



**Eat Smart  
Move More**



We all want our children to grow up to be happy, healthy adults. But it can sometimes be hard to know how. Encouraging children to eat smart and move more is a great way to start.

The information in this booklet has been put together by health professionals and will help you help your child to eat well, move more and live longer.

Whatever their weight, it is important that children eat properly and get lots of exercise to help them build a healthy body. If they are overweight they are at greater risk of heart disease and diabetes in later life. If they are underweight it is just as important for them to eat healthy food and be active.

## **In Ireland, 1 in 4 children aged seven are either overweight or obese**



Staying a healthy weight is all about balance. Your child takes in energy through their food and their body uses up energy through physical activity. If the energy they take in is more than the energy they use they will put on weight and become overweight.

Follow the information in this booklet to help your child reach a healthier weight.

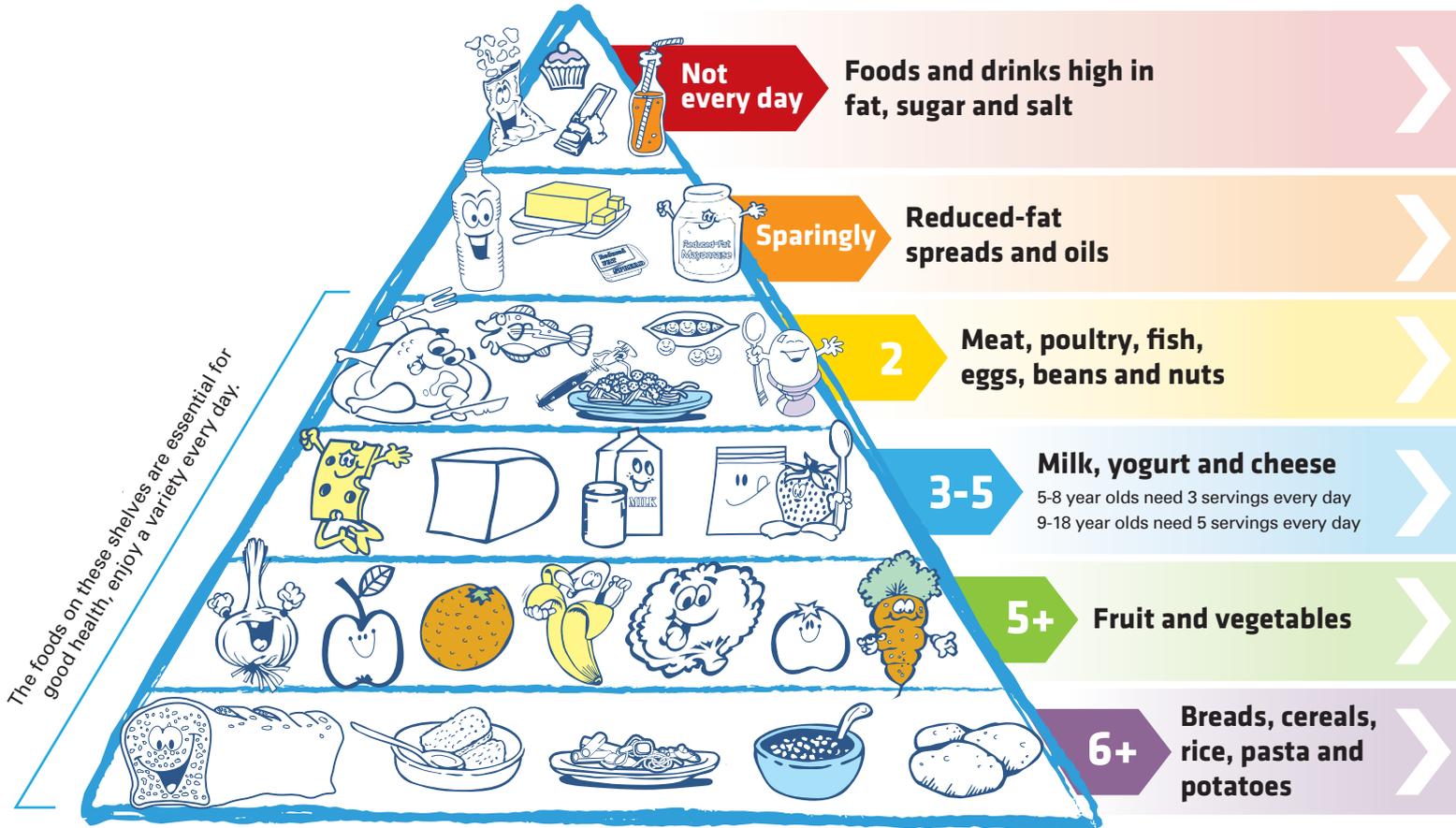
If you are concerned about your child's weight – speak with your School Nurse or GP.



