



# 5-2-1-0

FOR PARENTS AND FAMILY

When talking to your children about their health, focus on healthy behaviors, NOT their weight. Healthy behaviors include **5-2-1-0**, setting structured mealtimes, eating less fast food, and getting enough sleep and physical activity.

## What is 5-2-1-0?

**5** Offer fruits and vegetables **five times** on most days.

**2** Limit TV and computer use (not related to school) to **two hours** or less a day.

**1** Get **one hour** or more of physical activity every day.

**0** Drink less sugar. Try water and low-fat milk instead of soda and drinks with lots of sugar.

## Why talk about 5-2-1-0?

It's a simple message, and you can easily reach at least one of the key goals. There are also strong scientific reasons that support each part of the **5-2-1-0** message.

### **5** Offer fruits and vegetables **five times** on most days.

A diet rich in fruits and vegetables provides vitamins and minerals. These are important for supporting growth and development, and for optimal immune function in children.

- Eat fruits and vegetables yourself.
- Make fruits and vegetables available at every meal.
- Try, try, and try again! It takes up to 20 exposures to a new food before children decide they like or don't like it.
- Be patient and persistent. Pressure usually backfires.

## **2 Reduce TV and computer use (not related to school) to **two hours** less a day**

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the average child watches 5 to 6 hours of television a day. Watching too much television is related to lower reading scores, attention problems, and an increase in overweight and obesity. The AAP recommends that children under age two not watch any TV. It also recommends no TV or computer in the room in which the child sleeps, and no more than 2 hours of screen time a day. Screen time includes time on computers, laptops, tablets, smart phones, and hand-held gaming devices that is not related to school.

## **1 Participate in **one hour** or more of physical activity every day**

Regular physical activity is important to maintain a healthy weight and prevent chronic health problems, like diabetes. While most school-age children are quite active, physical activity sharply declines during the teen years. Children who are raised in families with active lifestyles are more likely to stay active as adults.

## **0 Drink water and low-fat milk instead of soda and sugar-sweetened drinks**

Drinking sugar-sweetened beverages has increased over the past 20 years. This includes soda pop, sweetened teas, energy drinks, lemonade, flavored coffee drinks, punch, and commercial fruit smoothies. High intake among children is related to overweight/obesity, not drinking enough milk, and dental cavities. Save sugar-sweetened drinks like soda for special occasions.

## **For more information**

Visit the following websites for helpful information on healthy behaviors and children:

- [kp.org/children](http://kp.org/children)
- [ellynsatter.com](http://ellynsatter.com)
- [thefeedingdoctor.com](http://thefeedingdoctor.com)
- [dinnertogether.com](http://dinnertogether.com)
- [thefamilydinnerproject.com](http://thefamilydinnerproject.com)
- [letsmove.org](http://letsmove.org)