



Hints and tips for families to help form healthier habits

As a family, it is important to try and follow a healthy balanced diet, maintain a healthy weight and take regular exercise to help stay fit and healthy.

This blog aims to share some hints and tips to support your family's progress towards healthier habits.

5 top tips

There are a few simple things you can do to help your family follow a healthy balance diet:

1. Be careful about portion size- remember kid's tummies are smaller than adults
2. Try and find or buy some child-size plates and bowls- this will help children have the right portion size for their age
3. Have fewer dinners in front of the TV- TV can often distract you and may cause you and your family to eat too much
4. Eat together as a family
5. Make mealtimes fun- involve children in preparing food and choosing healthier options

How to reduce your family's sugar intake

Too much sugar in the diet can lead to weight gain and have an impact on teeth. Cutting down on sugary drinks and snacks will help to reduce the amount of sugar your family is having.

Hints and tips on how to achieve this include:

- Switching to lower-sugar cereals or those with no added sugar, e.g. porridge
- Replacing fizzy pop with water, milk or sugar free drinks
- Being careful about spreads- swap honey, jam or marmalade for banana or cream cheese
- Go for lower sugar options when choosing snacks, e.g. swapping biscuits or cakes for plain rice cakes or plain popcorn

How to encourage children to be more active

Having physical activity as part of your child's daily routine may help in getting your child to become more active. For example, walking part or all the way to school or getting involved in household chores. Completing activities as a family may also help and will improve everyone's health and wellbeing. For example, going swimming or taking walks in the park as a family.

How to reduce a child's time on video games

Reducing screen time will free up more time to be physically active and connect with friends and family. Having rules and making plans around how much time your child can spend in front of a screen can help reduce screentime. For example, working with your child to make a weekly plan of set times for playing video games and completing other activities can reduce screentime, while helping children feel like they have ownership over their daily routine.

For more information about tailored programmes to support a healthier lifestyle, contact the Health Trainer Service on healthtrainers@northumberland.gov.uk