# EAT SMART

Eating smart means eating different foods in the right amounts.

Use the Food Pyramid as a guide for choosing the right foods in the right amount for your child.



**Limit to sometimes,  
not every day.**

***Servings equivalent to approximately 100 calories:***

4 squares of chocolate, 1 chocolate biscuit or 2 plain biscuits  
1 small cup cake (no icing), ½ or 1 cereal bar (check the label)  
½ can or 200ml sugary drink, 1 bag lower-fat crisps  
1 scoop of vanilla ice-cream, 1 plain mini-muffin

**Use as little as possible.  
Choose reduced-fat or  
light spreads. Choose  
rapeseed, olive, canola,  
sunflower or corn oils.**

***One serving equals:***

1 portion pack of reduced fat spread for 2-3 slices of bread  
1 teaspoon of oil per person when cooking  
Mayonnaise and salad dressing also contain oil

**Choose lean meat  
and low-fat cooking  
methods (grilling, baking,  
steaming or boiling).  
Choose fish twice a week  
– oily fish is best.**

***One serving equals:***

The child's palm of the hand – width and depth without fingers and thumbs, shows how much meat, poultry or fish needed in a day  
2-3 dessertspoons of peas, beans or lentils  
1 egg

**Reduced-fat or low-fat  
varieties are best.**

***One serving equals:***

1 glass of milk (200ml) (skimmed milk is suitable from 5 years of age)  
1 carton yogurt (125g) or 1 yogurt drink (200ml)  
1 matchbox size (25g) hard or semi-hard cheese such as cheddar or edam  
50g soft cheese such as brie or camembert

**More is better.**

***One serving equals:***

1 kid-size medium fruit – apple, orange, pear or banana  
2 small fruits – plums, kiwis, mandarin oranges or a handful of grapes  
½ cup or 4 dessertspoons of cooked vegetables – fresh or frozen  
1 bowl of salad – lettuce, tomato, cucumber, 100ml unsweetened fruit juice

**Include in each meal.  
High fibre varieties  
are best.**

***One serving equals:***

1 thin slice of bread, 2 breakfast cereal wheat or oat biscuits  
3 dessertspoons of dry porridge oats or muesli  
4 dessertspoons of flake type breakfast cereal  
3 dessertspoons of cooked pasta, rice or noodles, 1 medium or 2 small potatoes

# PORTION CONTROL IS WEIGHT CONTROL

## Snack check

Many snacks are full of sugar, salt, fat and calories.

- › Keep count. You may be surprised how many sweets, crisps, biscuits and cakes your child eats in a day.
- › Cut down on top shelf foods. Allow them occasionally – not every day.
- › Don't use top shelf foods as rewards. Find different ways to reward your child – stickers, a trip to the park.
- › Don't forget that sometimes it is kinder to say no.

## Sugar swap

Swap sugary snacks and drinks for ones that are lower in sugar. It can make a big difference to calorie intake – and it is better for their teeth too.

- › Healthier snacks - fresh fruit and vegetables (apple slices, carrot sticks, baby tomatoes, bananas) or bread sticks.
- › Healthier drinks - water, semi-skimmed milk or diluted fresh fruit juice.
- › Healthier breakfast cereal - lower sugar cereals, fruit or toast.

## Me-size meals

It is important to make sure that children get just the right amount for their age – not too little and not too much.

- › Give them a portion that matches their size not the same amount of food as you.
- › Give smaller portions to begin with then let them ask for more if they're still hungry. Don't pressure them to eat all the food on their plate if they're full up.
- › When eating out – ask for kid-size portions.

## Cut back on fat

We all know too much fat is bad for us, but it is not always easy to know how to cut it out.

- › Cut down on top-shelf snack foods. Allow them occasionally – not every day.
- › Grill or bake food in the oven rather than frying. This will help cut fat content by as much as two-thirds.
- › Trim off any fat you can see from meat before cooking it. Take the skin off chicken and turkey.
- › Drain fat from meat after cooking.



# FOOD LABELS

To help understand what you and your family are eating you need to be able to make sense of food labels.

