



EAT
RIGHT
BE
ACTIVE

A Guide for Caregivers of
Children Ages 6 - 8



NUTRITION RESOURCE CENTRE

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Introduction

We all want the best for our children. We want them to grow up healthy and feeling great. This booklet can help. It is full of everyday ideas that you as a busy parent or caregiver can put into action so your 6 - 8 year old can eat well and be active.

You are an important role model for your child. At home, at school and in the community, all the efforts you make will add up to a healthier child.

Note: In this booklet, "child" refers to children 6 - 8 years old. Both "him" and "her" are used throughout to describe your child. "Caregiver" refers to parents, caregivers and anyone else involved in your child's care.

Is my child growing well?

Some children naturally grow faster or slower than others. If your child seems happy, looks healthy, is usually hungry at mealtimes and is active, she is likely doing fine.

What is most important is the overall growth pattern, not the height or weight at any one time. Ask about the growth pattern of your child when you are visiting his health care provider.

Help your child to feel good about their body by praising their strengths, abilities and unique personality, not their appearance. Also try not to criticize your own body or the way others look.

Growth depends on many factors

- Family - parents' size and shape
- Age - children grow fastest as babies and teenagers
- General health - medical conditions, illnesses, medications
- Gender - boys and girls have different growth patterns
- Eating habits - what and how much your child eats
- Activity level - how active your child is, and for how long

Adapted from: *A Health Professional's Guide for using the WHO Growth Charts for Canada*, Dietitians of Canada, 2014

GOOD TO
KNOW!

Eat right, be active quiz

Helping your child to eat well and be active may be easier than you think. Answer with a **Yes** or **No**.

1. Is it important to eat meals together with my child? Yes No

Mealtimes are a chance for your child to learn your good eating and social habits. Eat together as often as possible.

2. Should I be active with my child every day? Yes No

Set a healthy example that your child can follow by being active together every day. Walk to the store, play catch, kick a ball around, or go hiking on the weekend.

3. Is it a good idea to let my child decide how much to eat? Yes No

Trust your child's appetite. When he is growing faster, he will be hungrier; when he is growing more slowly, he will eat less. It is okay if he does not finish every meal. As a parent, your job is to decide what, when and where to offer food, and your child's job is to decide how much and whether they eat the food.

4. Does my child's school have an impact on her eating and physical activity habits? Yes No

Your child spends a lot of time at school. How her school approaches nutrition and physical activity can have a big impact on her health. Healthy celebration options, non-food fundraising, milk programs and physical activity programs are all things you can talk to her school about.

5. If my child eats three healthy meals, does he need snacks too? Yes No

Your child should eat every 2 ½ - 3 hours. One or two healthy snacks plus three meals a day should be enough for healthy growth, and provide the energy to be physically active. Some days your child will eat a lot, sometimes he will eat a little. Your child may decide to say no to a snack or meal, and this is ok. Skipping one meal or snack is no cause for concern.

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