Your Child Will Feel Great by Playing, Laughing, & Eating Well

Every parent wants to see their child happy, wearing a big smile. One way to help your child feel good from the inside out is to encourage them to move their body every day.

Running, jumping, and playing often leads to smiling and laughing. It helps children get rid of stress and feel joy. They will develop a healthy habit, one that will help their body, mind, and spirit.

There are other ways to help your child feel their best. Try a few of these tips. Join your child. Your entire family will feel great!

Limit screen time

You can help your child take small steps to be more physically active. Limit their computer, television, and phone time, so they'll have more time to play!

If your child is going to watch TV or play computer games, break it up! Pause the game. Make commercial breaks into *"Move Breaks."* Make it fun!

- Jumping jacks
- Dancing
- Sit-ups and push-ups
- Jogging in place

Play actively every day

Have your child work up to playing actively for about two hours every day. Remember, it doesn't all need to happen at one time. Playing throughout the day all adds up. Join your child:

- Ride bikes.
- Run around the block.
- Play basketball.
- Walk the dog.
- Join a dance class.

Eat more fruits and vegetables

Your child's body needs many kinds of foods to grow up healthy. They need plenty of fruits and vegetables.

Here are some tips to help your child eat more fruits and vegetables:

- Give fruit as a snack. Give apples, strawberries, oranges, or grapes.
- Give veggies as a snack. Slice up some carrots, celery sticks, and cucumbers.
- Top cereal, oatmeal, or toast with strawberries, blueberries, or bananas.
- Keep it colorful – make a salad with a variety of veggies, like corn, carrots, and spinach.
- Try mixing vegetables into your child's favorite foods. Order a veggie pizza with toppings like green peppers and tomatoes.
- Let your child help you in the kitchen. Give them a special job, like stirring and adding ingredients. They will know they helped with the meal, and feel good about it.

If you need help getting fruits and vegetables for your family, please ask a tribal staff person or health care provider about local food resources.

Drink lots of water

Give your child plenty of water and low-fat milk (or non-dairy milk.)

- Give water instead of sugar-sweetened drinks, punch, soda, or juice.
- Add some lemon or cucumber to add flavor to water.
- Give low-fat milk instead of whole milk.

Try a few of these steps. Every day, try another step. You will be helping your child and your entire family feel better. You will be giving your child a healthy start on life. They will be developing good habits, ones to last a lifetime.

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