Healthy foods are low in fat, low in sugar, low in salt and high in fibre. Under EU food law, when nutrition information is given it must be presented as per 100g of food or drink.

**Check the label and get the right balance**

Some foods that are high in fibre may also be high in sugar and/or salt.



NUTRITION INFORMATION		
	■ Typical value per 100g	
	■ 30g serving with 125ml skimmed milk	
<b>ENERGY</b>	1580 kJ 372 kcal	725 kJ 171 kcal
<b>PROTEIN</b>	7g	7g
<b>CARBOHYDRATE</b> of which sugars starch	84g 8g 76g	31g 8g 23g
<b>FAT</b> of which saturates	0.9g 0.2g	2.5g 1.5g
<b>FIBRE</b>	3g	0.9g
<b>SODIUM SALT</b>	0.7g 1.8g	0.25g 0.7g

## SUGAR

Low-sugar = less than 5g per 100g

Sugar-free = no added or naturally occurring sugar

No added sugar = no extra sugar added

100g of some foods may be more or less than a typical serving

## FAT

Low-fat = less than 3g per 100g

Low-saturates = less than 1.5g

## SALT

Low-salt = 0.3g

## FIBRE

High-fibre = 6g or more per 100g

Look for products with the lowest % GDA - most people need to cut down on all these nutrients

Each portion contains

Calories	Sugars	Fat	Saturates	Sodium
112	2,5g	0,3g	Trace	0,2g
6%	3%	<1%	<1%	8%

of an adult's Guideline Daily Amount

**Many food companies choose to display Guideline Daily Amounts.**

These are most often presented for a serving or portion of food, not 100g.

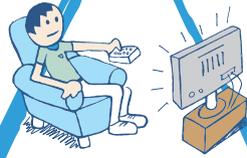
# MOVE MORE

Moving more means being physically active in a variety of ways.

Use the Activity Pyramid and Activity Table as a guide to the different type of activities your child can do to move more.

## Cut down on sedentary activities Limit screen time to a total of 1 hour per day

Screen time - playing games on computers/tablets/phones, watching TV/DVDs. Sitting down or lounging about.



## Aerobic activity

At least 20 minutes 2-3 times a week

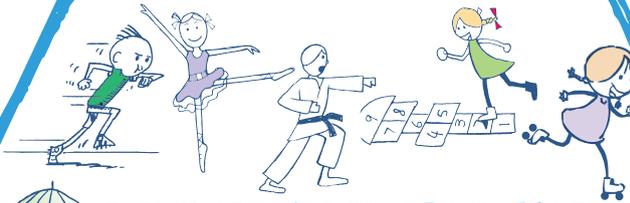
Team sports (gaelic football, hurling, soccer, rugby, basketball), swimming, tennis, skipping, playground games (chase, hide & seek), cycling



## Strength and flexibility

At least 3 times a week

Swinging on playground bars, climbing walls, hopscotch, skipping, jumping, running, ballet, gymnastics, yoga, martial arts.



## Be more active every day

Walking, cycling, active play - games involving movement, dancing, use stairs instead of the lift, help around the house, walk the dog.





## TYPE OF ACTIVITY

## EXAMPLES

### **Aerobic**

*Moderate intensity*

Cycling  
Brisk walking  
PE class  
Skateboarding or rollerblading  
Hiking  
Dancing  
Games of catch and throw

### **Aerobic**

*Vigorous intensity*

Active games involving running and chasing such as tag  
Cycling  
Jumping rope  
Martial arts, such as karate  
Running  
Vigorous dancing  
Sports such as gaelic football, hurling/camogie, soccer, rugby, basketball, swimming, tennis

### **Muscle strengthening**

Games such as tug of war  
Rope climbing  
Swinging or climbing on playground equipment or bars  
Climbing walls  
Sit-ups (curl-ups or crunches)  
Modified push-ups (with knees on the floor)

### **Bone strengthening**

Games such as hopscotch  
Hopping, skipping, jumping  
Jumping rope  
Running  
Sports such as gymnastics, basketball, volleyball, tennis



## 60 active minutes

It doesn't have to be all sport – running around and having active fun counts too. Children are naturally active so any amount of physical activity counts toward their 60 minutes.

- › Active play every day – hopscotch, hide and seek, dancing to music, cycling, tag, skipping.
- › Active treats – a trip to the park, playground or swimming pool.
- › Active travel – get them off the bus and out of the car – if it's walkable, walk it or cycle.
- › Organised activities – hurling, football, karate, dance, archery, community games.

