**
2. **It's so tempting to serve Kool-aid® or soda at meals. What ways have you found to serve milk instead of high-sugar drinks?**
3. **If your child has problems digesting milk, what do you serve with meals? What other calcium-rich foods and drinks does she/he like?**

Be likeable. Be positive about current choices (like milk at breakfast) while suggesting changes (like serving milk at lunch and dinner).

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Milk

What drinks are best for my family?

Loving parents serve the best beverages – milk or water with every meal and snack.

- **Kids eat better when they get enough, but not too much, to drink. Most kids need:**
  - **16 oz. milk per day**
  - **4 to 6 oz. 100% juice per day**
- **For beautiful teeth and strong bodies, wise parents limit their children's intake of soft drinks, fruit punch, fruit drinks, sweet tea and other high-sugar drinks.**

Choose one to start the conversation:

1. **Parents often ask me how to keep kids from drinking so many high-sugar beverages (pop, soda, fruit punch, juice drinks, sweet tea, etc.). How have you helped your kids get into the milk and water habit?**
2. **Look at that beautiful smile – and all those gorgeous teeth! You must be taking really good care of your child's mouth. What kinds of things have you been doing for her/his teeth?**

Establish a common bond. Share your personal experience, like how you got your family to decrease their soft drink intake.

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Drinks

What's the best serving size for my child?

Small children need small servings.

- **Start small. Let your children decide if they want more to eat.**
- **Offer about 1 tablespoon of each food for every year of life.**
- **Order child-sized menu items or share meals when you eat out.**
- **Children's appetites vary from day to day. You decide what foods to serve; they decide how much or how little to eat.**

Choose one to start the conversation:

1. **How do you feel about the amount of food your child eats?**
2. **It's common to worry about how much your children eat; I know I did. How does your child let you know she/he is hungry? Full?**
3. **How do you help your child get enough, but not too much to eat?**
4. **Do you have any tips for other parents on using the right serving sizes for small children?**

Let them know what others are doing. Share a tip about child-sized servings from another parent — or your own experience.

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Serving

What cup is best for my child?

Kids love to drink from their own special kid-sized cups – 4 to 6 ounces is just right.

- **Wise parents limit the use of baby bottles, sippy cups and sport bottles – to protect their child's growing teeth.**
- **Small changes can make a big difference – the right-sized cup gives your child a chance to learn new skills.**

Choose one to start the conversation:

1. **Getting kids to switch from the breast (or the bottle) to a cup is frustrating for some parents. How is that going with your child? Do you have any helpful tips for other families?**

2. **Here is a cute cup that I found at a store for my child (or grandchild). Have you tried letting your child drink out of a cup like this? How did it go? What ways did you find to make it easier for her/him to use a cup?**

Get them to make a commitment. *Ask the client to make a commitment, like to buy and try a regular, child-sized cup.*

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How can my family eat more fruits & veggies?

Give your family nature's best — at least 5 juicy, crunchy, crispy, tasty fruits and vegetables every day.

- Simple ways to raise a veggie-lover:
  - Enjoy vegetables yourself.
  - Offer a rainbow of colors.
  - Make regular veggie snacks, like broccoli trees with dip.
  - Repeat new items many times so kids can learn to love them.
- Include lots of different choices — fresh, frozen and canned.

Choose one to start the conversation:

1. **Our food preferences start when we are very young. What do you remember about eating fruits and veggies when you were a child?**
2. **I found some good prices on produce at the store last week; the oranges were really juicy! What kinds of produce has your family been enjoying recently?**
3. **We're trying to help families serve more vegetables at snack time. Do you have any ideas for me to share with other parents?**

Make clients feel good about themselves. Compliment the client about current vegetable choices before making suggestions about possible changes.

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Fruits and

Why are kids "choosy" about food?

It's reassuring to know that picky eating (being choosy) and food "jags" are normal for little kids.

