



IDEAS FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES!

Heart & Stroke Foundation of Ontario/YMCA Healthy Active Schools
www.ymcaofsimcoemuskoka.ca www.heartandstroke.com



Practical Ideas for Eating Healthier, Getting Active, and Building Assets

Supporting Each Other

Healthy living is much easier when we have a lot of support. When family members encourage each other to eat healthy and to be active, we're more likely to make healthy choices. Support each other by:

- Talking about healthy choices.
- Setting family health goals, such as taking a family walk four to five times a week (or more).
- Asking each other questions about health.
- Sharing your successes and struggles.
- Spending time together.



Eat Healthy Together

Try these ideas to eat healthy together:

- Eat a meal together at the table. Keep the TV off.
- Cook a meal together.
- Enjoy an extra serving of vegetables today.
- Incorporate something from each food group in your dinner preparation. Talk about the food groups and what food represents each.
- Manage portion sizes. (The ideal plate = 1/2 fruits and vegetables, 1/4 grain products, 1/4 meat or an alternative and a glass of milk.)



Get Active Together

Try these ideas to get active together:

- Take a family walk together.
- Chase each other around your home or neighbourhood.
- Visit a nearby park or playground.
- Encourage each other to be more active every day.



QUICK TIP

Listen proactively

to what your

children have

to say and respond

to what they

have to say.

Talk Together

Ask each other these three questions:

1. How can we best support each other to eat healthier?
2. Which physical activity would be fun to try as a family?
3. How can we help each other when we're tempted to make unhealthy choices?

Build Assets Together

Minneapolis-based Search Institute has identified 40 Developmental Assets that all kids need to succeed. Researchers have surveyed more than 2.2 million young people in Canada and the United States and have found that the more Developmental Assets that kids have, the more likely they are to make healthy choices.

Six Developmental Assets are key support assets. These include:

- #1 Family support—Family life provides high levels of love and support.
- #2 Positive family communication—Parent(s) and child communicate positively. Child feels comfortable seeking advice and counsel from parent(s).
- #3 Other adult relationships—Child receives support from adults other than her or his parent(s).
- #4 Caring neighbourhood—Child experiences caring neighbours.
- #5 Caring school climate—Relationships with teachers and peers provide a caring, encouraging environment.
- #6 Parent involvement in schooling—Parent(s) are actively involved in helping the child succeed in school.

Support each other in making healthy food and exercise choices by building these six key assets.

GOOD NEWS

68% of kids say that they have asset #1: family support.

CHALLENGING NEWS

28% of kids say they have asset #2: positive family communication.



YMCA

We build strong kids,
strong families, strong communities.