Healthy Weight
Healthy Children
Healthier Child, Brighter Future
A healthy, active lifestyle helps your child look and feel his best

Complications of childhood obesity

Know your child’s Body Mass Index (BMI)

Cultivate healthy eating habits

Start by eating right

Choose healthy snacks

Reduce sweetened drinks

Cook more often at home

Make healthier choices when eating out

Shop wisely

Recipes
  • Apple Fried Rice
  • Spaghetti with Meatballs
  • Tuna Stuffed Tomato
  • Chicken-O-Wrap
  • Tangy Prawn Salad

Be active together

Look good and feel good

This resource guide is designed for parents with overweight children and should not replace the advice provided by your doctor or healthcare professionals.
A HEALTHY, ACTIVE LIFESTYLE HELPS YOUR CHILD LOOK AND FEEL HIS BEST
A healthy, active lifestyle helps your child look and feel his best.

At primary school, children learn and pick up new skills such as making friends, managing their pocket money and developing their own eating habits and lifestyles.

As parents, this is the best time to guide your children to adopt healthy eating habits and lifestyle practices so that they can grow up to be healthy adults.

Children who are inactive and have poor eating habits are more likely to gain weight.

For the sake of simplicity, he/his/him are used to represent both genders.
Being overweight or severely overweight, your child may have a higher risk of developing medical conditions such as:

- Type 2 diabetes
- High blood pressure
- High blood cholesterol
- Obstructive sleep apnoea
- Fatty liver disease
- Orthopaedic conditions (e.g. knee joint pain)
- Psychological problems such as poor body image, low self-esteem and confidence.

Hence, it is important to help your child manage his weight to prevent early onset of medical conditions.
Know your child’s

Body Mass Index (BMI)

**BMI** measures the relationship between a child’s height and weight and provides an estimate of the amount of fat in the body.

\[
\text{BMI} = \frac{\text{Weight (kg)}}{\text{Height (m)} \times \text{Height (m)}}
\]

The BMI for children has to be interpreted in relation to their age and gender using the BMI-for-age percentile tables. Look at the tables on page 8 to know your child’s weight status category.
## BMI-for-Age Percentiles (6-18 Years)

### BOYS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE (years)</th>
<th>SEVERELY UNDERWEIGHT (&lt; 3rd percentile)</th>
<th>UNDERWEIGHT (3rd to &lt; 5th percentiles)</th>
<th>ACCEPTABLE WEIGHT (5th to &lt; 90th percentiles)</th>
<th>OVERWEIGHT (90th to &lt; 97th percentiles)</th>
<th>SEVERELY OVERWEIGHT (≥ 97th percentile)</th>
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### GIRLS

<table>
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<th>AGE (years)</th>
<th>SEVERELY UNDERWEIGHT (&lt; 3rd percentile)</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
Helping your child to develop healthy eating habits and encouraging him to be active can help to slow down his weight gain.

Involve your child in setting realistic goals will motivate him to change his habits and behaviours.

Examples of dietary and physical activity goals:

- Eat 2 servings of fruit every day.
- Brisk walk to school every day.
CULTIVATE HEALTHY EATING HABITS
Cultivate healthy eating habits

Parents are responsible in providing healthy food. If you prepare healthy food, your child will most likely eat the food you prepare, as there are no other options available.

Eating meals together as a family. Your child is more likely to eat the food when he sees other family members enjoying the food.

Setting limits to foods that are high in fat, salt and sugar. Help your child understand that these foods are occasional treats and not to be eaten often.

Meal time is the best time to cultivate healthy eating habits.

- Encourage your child to eat slowly. If he eats fast, chances are he may overeat.
- If he comes home feeling hungry, let him drink a glass of water or a bowl of clear soup before he starts eating.
- Use smaller plates and bowls to serve food.
- Do not use food as reward or punishment. Using food as a reward will tempt your child to eat more of the food. Using food as a punishment may make your child dislike the food even more.
Eating Right

In order to ensure that your child gets all the nutrients he needs, use My Healthy Plate as a guide to teach him what to eat and how much to eat at each meal.