## Make it enjoyable and fun

Include a variety of activities so getting more active doesn't become a chore.

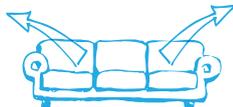
- › Join in – adults need to be active too.
- › Make a list of activities your child would like to try – check out [www.getirelandactive.ie](http://www.getirelandactive.ie) for details of these in your local area.
- › Allow your child to explore different activities so they find out what they like.



## Get up and about

Today's way of life means most of us spend too long sitting down.

- › Encourage your child to be active during their free time.
- › Try not to sit or lounge about for more than 30 minutes at a time.
- › Limit the amount of time your child can sit in front of a screen – TV/computer/tablet/phone. Set daily and weekly limits.
- › Get them running around after school. When the evenings are dark early, allow some playtime before homework.
- › Don't let the weather interfere – swap outdoor activities for indoor ones or wear suitable clothing.



## Getting more active

Children need to be physically active at a moderate intensity for at least 60 minutes a day. If your child is not used to being active regularly, what you consider a moderate intensity activity may feel like vigorous intensity to them.



## Start off slowly

Include an extra 15-30 minutes activity 1-2 days in your weekly routine. Gradually build this into your daily routine, adding activities over time until you reach your goal of at least 60 minutes a day.

### MODERATE ACTIVITY

Heart is beating faster than normal, breathing is harder than normal

### VIGOROUS ACTIVITY

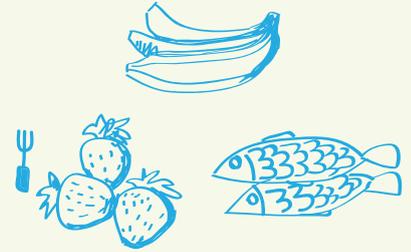
Heart is beating much faster than normal and breathing is much harder than normal



# PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

Use these exercises to help plan how to eat smarter and move more.

Fill in the food and activity pyramids below and when complete, compare your pyramids with the ones on pages 4 and 8.



## FOOD

Fill in everything your child ate yesterday. Try to include serving sizes and include all meals and snacks.

**Foods and drinks high in fat, sugar and salt**

**Reduced-fat spreads and oils**

**Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, beans and nuts**

**Milk, yogurt and cheese**

**Fruit and vegetables**

**Breads, cereals, rice, pasta and potatoes**

## What changes could you make?

1.

2.

3.