- Your child learns healthy eating habits from you:
  - Eat a variety of foods yourself.
  - Offer a few choices at one time.
  - Offer a new food with some familiar foods.
  - Do not pressure children to eat.
- Patience helps with pickiness — sometimes a child needs to try a new food 7 to 15 times before he/she accepts it.

Choose one to start the conversation:

1. How do you feel about your child's willingness to try new foods? Is she/he ever picky about eating certain things?
2. Kids love to imitate adults, so we can have a big impact on their eating. In what ways does your child seem to imitate your eating habits?
3. Parents know their children best. How do you help your child to try a new food?

Present situations as temporary. Reassure parents that children can grow out of a picky eating phase with their help.

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Choosiness

How can I help my child try new foods?

Your child needs YOU to learn healthy habits. You are the most important role model they have.

- **Children like foods less when they are forced to eat them.**
- **Calm mealtimes help children focus on food and eating:**
  - **Turn off TVs, and turn down music.**
  - **Use dishes and utensils that are the right size for your child.**
  - **Talk to kids about food, how you prepared it, and how it will help them grow strong and healthy.**

Choose one to start the conversation:

1. **How do mealtimes usually "feel" in your house? Calm and relaxed? Stressful and hectic?**
2. **As a mom, I know it can be hard to get kids interested in healthy foods. I wonder if you have any good ideas that I might be able to pass along to other families?**
3. **Here's a list of ways that other parents have found to make mealtimes work better for them. Do any of these sound like they might help you?**

Give them exclusive information. *Offer a list of ideas — and circle one or two that seem the most "do-able" for their family.*

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Do food bribes improve behavior?

Wise parents realize that food bribes usually backfire — and that they can make a child's behavior worse, not better.

- **Loving parents know that food nourishes healthy kids. That's why they never use food to punish children.**
- **You are the best reward for your child. Children love your time and attention — for doing special things, like reading together or just snuggling.**

Choose one to start the conversation:

1. **Parenting children can be a tough job — and it's easy to see why parents try to use food as a bribe for good behavior. What rewards, besides food, seem to work best in your family? Any helpful hints for other parents?**

2. **Learning how to set limits for kids is tough, too. Here's a list of tips that our parenting class has collected. Do any of these look like they might help you when you are having problems with your child's behavior?**

Be likeable. Make your clients feel welcomed, comfortable and relaxed before discussing sensitive issues about their children.

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How can being active help my family?

Play with your kids every day – fun for them, fun for you, too!

- **Playing with your child can help you manage your weight, too. It's a fun, easy way to be more active!**
- **Daily activity makes parenting easier. Active kids behave better and sleep better at nap time and at night.**
- **Get the whole family off on the right foot – take time to walk (and talk) together every day.**

Choose one to start the conversation:

1. **Our staff has been trying to be more active. I've been taking a couple of 10-minute walks during the day and I really feel better. Do you have any ways to squeeze activity into your busy days?**
2. **Playing together helps us stay close to our kids. What kinds of fun activities does your family like to do together? Have you found any good parks or other play places that I could tell other families about?**

Give them something they value. Share a list of safe places to play outdoors — circle the ones that are closest to the client's home.

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Why is TV-free time good for my family?

Turning off the TV gives you more special family time to talk, play, read or just snuggle up together.

- **Wise parents know that TV-free time is good for children's bodies, brains and behavior.**
- **Make more TV-free time for your kid's sake:**
  - **Take the TV out of the child's bedroom.**
  - **Turn off the TV during meals.**
  - **Aim for less than 2 hours per day.**

Choose one to start the conversation:

1. **How do you feel about the amount of TV, videos and games that your child usually watches? Does it feel about right or does it feel like too much sometimes?**
2. **Many families are looking for ways to cut back on the amount of TV that they watch. I've been trying to make some changes for my family too. What ways have you found to create TV-free times at your house?**

Get them to make a commitment. *Ask them to try one or two specific activities (like reading a book) when they turn off the TV.*

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TV-Free

For more information go to www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/sharing-center/index.html and click on: Fit Kids.

WIC GROWING HEALTHY FAMILIES

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