Fill a quarter of his plate with whole-grains

Whole-grain products such as brown rice, wholemeal bread and rolled oats contain vitamins (vitamins B and E), minerals (iron, zinc and magnesium), plant chemicals (lignans, phytosterols) and inulin (a type of dietary fibre).

Refined grain products such as white rice or white bread have gone through processing which removes the valuable nutrients that whole-grains have to offer. Consuming whole-grains can reduce the risk of developing heart disease and diabetes.

Fill a quarter of his plate with meat and others

Lean meats, chicken, fish, lentils, beans, tofu and nuts contain protein that helps to build and repair tissues in the body. Include calcium-rich foods such as milk, yoghurt, cheese, tofu, sardines and calcium-fortified soy milk in your child’s diet each day. Choose low-fat or non-fat dairy products more often than full-fat dairy products.

Choose water

Your child, aged 7-12 years, needs 6-8 glasses of water per day. The total fluid intake should be 7-9 glasses per day.

NOTE:
* One glass = 250ml
* Total fluid intake is the total amount of fluid intake from food (such as soup and porridge) and beverages (such as water and milk)
Choose water

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NOTE:
# One glass = 250ml

* Total fluid intake is the total amount of fluid intake from food (such as soup and porridge) and beverages (such as water and milk).

Fill half of his plate with fruit and vegetables

Fruit and vegetables are rich in dietary fibre, vitamins and minerals, and can lower the risk of developing heart disease, stroke and certain types of cancer. Eat a colourful variety of fruit and vegetables to get a variety of nutrients.

Be active!

Your child should aim for at least 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity every day to keep him fit and healthy.

Use healthier oils

Healthy fats should be included in the diet on a daily basis to help our body function at its best. Healthier oils such as canola, olive, soy, sunflower and peanut oils, consist of healthy fats that can decrease the risk of developing heart disease. Nuts are also good sources of healthy fat.
How much to eat in a day?

The table shows the ‘Recommended number of servings per day’ your child requires from each food group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Groups</th>
<th>Recommended number of servings per day for children aged 7 to 12 years old</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brown Rice and Wholemeal Bread</td>
<td>5 - 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat and Others of which Dairy foods or calcium-rich foods</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BROWN RICE AND WHOLEMEAL BREAD

What is an example of 1 serving of Brown Rice and Wholemeal Bread?

2 slices wholemeal bread (60g)  
½ bowl* whole-grain noodles, beehoon or spaghetti (100g)  
4 plain wholemeal crackers (40g)

½ bowl* brown rice (100g)  
2 wholemeal chapatis (60g)

1½ cups** whole-grain breakfast cereal (40g)  
¾ bowl* uncooked oatmeal (50g)

All weights listed are for edible portions only
* Rice bowl  ** 250ml cup
What is an example of 1 serving of Fruit?

1 small apple, orange, pear or mango (130g)
1 wedge papaya, pineapple or watermelon (130g)
10 grapes or longans (50g)
1 medium banana
¼ cup** dried fruit (40g)
1 glass* pure fruit juice (250ml)

All weights listed are for edible portions only
* 250ml glass ** 250ml cup
What is an example of 1 serving of Vegetables?

- ¼ round plate* cooked vegetables
- 150g raw leafy vegetables
- 100g raw non-leafy vegetables
- ¾ mug*** cooked leafy vegetables (100g)
- ¾ mug*** cooked non-leafy vegetables (100g)

All weights listed are for edible portions only

*** 250 mug • 10 inch plate
MEAT AND OTHERS

What is an example of 1 serving of Meat and Others?

