



NATIONAL CENTER ON  
Early Childhood Health and Wellness



# Wellness: Tools for Promoting Healthy Living

Wellness is an active process that requires awareness and directed, thoughtful attention to daily choices. Early learning programs play a critical role in helping children, families and staff implement healthy lifestyle changes that promote both physical and mental well-being. The two, in fact, are closely linked. Feelings, thoughts and behaviors directly affect health. Similarly, health has a direct effect on feelings, thoughts and behaviors. The following tools to help create a culture of wellness for young children and the adults who care for them.

## For Practitioners

These resources are developed for staff and consultants working in early childhood settings. Some resources may also be useful to families.

### Healthy Active Living

This web page compiles several resources that early childhood educators and staff can use when planning activities or when talking with families about healthy choices. Included are worksheets, posters, flipcharts, and fact sheets.



*Refer to the Reducing Stress and Promoting Resilience handouts for more wellness resources.*

### **[I Am Moving, I am Learning, Interactive Tool \[English only\]](#)**

The *I Am Moving, I Am Learning* tool is filled with quick and easy ideas for integrating movement, nutrition, and healthy habits into everyday life. It may be useful to home visitors, classroom teachers, and other caregivers.

### **[Let's Go! Child Care Toolkit](#)**

*Let's Go!* is working in schools, child care centers, after school programs, workplaces, and health care practices to ensure that healthy choices are the easiest choices. This toolkit provides resources for implementing a comprehensive program that encourages healthy eating, physical activity, screen time limits, staff wellness, breastfeeding, parent engagement, and other aspects of wellness.

### **[Little Voices for Healthy Choices](#)**

The Little Voices for Healthy Choices is a national initiative for Early Head Start and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs. It was developed to promote wellness in infants, toddlers, and expectant families. The initiative includes training and resources with strategies designed to address healthy nutrition, physical activity, brain development, and sleep for children birth to 3, their families, and communities.

### **[Embracing Health and Wellness](#)**

Learn about current research topics, best practices, and safety tips for Head Start and child care programs. Discover tips for supporting staff and engaging families on a variety of wellness topics.

### **[Program Approaches for Staff Wellness](#)**

Turnover in staff can be costly for programs and difficult for children. In this video, learn key factors that can help your program create an effective approach to supporting staff health and wellness.

### **[For Families](#)**

#### **[A Healthy Baby Begins with You \[.gov link – English only\]](#)**

An infant's survival and long-term health is influenced by many factors, including the mother's age, health status and behavior during and after pregnancy. This brochure provides practical tips for a healthy start for mothers and babies.

#### **[Health Tips for Families](#)**

These tip sheets help Head Start health managers provide important information to families. Available in 13 languages, tips are provided on active play, health literacy, healthy breathing, healthy eating, mental health, oral health, and safety and injury prevention.



### [Growing Healthy Family Postcard](#)

The message featured in this postcard provides suggestions for building healthy, active lives for everyone in the family. Staff can share this resource with parents to put on the refrigerator as a reminder to make healthy choices every day. [English and Spanish]

### [Growing Healthy Family Goals Worksheet](#) [\[English only\]](#)

Most parents know the benefit of teaching their children to eat healthy foods and encouraging them to exercise. However, that can be hard to do, especially when it feels like everything about your current lifestyle needs to change. Early learning program staff may use this worksheet with families to help them start behaviors that will improve the health and wellness of everyone at home. The 5-2-1-0 message provides suggestions for building healthy, active lives for everyone in the family.

### [Cues to Increase Positive Social-Emotional Interactions](#) [\[English and Spanish\]](#)

These tip sheets are designed to help support family mental wellness by encouraging routines-based positive social emotional interactions.

**GROWING HEALTHY**  
There are lots of ways to grow healthy  
but you don't have to do them all at once.

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**IDEAS FOR LIVING A HEALTHY ACTIVE LIFE**

- 5 Eat at least 5 fruits and vegetables a day.
- 2 Keep screen time (like TV, video games, computer) down to 2 hours or less per day.
- 1 Get 1 hour or more of physical activity every day.
- 0 Drink 0 sugar-sweetened drinks. Replace soda pop, sports drinks and even 100% fruit juice with milk or water.

**OUR GOAL FOR THIS MONTH IS TO:**  
Need help getting started? Turn this card over for more healthy ideas.

- Eat \_\_\_\_\_ fruits and vegetables a day.
- Limit screen time to \_\_\_\_\_ minutes a day.
- Get \_\_\_\_\_ minutes of physical activity a day.
- Limit sugary drinks to \_\_\_\_\_ a day.

Our plan: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Staff contact \_\_\_\_\_

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Adapted from the  
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Contact Us: The National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness welcomes your feedback as well as your suggestions for topics for future resources!  
Please forward your comments to: [health@ecetta.info](mailto:health@ecetta.info) or call us at 888-227-5125.

***School readiness begins with health!***