Eat
Young children like most healthy foods as much as they like processed and fast foods. Start introducing fresh fruits and vegetables when your kids are little. And avoid fast food as much as possible!

Play
Touch football, bike rides, walks to the park—there are a lot of ways you can get your kids moving and still have fun. Take some time this weekend to do a physical activity as a family!

Take a Minute
Kids need to take breaks and have alone time, too. Encourage your child to take 20 minutes each day to escape in a book. Or, make time to read to your child each day. Children are never too old to listen to a story read aloud.

• Eat a variety of foods.
• Feel better today.
• Stay healthy tomorrow.

about weight management in children...
• No two children are alike. And this applies to weight, too. Some children are naturally larger than others, and some are naturally smaller.
• Visit with your pediatrician to find out if your child needs a weight management plan. If so, follow your pediatrician’s recommendations.
• Once you have a plan, involve your child. It is easier for a child to lose weight if he or she is motivated.

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Weight Management in Children

Are you concerned about your child’s weight? If so, you’re not alone. One out of three children is overweight.

Why are so many children overweight today? Two reasons:

• They eat too much of the wrong foods.
• They don’t get enough exercise.

Did You Know?

• Children who are overweight can develop diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease.
• Children who are overweight can also develop joint and bone problems. They can also have trouble breathing and sleeping.
• Children who are overweight are more likely to be have weight problems as adults.

Help Your Children Make Health Food Choices

• Choose healthy well-balanced meals.
• Prepare low-fat, low-calorie meals.
• Be a good role model in your eating habits.
• Do not use food as a reward or punishment.
• Eat three meals a day and add healthy snacks.
• Be aware of hunger cues.
• Do not have a clean-plate policy.
• Watch portion sizes.
• Limit empty-nutrient, high-calorie snacks and beverages such as soda and candy.
• Try healthy desserts such as fresh fruit, low fat puddings, and yogurts.

Make Exercise Fun

• Encourage your children to try different kinds of physical activities.
• Make time every day for physical activity.
• Exercise as a family. Play Frisbee together!

Plan for Healthy Snacks

• Stock the refrigerator with healthy snacks. Try vegetables that are washed and cut. Place them in small snack bags for easy access. Include some reduced-fat dips or dressings.
• Choose whole grains such as reduced-fat popcorn, graham crackers, and low-fat oatmeal cookies.
• Add low-fat dairy products such as yogurt, skim milk, and string cheese.
• Discourage eating in front of the television.
• Encourage your kids to eat five servings of fruits and vegetables each day.

Dear Friend,

I come to you from your county Extension office. I can tell you many things about feeding and caring for your family. Come by or call the Extension office for free material!

Katie

Katie has brought food and nutrition tips to help Alabama families for nearly 50 years.