1 palm-sized piece meat, fish or poultry (90g)
2 glasses* low-fat milk (500ml)
2 small blocks soft beancurd (170g)
5 medium prawns (90g)
¾ cup** cooked pulses (peas, beans, lentils) (120g)
3 eggs (150g)

All weights listed are for edible portions only
* 250ml glass ** 250ml cup
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Meal Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Breakfast | Breakfast cereal           | ¾ cup*** whole-grain cereal  
|         |                             | 1 glass*** low-fat milk                                                     |
| Snack   | 2 slices wholemeal bread   | with tuna and lettuce                                                      |
| Lunch   | Spaghetti                  | ¾ bowl** whole-grain spaghetti  
|         |                             | 4 tablespoons lean meat, minced  
|         |                             | 2 tablespoons low-fat cheese, grated  
|         |                             | ¾ mug*** tomato puree with carrot and broccoli  
|         |                             | ½ guava                                                                     |
| Snack   | Green bean soup, reduced  | ¼ cup cooked green beans                                                   |
| Dinner  | 1 bowl brown rice          |                                                                             |
|         | ¾ palm-sized piece         | stir-fried skinless chicken                                                 |
|         | ¾ mug spinach in           | ikan bilis soup                                                            |
|         | orange                     |                                                                             |

* All weights listed are for edible portions only  
** Rice bowl  *** 250ml
## Sample Menu B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Meal</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Breakfast</strong></td>
<td>Wholemeal toast</td>
<td>1 slice wholemeal bread, toasted 1 pan-fried egg with grated carrot 1 glass*** low-fat milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Snack</td>
<td>1 small wholemeal bean pau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lunch</strong></td>
<td>Chicken noodle soup</td>
<td>1 bowl** whole-grain noodles ½ palm-sized piece skinless chicken, shredded 3 medium prawns ¾ mug*** chye sim and bean sprouts 1 banana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Snack</td>
<td>1 small tub low-fat yoghurt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dinner</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 bowl brown rice 1 palm-sized piece fish with sweet and sour sauce ¼ plate* stir-fried broccoli with mushroom 1 small apple</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* All weights listed are for edible portions only  
** Rice bowl  *** 250ml  + 10 inch plate
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Meal</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td>Oatmeal with milk and fruit</td>
<td>¾ bowl uncooked oatmeal, ½ cup low-fat milk, 1 tablespoon raisins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snack</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 wholemeal biscuits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 bowl** brown rice, 1 palm-sized piece grilled chicken, skinless, ¼ plate* stir-fried long beans and cauliflower, 10 grapes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snack</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 glass*** low-fat milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dinner</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 wholemeal chapatis, ¾ cup*** dhal curry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vegetable salad with low-fat yoghurt</td>
<td>¾ mug*** carrots and cucumber, sliced, ½ mug low-fat yoghurt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*All weights listed are for edible portions only
**Rice bowl  ***250ml  *10 inch plate
Eat **healthy breakfast** every day

Eating a healthy breakfast helps children to:

- Concentrate and perform better at school
- Have more energy to do daily activities such as running and playing sports
- Manage their weight
Healthy breakfast ideas

Here are some healthy breakfast ideas for your child to start the day.

Tips to eating breakfast

- If your child says he is not hungry, give him a glass of low-fat milk or a fruit.
- If he is in a hurry, pack his food and let him eat on the way to school.
- Vary your choice of breakfast so that he will not be bored of eating the same food every day.
- If you have no time to prepare breakfast, give your child a bowl of whole-grain cereal with low-fat milk.
Bone up on calcium

Calcium helps to build strong, healthy bones and teeth.

Provide your child with one serving of dairy foods or other calcium-rich foods every day.

You can increase calcium intake in your child’s diet by adding:

- Low-fat yoghurt to whole-grain cereals, vegetable or fruit salads
- Low-fat cheese to sandwiches and wraps
- Low-fat milk to food dishes to replace coconut milk

Do you know...

One glass of low-fat flavoured milk contains 3 to 5 teaspoons of added sugar. Go for low-fat, plain milk instead.
Eating fruit and vegetables helps your child feel full so that he will not overeat.

