



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

Empowering Each Other

When we feel empowered, we know we can do the right thing. When we act empowered, we do the right thing. We're more likely to eat healthy and get physical activity when we are empowered to make healthy choices.

Empower each other by:

- Learning how to cook something new together.
- Visiting the library and researching new ideas for family physical activity.
- Participate in a 'Special' Physical Activity together as a family.
- Turning a household chore into a physical activity, such as dancing as you dust.
- Naming ways you help each other feel valuable and empowered.



Eat Healthy Together

Try these ideas to eat healthy together:

- Try a new food that you've never tried before.
- Have the kids plan an upcoming meal (Don't forget to use Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating when planning. For a free copy, visit www.eatwellbeactive.gc.ca.)
- Drink more water and less pop.



Get Active Together

Try these ideas to get active together:

- Do something outside. Build a snow fort. Walk in the rain. Jog in the park. Rake leaves.
- Play a game of tag or hide and seek.
- Ask your child to make up a game. Play it together.



QUICK TIP

Ask your child for
an idea of how
to make healthier
choices as a family.
Follow through and
make the idea
become a reality.



Talk Together

Ask each other these three questions:

1. How can we empower each other to be more active?
2. Which community service project would be fun to try as a family?
3. How can we value the effort each family member is making to eat healthy?

Build Assets Together

Minneapolis-based Search Institute discovered that when kids have more assets, they're more likely to:

- Act in positive ways that we value (such as making good health choices and succeeding in school)
- Avoid or resist risky behaviours (such as hitting someone or getting into trouble)
- Bounce back after difficulty (such as coping after getting hurt or suffering a loss)

Four Developmental Assets are key empowerment assets. These include:

- #7 Community values children—Child feels valued and appreciated by adults in the community.
- #8 Children as resources—Child is included in decisions at home and in the community.
- #9 Service to others—Child has opportunities to help others in the community.
- #10 Safety—Child feels safe at home, at school, and in his or her neighbourhood.

Empower each other to make healthy food and exercise choices by building these four key assets.

GOOD NEWS

51% of kids say that they have asset #10: safety.

CHALLENGING NEWS

22% of kids say they have asset #7: community values youth.