

8 to Live By

TRACK IT!

WEEK: _____

FOOD		SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
Breakfast	EVERY DAY!	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Fruits	EAT MORE!	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○
Veggies	EAT MORE	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○
Sweetened drinks	AIM FOR NONE!	★ ^{1 2} ₃	★ ^{1 2} ₃	★ ^{1 2} ₃	★ ^{1 2} ₃	★ ^{1 2} ₃	★ ^{1 2} ₃	★ ^{1 2} ₃
Low-fat milk	DRINK UP!	○○○	○○○	○○○	○○○	○○○	○○○	○○○
Water	DRINK UP!	○○○○ ○○○○	○○○○ ○○○○	○○○○ ○○○○	○○○○ ○○○○	○○○○ ○○○○	○○○○ ○○○○	○○○○ ○○○○

ACTIVITY		SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
Minutes of TV, video games, Internet	GO EASY!	○ # MINUTES	○ # MINUTES	○ # MINUTES	○ # MINUTES	○ # MINUTES	○ # MINUTES	○ # MINUTES
Minutes of activity: outside play, chores, family activities, walking to school, sports, and more...	REV IT UP!	○ # MINUTES	○ # MINUTES	○ # MINUTES	○ # MINUTES	○ # MINUTES	○ # MINUTES	○ # MINUTES

SUPPORT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
I ate dinner with my family this week on these days:	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Things my family and friends did that were helpful:	_____						
Things my family and friends did that were hurtful:	_____						

CELEBRATE things I did well this week: _____

NEW GOALS I will work on: _____

For more tracker pages, go to: RideoutHealth.org/RideoutHealthyKidsDownloads
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8 to Live By

HABIT BUILDER FOR KIDS, TEENS, AND FAMILIES



To reach and keep a healthy weight, build better habits together. The 8 habits prescribed below are the best place to start. Scientific studies show that these have the biggest impact on your weight, your health, and your outlook.

FOOD

1 ALWAYS EAT BREAKFAST — AND MAKE IT HEALTHY

- Eating a healthy breakfast can improve your memory, boost your creativity, raise your test scores — and help you reach and keep a healthy weight.
- Aim for breakfasts that include **3 of the 5 main food groups**. Try combos such as: (cereal + milk + juice) or (eggs + toast + milk) or (fruit + yogurt + bagel).

2 EAT MORE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- Fruits and vegetables are full of nutrients that help you learn and grow, prevent disease, and keep up your energy and mood. Studies show that they're important for a healthy body weight, too.
- Every day, aim to get **1 to 2 cups of fruit**, and **1½ to 3 cups of vegetables**.

3 LIMIT — OR ELIMINATE — SWEETENED DRINKS

- Studies suggest that America's weight problem is linked to America's "drinking problem" — that is, to our increasing intake of sweetened drinks like sodas and sports drinks. Sweetened drinks are also linked to weak bones and tooth decay.
- Aim for **less than 12 ounces per week** of soda, sports drinks, lemonade, and other sweetened drinks. Limit juice to less than 6 ounces per day. Drink water instead, and aim for 3 glasses of milk each day.

ACTIVITY

4 LIMIT SCREEN TIME (TV, VIDEO GAMES, INTERNET)

- Research links TV to a wide range of negative health effects in children and teens — including obesity.
- Make a rule of **no more than 1 to 2 hours a day** in front of a TV or computer screen. (Children age 2 and under shouldn't be watching at all.)

5 INCREASE YOUR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- Everyone needs regular physical activity — regardless of their shape, size, health, or age. Physical activity gives you better energy, stronger muscles, less stress, and easier weight management.
- Aim for **at least 60 minutes of physical activity** every day. You can get most of this from daily playtime, walking or biking to school, or family activities. The rest can come from sports or other exercise.

SUPPORT

6 EAT MEALS TOGETHER AS A FAMILY — SITTING DOWN

- Many studies have shown that children and teens who eat regular meals with their parents are more likely to eat in a balanced way, do well in school, and maintain a healthy weight.
- Aim to **eat dinner together** most nights of the week. Sit down at the table, turn the TV off, and enjoy!