Encourage your child to eat 2 servings of fruit and 2 servings of vegetables every day.

Tips to encourage your child to eat fruit and vegetables

- Involve your child in buying and preparing fruit and vegetables.
- Prepare fruit and vegetables in interesting colours, shapes and sizes to make them more appealing.
- Add vegetables to your child’s favourite dishes.
- If your child does not like a certain vegetable, encourage him to taste the food again and again. It may take up to many tries before the food is being accepted.
Choose healthy snacks

If your child feels hungry in between meals, you can:

- Offer him a healthy snack such as fruit, vegetable sticks (e.g. cucumber, carrot or celery), plain popcorn, low-fat milk or low-fat yoghurt.
- Serve snacks in small portion. Be aware that eating too much snacks on top of the three main meals may lead to weight gain.
- Choose snacks with the Healthier Choice Symbol (HCS) and eat them in moderation.
- Limit foods that are high in fat and sugar such as potato chips, cakes and cookies.

Try these snacks:

- Mixed fruit
- Vegetable salad
- Fruit smoothie with low-fat milk
- Steamed corn
Sweetened drinks are high in calories and contain very little nutritional value.

Fruit juice with added sugar and other sweetened drinks such as soft drinks, syrups, bubble tea and juice drinks should be limited.

Take a look at the amount of sugar in these sweetened drinks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approximate sugar content (in teaspoons**)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A 300ml can drink (with HCS*)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 300ml can drink (without HCS*)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 500ml bottle drink (with HCS*)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 500ml bottle drink (without HCS*)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*HCS = Healthier Choice Symbol  **1 teaspoon = 5g

**Tips to reduce sweetened drinks**
- Drink water instead of sweetened drinks.
- Share a drink with others or add water to half a glass of sweetened drink.
- Choose a packet or a can drink with HCS instead of a bottle.
- Avoid keeping sweetened drinks at home.

Encourage your child to bring a water bottle to school every day or whenever he goes out.
CHOOSE HEALTHY SNACKS

COOK MORE OFTEN AT HOME
Cooking at home is healthier than eating out as you can choose what goes into your meals. Try to prepare home-cooked meals as often as you can.

Tips to prepare healthy meals
• Use healthier cooking methods such as boiling, steaming, microwaving or stir-frying with less oil.
• Add more whole-grains, vegetables and fruit in your cooking.
• Remove visible fat and skin from meat and poultry before cooking.
• Limit processed meat such as sausages, ham, nuggets and luncheon meat as they are high in fat and salt.
• Season foods with herbs and spices such as onions, garlic, ginger or pepper instead of salt, sauces or stock cubes.

No time to cook at home?
• Prepare food in bulk, divide them into smaller portions and freeze them for other meals.
• Prepare one-dish meals by adding meat, fish and vegetables in noodle soup or spaghetti.
• Microwave meat and vegetables for a quick meal.
Make healthier choices when eating out

- Ask for less oil, salt and sugar in your food.
- Choose brown rice over white rice or flavoured rice (e.g. chicken rice, nasi lemak or nasi briyani).
- Limit the amount of sauces, gravies and salad dressings.
- Share the food with your child if the portion is too big.
- End the meal with a fruit instead of a sweet dessert.
Look at the calorie and fat content of some common hawker foods and fast food. Choose the healthier options.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choose these foods:</th>
<th>Instead of:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Calorie (kcal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 plain thosai with dhal curry</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 bowl fishball kway teow soup</td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 plate grilled skinless chicken chop with baked potato</td>
<td>392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and vegetable salad</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 plate brown rice with grilled skinless chicken</td>
<td>541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and stir-fried mixed vegetables</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 cheese burger, 1 cup corn and 1 small packet low-fat</td>
<td>459</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>milk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Brown rice with skinless chicken and mixed vegetables

Saves 6 teaspoons of fat!
Going to the supermarket with your child provides a good opportunity to teach him how to choose healthy foods.