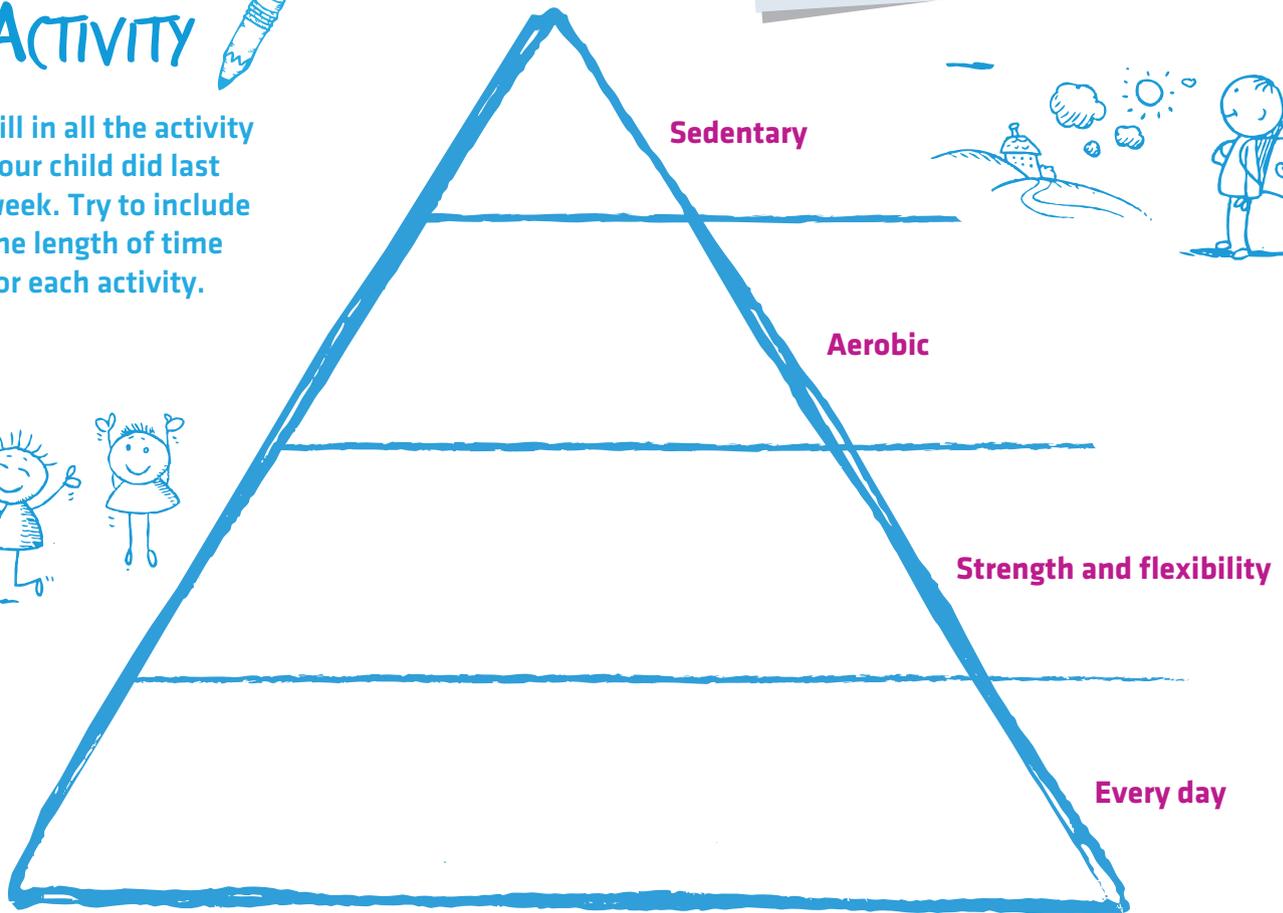
### Helpful tips

- > Pick one change at a time and work with your child to make it.
- > Get all the family involved – children learn best by example.
- > Use the Meal planner and Food exchange for healthy food tips.
- > Set goals and keep track of your progress – see page 18.

## ACTIVITY



Fill in all the activity your child did last week. Try to include the length of time for each activity.



# MEAL PLANNER

It is important for children to have regular meals as growing bodies respond better to routine.

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
<b>Breakfast at home</b>	1-2 cereal wheat biscuits with low-fat fortified milk. Add some fruit like berries/banana/raisins for variety	A bowl of cereal oat biscuits with low-fat fortified milk. Add some fruit like berries/banana/raisins for variety	A bowl of oat cereal with a teaspoon of nutmeg or cinnamon	A bowl of flake type cereal with low-fat fortified milk. Add banana for variety
<b>Breakfast on the run</b>	Banana or handful of raisins with a slice of toast and a low-fat yogurt drink	Banana, cereal bar, and a glass of low-fat fortified milk	Breakfast milkshake - 200ml low-fat fortified milk or a low-fat yogurt blended with fruit	Apple, a handful of dry cereal and a low-fat yogurt drink
<b>Snack (Little Break)</b>	Low-fat yogurt	Orange segments	Banana	Cheese
<b>Lunch</b>	2 slices of wholemeal bread with a low-fat cheese slice and tomato	Pita bread with cooked ham, low-fat mayonnaise, lettuce and cucumber	Tortilla wrap with a slice of chicken, relish and lettuce and a sliced apple	Cooked pasta with tuna, sweetcorn, spring onion and tomato ketchup
<b>Snack</b>	Fresh fruit	1 thin slice of fruit brack/ banana bread	2 rice cakes	Packet of plain popcorn
<b>Dinner</b>	Shepherd's pie with sweetcorn and green beans	Lamb curry with vegetables and boiled rice	Spaghetti bolognaise	Baked fish with vegetables and pasta



FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
A bowl of porridge needn't be boring. Add honey or yoghurt	Slice of wholemeal toast with baked beans or scrambled egg	Omelette with lots of fresh/frozen vegetables
Slice of wholemeal toast thinly spread with jam or reduced-fat spread		
Carrot sticks	Low-fat yogurt	Chopped apple
Brown roll with mashed hard boiled egg, lettuce, peppers and tomato	1 wholemeal bap with a lean grilled rasher, tomato and avocado	Cooked rice, lettuce, tomato, low-fat cheese or tuna
Sugar-free jelly	Small bowl of homemade soup	Low-fat yogurt
Roast breast of chicken (remove the skin), carrot, parsnip and broccoli with a jacket potato	Stir fried pork with peppers, mushrooms, onions and noodles	Chicken casserole with vegetables and boiled potato

