



# IDEAS FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES!

Heart & Stroke Foundation of Ontario/YMCA Healthy Active Schools  
[www.ymcaofsimcoemuskoka.ca](http://www.ymcaofsimcoemuskoka.ca) [www.heartandstroke.com](http://www.heartandstroke.com)



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

### Building Essential Skills

Helping your child build essential skills will help your child succeed in the future. Successful people have good people skills, and they also have personal skills that help them move forward, deal with difficulties, and reach their goals. Consider trying these ideas:

- Set health goals as a family. Set one eating goal, such as eating together as a family one more time this week than last. For a physical fitness goal, try a new activity or be active together for a longer period of time.
- Include others in eating healthy and physical activity. Invite an extended family member over for dinner **or to do a physical activity** with you.
- **Start exploring ACTIVE Summer camp options.**
- Broaden your eating habits. Try foods from another culture, such as Indian, Mexican, Chinese, Ethiopian, or Lebanese food.
- Resolve conflicts peacefully. Talk about your feelings. Don't use food as a way to comfort yourself when you're upset. Go for a walk or jog or do something else active when you have pent-up energy.
- Invent new rules for common games, such as tag, hide and seek, or relay races.



### Eat Healthy Together

Try these ideas to eat healthy together:

- Give family members healthy choices for food. For example, let your child choose between two food options: having cooked carrots or broccoli.
- Watch serving sizes. It's often tempting to make servings too large.
- Eat a healthy breakfast. Even if you're not hungry, try to eat at least a little.



### Get Active Together

Try these ideas to get active together:

- Walk your dog together. If you don't have a dog, ask a neighbour if you can walk his or her dog.
- **Visit your local conservation area and participate in outdoor education programming and seasonal activities.**
- **Plan a family getaway that is active.**



# QUICK TIP

Plan a meal. If you already plan meals, plan one meal together. With your children, create the menu, the shopping list, and then shop and cook together.

## Talk Together

Ask each other these three questions:

1. How do you decide what to eat for meals? For snacks?
2. Which friends help you make healthy eating and physical activity choices?
3. How does being angry affect how you eat and be active? What about when you're sad? Happy?

## Build Assets Together

To grow up well, children need essential skills. They need to have strong social skills so they can get along well with a diversity of people. They need skills that help them plan and make decisions. They need skills that help them resist danger and resolve conflicts peacefully.

Five Developmental Assets are key social competencies assets. These include:

- #32 Planning and decision making—Child thinks about decisions and is usually happy with results of her or his decisions.
- #33 Interpersonal competence—Child cares about and is affected by other people's feelings, enjoys making friends, and, when frustrated or angry, tries to calm her- or himself.
- #34 Cultural competence—Child knows and is comfortable with people of different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds and with her or his own cultural identity.
- #35 Resistance skills—Child can stay away from people who are likely get her or him in trouble and is able to say no to doing wrong or dangerous things.
- #36 Peaceful conflict resolution—Child seeks to resolve conflicts nonviolently.

Learn more to eat healthy and to stay active by building these five key assets.

## GOOD NEWS

45% of kids say that they have asset #33: interpersonal competence.

## CHALLENGING NEWS

29% of kids say they have asset #32: planning and decision making.



YMCA

We build strong kids,  
strong families, strong communities.