Tips to shop wisely:

Prepare a list of items to buy at the supermarket. Do not be tempted to buy foods that are not on your list.

Avoid going to the supermarket on an empty stomach. This can reduce impulse buying of foods and drinks that are high in fat and sugar.

Involve your child in buying food. Teach him how to choose healthier food products with the Healthier Choice Symbol (HCS).

Do not give in to your child’s temptation. Tell him beforehand that you will only be shopping for foods that are on your list. If he asks for sweets, remind him that they are not on your list. Giving in to what he wants will encourage more of such behaviour in future.
APPLE FRIED RICE

Ingridents

1 ½ cups^ brown rice, cooked
150g skinless chicken fillet, cut into cubes
1 egg, beaten
½ cup green peas
1 small apple, diced
2 tablespoons oil*
1 small onion, finely chopped
1 clove garlic, finely chopped
Salt and pepper to taste

Method

1. Heat ½ tablespoon oil in a non-stick pan.
2. Stir-fry the beaten egg and set aside.
3. Heat the rest of the oil in the pan.
4. Add onion, garlic, chicken and stir-fry until partially cooked.
5. Add in rice, green peas and half portion of diced apple. Continue to cook for a few minutes.
7. Garnish with the remaining apple.

^ 1 cup = 250 ml

*Choose products with the Healthier Choice Symbol
## SPAGHETTI WITH MEATBALLS  
*Serves 2*

### Ingredients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For pan-frying</th>
<th>Meatballs</th>
<th>Tomato sauce</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 teaspoon oil*</td>
<td>1 ½ cup wholemeal spaghetti, cooked</td>
<td>1 tablespoon oil*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 tablespoon corn flour</td>
<td>150g lean meat, minced</td>
<td>3 large tomatoes, diced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¼ teaspoon salt</td>
<td>1 small square bean curd, mashed</td>
<td>3 shiitake mushrooms, diced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A sprinkle of pepper</td>
<td>½ small onion, finely chopped</td>
<td>½ cup broccoli, small florets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 clove garlic, finely chopped</td>
<td>1 tablespoon parsley, finely chopped</td>
<td>1 small onion, finely chopped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 tablespoon corn flour</td>
<td>1 tablespoon parsley</td>
<td>½ teaspoon paprika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¼ teaspoon salt</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 teaspoon oil*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A sprinkle of pepper</td>
<td>¼ cup water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Salt to taste</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Method

**Meatballs**
1. Mix all the ingredients.
2. Shape into meatballs.
3. Pan-fry the meatballs in a non-stick pan until golden brown and set aside.

**Tomato Sauce**
4. Heat oil in a non-stick pan.
5. Stir-fry onion until soft.
6. Add tomatoes, paprika and water. Stir well and cook until the tomatoes soften.
7. Add in broccoli and mushrooms. Simmer for 3-5 minutes.
8. Pour the tomato sauce over spaghetti and meatballs and serve.

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*Choose products with the Healthier Choice Symbol*
TUNA STUFFED TOMATO

Serves 2

**Ingredients**
- 2 large tomatoes
- 2 button mushrooms, diced
- ⅓ canned tuna in water*, drained and mashed
- 2 tablespoons oats
- 1 slice low-fat cheese*, cut into strips
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- ½ small onion, finely chopped
- 2 teaspoons oil*
- Salt and pepper to taste

**Method**
1. Cut tomatoes horizontally into halves and scoop out the pulp.
2. Mash the tomato pulp and set aside.
3. Put mushroom, garlic, onion and oil in a bowl and microwave for 1 minute.
4. Add tomato pulp, tuna and oats and mix well.
5. Stuff the mixture into the halved tomatoes.
6. Top with low-fat cheese.
7. Grill the stuffed tomatoes for 1 minute and serve.