7 BE POSITIVE ABOUT FOOD

- Experts agree that how you think and talk about food and bodies can have a big impact on your health now — and in the future.
- Forget "forbidden foods" — all foods can fit in a balanced diet. Don't give food as a reward or withhold it as a punishment. **Be food-friendly**, not food-phobic.

8 DON'T CRITICIZE ABOUT WEIGHT

- If you, your friends, or your family obsess about food or weight, you're more likely to have unhealthy behaviors — and an unhealthy body weight.
- Watch what you say. **Don't criticize** your own body — even as a joke. **Don't compare** your own weight, size, or shape to anyone else's. Being healthy means being positive.

STEP UP TO



EVERY DAY, AIM FOR:

- Less than 2 hours of screen time (TV, video games, Internet)
- 60 minutes or more of physical activity!



STRETCH & STRENGTHEN

STRETCH YOUR BODY EVERY DAY

Be gentle, patient, and persistent. Work stretching into everyday activities — or at least take time to stretch 2 to 3 times a week:

- Stretch before you get out of bed.
- Stretch before and after aerobic exercise or sports.
- Learn yoga or Pilates.
- Try martial arts or gymnastics.
- Dance or stretch to music (for toddlers, try “head, shoulders, knees and toes”).

BUILD STRENGTH

Add strength training 2 to 3 times a week.

- Use your own body weight — do push-ups, pull-ups, sit-ups, and knee bends.
- Sign up for personal training or work with a coach to learn good technique.
- Try light weights (or even soup cans) and do lots of repetitions. Teens and kids shouldn't use heavy weights unless a coach or other trained professional can help them lift safely.



START

BUILD A HEALTHY FOUNDATION

GET AEROBIC

Try to make 20-30 minutes of your daily activity vigorous and aerobic. Get your heart beating faster, and work up a sweat.

- **Outdoors:** bike, walk, run, hike, climb, skate, sled, cross-country ski, or jump rope.
- **Indoors:** rowing machine, stationary bike, treadmill, elliptical trainer, active arcade or video games (dance, boxing).

EASE INTO IT

If you have joint pain with walking or sports activities — or you're just starting from scratch — consider these low-impact activities first:

- Swimming or water play
- Stationary cycling
- Elliptical trainers

Need help? Find a personal trainer.

PLAY A SPORT OR JOIN A CLUB

You don't need to be a sports star. Pick up a game with friends and family.

- Check out options at your local parks and recreation center or at a health club or school.
- Try: basketball, tennis, soccer, flag football, hockey, lacrosse, softball, Ultimate Frisbee, swimming, dancing, cheerleading, volleyball, wrestling, or track.

REV IT UP



TURN OFF THE TV

Aim for less than 2 hours a day.

- Remove TV, computers, and game consoles from all bedrooms.
- Be firm about limits.
- Don't eat in front of the TV.
- Don't surf: schedule time in advance to watch your favorite shows.
- Exercise while you watch (treadmill, bike, commercial-calisthenics).

TRANSPORT YOURSELF

Try to spend less time in the car. Get some fresh air. Rely on your own 2 feet.

- Walk or ride your bike to school. Make it a daily routine.
- Walk or ride your bike to friends' houses, to the store, to movies, to lessons, to church, or to work.
- Ditch the stroller. Let toddlers walk along with you when possible.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator — always — up and down.

PLAY, PLAY, PLAY

Do more good old-fashioned, active play. No rules, no structure. Just have fun!

- Play tag, hopscotch, red-rover, or kickball.
- Throw a ball.
- Chase the dog.
- Look for bugs or play with dolls.
- Build things — towers of blocks, snowmen, or fortresses.
- Spend time at a playground, skate park, or rec center.
- Jump rope.

MAKE IT A FAMILY AFFAIR

Don't go it alone. Get the whole family involved. Make family activities part of your weekly routine.

- Do regular, active chores: vacuuming, raking leaves, mowing the lawn, sweeping the floor, washing windows.
- Take walks together after dinner.
- Play Ping-Pong, Frisbee, badminton, or croquet.
- Find active indoor games like Twister or balloon volleyball.
- Go bowling or mini golfing.



RIDEOUT HEALTH

For more information:

530 751-4268

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