**Try to organise around three regular mealtimes – breakfast, lunch, dinner.**

- > Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Don't skip it. Try getting up 15 minutes earlier so you have some time to wake up before breakfast.
- > Most schools have a healthy eating policy – your child cannot bring top-shelf foods. Include healthy snacks in lunchboxes.
- > Eat together whenever you can. Children copy parents, brothers, sisters and friends. When they see you eating lots of different, healthy foods they are more likely to do the same.
- > Involve your child in planning and preparing meals. They are more likely to eat foods they've helped prepare. For recipe ideas download 101 Square Meals from [www.healthpromotion.ie/publications/](http://www.healthpromotion.ie/publications/)

# LET'S FIND SOME HEALTHIER ALTERNATIVES AT THE FOOD EXCHANGE

## FATS AND OILS

### FOR A HEALTHIER OPTION WHY NOT...

- Butter > **use** half the amount of a mono/poly-unsaturated spread or reduced-fat spread
- Mayonnaise > **choose** low-fat mayonnaise or relish or chutney
- Salad dressing > **choose** reduced-fat dressing
- Vegetable oil > **use** a small amount of olive/canola/rapeseed oil

## MEAT, POULTRY, FISH

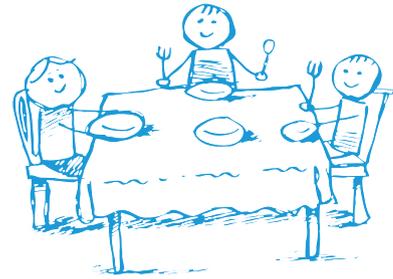
### FOR A HEALTHIER OPTION WHY NOT...

- Beef/lamb/bacon/pork > **choose** cuts with little visible fat and trim any remaining fat
- Chicken/turkey > **remove** all skin
- Tuna > **choose** tuna in brine
- Sausages > **choose** 80% meat/reduced-fat/vegetarian

## MILK, YOGURT AND CHEESE

### FOR A HEALTHIER OPTION WHY NOT...

- Yogurts > **choose** plain/fruit low-fat yogurt
- Cheese > **choose** reduced-fat cheeses or small amounts of lower fat cheeses e.g edam, mozzarella, brie
- Milk > **choose** low-fat, skimmed or fortified (added vitamins)



## FOOD HIGH IN FAT, SUGAR AND SALT

FOR A HEALTHIER OPTION WHY NOT...

REMEMBER -  
NOT EVERY  
DAY

- Crisps > **try** low-fat crisps, rice cakes or popcorn
- Chocolate > **choose** fun-sized chocolate bars
- Biscuits > **choose** low-fat/plain biscuits
- Hot chocolate > **choose** low-calorie hot chocolate or cocoa
- Chips > **choose** oven chips
- Ice-cream > **choose** low-fat frozen yoghurt/ice-cream/ ice-pops
- Cream > **choose** low-fat natural yogurt

## DRINKS

FOR A HEALTHIER OPTION WHY NOT...

IMPORTANT -  
fizzy drinks, including  
no added sugar versions,  
can damage teeth and  
bones

- All day > **choose** water or milk
- At meal times only > **choose** fresh fruit juice (100ml once a day), well diluted cordials (5 parts water to 1 part cordial)



# SET GOALS AND KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS

**Setting goals is a good way to stay motivated and keep track of your progress.**

Choose one change from your list on page 13.

Agree a goal with your child and a suitable weekly reward if they achieve the goal. The reward should not involve food. Choosing an active reward such as a trip to the playground is a good way to make moving more attractive and fun.

Suggestions for daily goals and reward could include the following:



## DAILY GOAL

- > Eat vegetables every day
- > Try one new piece of fruit
- > Walk for 20 minutes every day
- > Eat all meals at the kitchen table
- > Try a new after-school activity
- > Watch only one hour of TV each day

## WEEKLY REWARD

- > Trip to the playground
- > New colouring pencils or paint set
- > Go for a swim
- > Get a new book from the library

**Use the reward chart to record your goals and track your progress.**



# My REWARD CHART

Encourage your child to set food and activity goals each week.

Place a star in the food or activity boxes for each day the goal is achieved.



My goal is:

To achieve my goal I will:

My reward is:

FOOD	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
ACTIVITY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY



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