*Choose products with the Healthier Choice Symbol
# CHICKEN-O-WRAP

**Serves 2**

## Ingredients
- 2 wholemeal wraps
- 120g skinless chicken fillet
- 2 large lettuce leaves, shredded
- ½ medium carrot, grated
- ¼ cucumber, cut into strips
- 2 teaspoons oyster sauce*
- 1 tablespoon honey mustard sauce

## Method
1. Marinate the chicken fillet with oyster sauce.
2. Microwave the fillet for 4 minutes on each side.
3. Shred the fillet into strips.
4. Microwave each wrap for 15 seconds or as instructed on the package.
5. Place lettuce, carrot and cucumber on the wrap.
6. Top with shredded chicken and honey mustard sauce.
7. Roll and serve.

*Choose products with the Healthier Choice Symbol*
### TANGY PRAWN SALAD

**Serves 2**

**Ingredients**
- 6 prawns, cooked, de-shelled and halved
- 4 lettuce leaves, shredded
- 1 large tomato, cut into thin slices
- 1 small apple, cut into strips
- 1 small orange, peeled and cut segments into halves
- 1 tablespoon walnuts, crushed

**Dressing**
- 1 teaspoon oil*
- 1 teaspoon lime juice
- 1 teaspoon honey
- Salt and pepper to taste

**Method**
1. Combine all the ingredients except walnuts.
2. Mix the ingredients for the dressing.
3. Pour the dressing over the salad and toss well.
4. Chill for 30 minutes.
5. Sprinkle with walnuts and serve.

*Choose products with the Healthier Choice Symbol
Being active in sports and games can help your child to:

- Improve academic performance and self-esteem
- Build strong bones and muscles
- Promote healthy weight
- Reduce stress and anxiety
- Develop leadership & teamwork skills

The physical activity recommendation for your child is to accumulate 60 minutes or more of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity every day. As part of the 60 minutes, vigorous-intensity physical activity should be incorporated at least 3 times per week, including those that strengthen muscles and bones.

Your child may need additional physical activity beyond the recommendations to achieve or maintain a healthy weight. Consult your doctor or healthcare professionals, where necessary.
Types of physical activities and intensities that are suitable for your child

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Intensity*</th>
<th>Types of Physical Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Moderate-intensity Activities | Ride on bicycle  
Swim  
Brisk walk | Rollerblade  
Physical Education (PE) |
| Vigorous-intensity Activities | Run  
Skip  
Dance | Swim  
Sport (e.g. basketball, soccer, martial arts, etc) |

Be safe while being active
- Avoid exercising when feeling unwell.
- Avoid outdoor exercise during the hottest time (10.30am to 3.30pm) and in adverse weather conditions.
- Dress in appropriate attire and footwear. Put on safety gear (helmet, knee guards, etc) if the activity requires it.
- Drink water before, during and after exercise.
- Do warm-up and cool-down activities to prevent injuries.

*Moderate-intensity* physical activity will cause a noticeable increase in breathing and heart rate such that your child is able to carry on a conversation but does not have enough breath to sing while engaging in the activity.

**Vigorous-intensity** physical activity will cause a large increase in breathing and heart rate such that your child is not able to carry on a conversation but is not out of breath while engaging in the activity.
Children who enjoy being physically active tend to stay active throughout their lives.

**Tips to increase physical activity**

- If your child has not been physically active, let him start slowly. Increase the intensity and frequency of the physical activity gradually as he gathers more stamina.
- Let him choose an activity he enjoys.
- Introduce simple props such as squashed paper balls, plastic plate Frisbee and water bottle lifting to keep him active.
- Enrol him in a sport in school, community club or sports centre.
- Encourage him to walk to school, take the stairs and do household chores.
Your child expends little energy when he sits in front of the television or plays computer games and this can lead to weight gain.

**Tips to limit sedentary entertainment screen time**

- Limit his total sedentary entertainment screen time (e.g. television and video games) to less than 2 hours each day.
- Avoid putting a television or computer in his room.
- Do not reward him with screen time. Reward him with an outdoor trip instead.
Look good and feel good

Having a positive body image means accepting and appreciating our body and feeling satisfied with our appearance. Having a poor body image may lead to low self-esteem and feelings of unhappiness.

As parents, you can help to foster a positive body image in your child. Here are some strategies to get you started:

• Demonstrate you love and accept your child regardless of his weight and appearance. Do not criticise or tease him.
• Teach your child that inner strength and qualities are more important than physical appearance.
• Help your child to appreciate his own body and emphasise the importance of healthy eating and physical activity in order to achieve a healthy weight.

If your child is being teased:

• Listen to your child and let him talk about how he feels.
• Explain to him that the teaser is trying to make fun of others to make himself feel better.
• Teach your child not to respond or show any emotions towards the teaser.
• If the teasing continues, report to the teacher.
• If a family member teases your child, explain that teasing will not help your child to lose weight but will affect his self-esteem.
Books from National Library Board

Healthy Choices, Healthy Children: A Guide to Raising Fit, Happy Kids

Abstract provided by publisher: This easy-to-use guide provides essential tools for raising well-nourished, active children who will make lifelong healthy choices. Engaging, practical, and filled with quick tips, this is a must read for the busy parent trying to navigate the challenging world of kids and food. An ideal book for parents, schools and community groups. Recipes are included.

The Monster Health Book: A Guide to Eating Healthy, Being Active & Feeling Great for Monsters & Kids!

Summary: Monsters need to stay in good shape in order to wreck havoc. Like them, kids also need nutrition and exercise. This well-rounded book gives children important information about food, sleep and physical exercise, to make healthy and wise choices. Children (and their inner monsters or angels) will appreciate the colourful illustrations, the fun facts and the humorous, casual style of this book.
Cool Exercise: Healthy & Fun Ways to Get Your Body Moving

Summary: This book introduces readers to the physical and mental benefits of exercising. Filled with colourful pictures and bite-sized information, it is a great book for children to learn how to use their time in everyday situations to develop strong bodies. Includes a Health journal to document creative ways of keeping fit, and a glossary that explains difficult words. Begin a healthy lifestyle today with the fun activities suggested in this book!

35 Things to Know to Raise Active Kids

Summary: This book gives 35 sporting activities that parents can introduce to their children. The writer recommends activities which range from traditional sports like basketball and tennis to everyday tasks like making household chores fun and walking in the mall. This is a useful and easy book to get more ideas to occupy children in a healthy way.
If you require more information or advice, please call Health Promotion Board’s HealthLine at 1800 223 1313 to speak to our nurse advisors or visit www.hpb.gov.sg

**Student Health Centre**
If your child has been identified as being severely overweight (BMI-for-age ≥97th percentile) by the school and is given an appointment to attend the medical assessment at the Student Health Centre, Health Promotion Board, please bring your child for this appointment.

If you prefer to bring your child to your family doctor, please cancel your child’s appointment at the Student Health Centre. Contact us at Tel: 6435-3895 or by Fax: 6438-7166; or Email: HPB_SHC@hpb.gov.sg

**Useful websites**

**HEALTH & SPORTING ACTIVITIES**
**ActiveSG**
www.myactivesg.com

**National Parks Board**
www.nparks.gov.sg

**COMMUNITY CLUBS**
**People’s Association**
63456163
www.one.pa.gov.sg

*All information and contact details in this book are accurate at the time of printing. This book is not meant for commercial sale.*
Healthier Child, Brighter Future

The Healthier Child, Brighter Future (HCBF) initiative is Health Promotion Board’s child health strategy. It aims to establish strong foundations of health and wellbeing for all children from the pre-natal stage of their lives and through their childhood years. HCBF is a call to action for parents like you to influence the health of your children and set them on the path to achieve their fullest potential. You will be equipped with knowledge and skills to provide your children with a healthy head start to a brighter future.

Cultivate healthy habits early. Set a healthy example.