



# GROWING HEALTHY KIDS TOGETHER

Working with Families to Promote Healthy Weight Behaviors



# WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

- At the end of this workshop, participants will be able to...
- Describe the role of child care staff in helping families address healthy weight behaviors
- Describe the key messages they can send home to families
- List strategies child care staff can use in communicating healthy weight information to families



# ACTIVITY

Please locate the handout:  
“How well does your facility communicate with parents?”

Think about each statement and how it relates to your child care facility.

## *How well does your facility communicate with parents?*

Think about each statement and how it relates to your child care facility. Choose either **YES** (1 point) or **NO** (0 points). Add up your score to determine how well you communicate with your parents.



We talk to parents as they pick up or drop off their child	1	0
We send home informational handouts	1	0
We hold family events and activities	1	0
We hold parent workshops on a variety of topics	1	0
We have a parent group that helps influence major decisions regarding the our physical environment and policies	1	0
When parents ask for information, we make sure to find appropriate resources	1	0

### HOW DID YOUR FACILITY DO?

**5-6 points:** EXCELLENT COMMUNICATION!!!!

**3-4 points:** GOOD, but there's room for improvement!

**1-2 points:** Try some of the techniques offered in this workshop

# WORKING WITH FAMILIES

- The role of child care is to provide quality care that contributes to a child's health and development
- Development of a healthy weight is an important goal shared with the family
- Developing communication between school and home can help meet the goal

# WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- More than 60% of adults and 20% of children are overweight
- Overweight children are twice as likely to become overweight adults
- Parents are probably the most important role models a child has in developing healthy (or unhealthy) behaviors



# WAYS TO REACH PARENTS

- Send home handouts or information packets
- Hold parent workshops
- Speak with parents at drop-off or pick-up times
- Organize family events and activities that your families can participate in
- Start a Parents Advisory Group

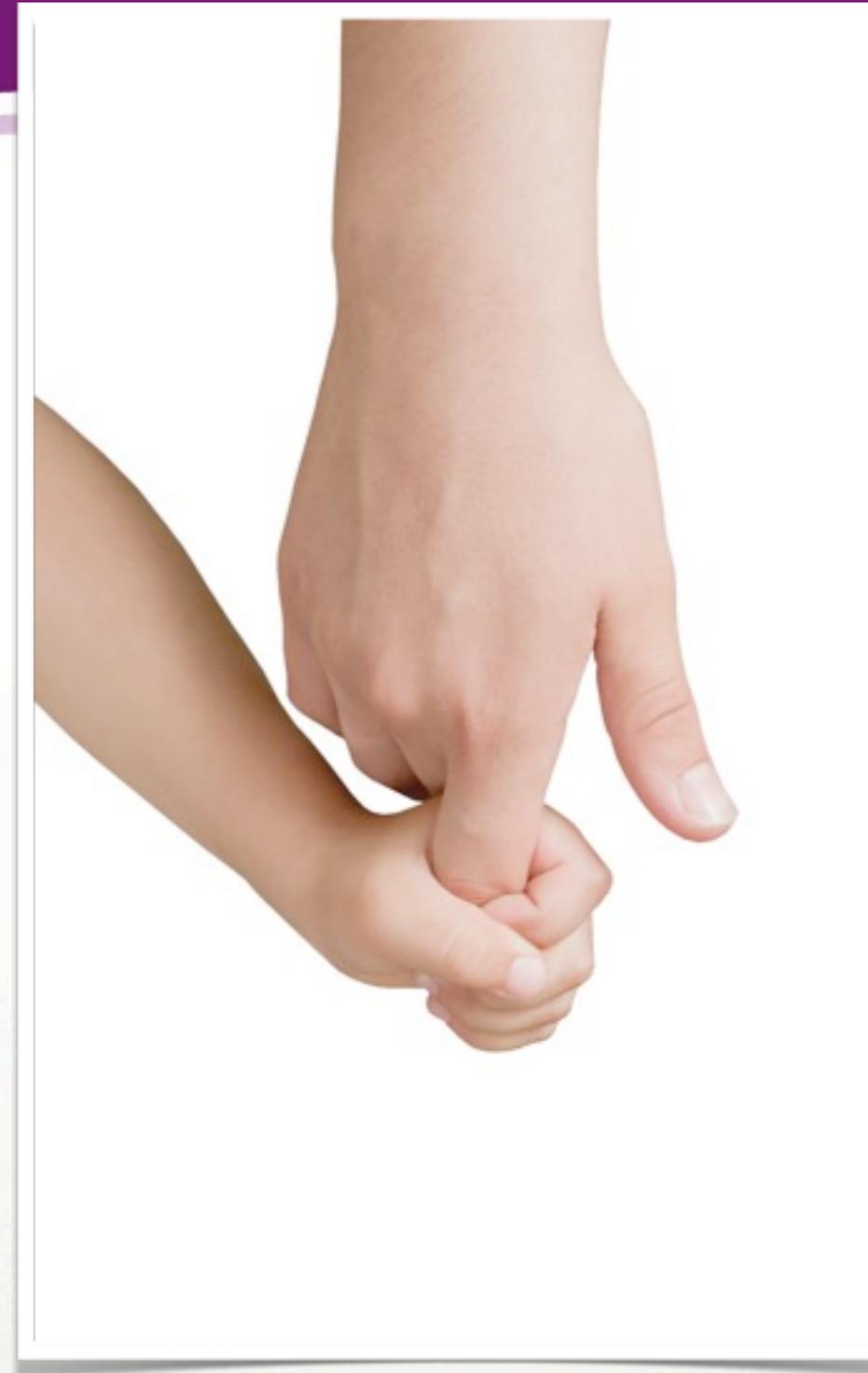
# TECHNIQUES FOR COMMUNICATION



- Be positive and encouraging
- Be careful not to sound judgmental
- Focus on goal-setting--be specific!

# KEY MESSAGES

- Healthy eating at home
- Increasing activity at home
- Keeping screen time in check
- Celebrating Healthy



# HEALTHY EATING AT HOME



# THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY MEALS

## **Family meals improve dietary quality and promote healthy weight**

- Increase intake of fruits, vegetables, grains, calcium-rich foods, protein, iron, fiber, and Vitamins A, c, E, B-6 and folate
- Lower intake of soft drinks and snack foods

## **Family meals lower risk-taking behaviors**

- Kids who eat dinner with their families 5 times a week or more are least likely to take drugs, feel depressed, or get into trouble

## **Family meals improve family relationships and emotional health**

- Emotionally content and positive peer relationships
- Work hard in school
- Improved family communication and stronger family ties

## **Family meals improve academic performance**

- Improved vocabularies and reading skills
- Improved achievement test scores
- Higher grades

# COMMON OBJECTIONS TO COOKING AT HOME:

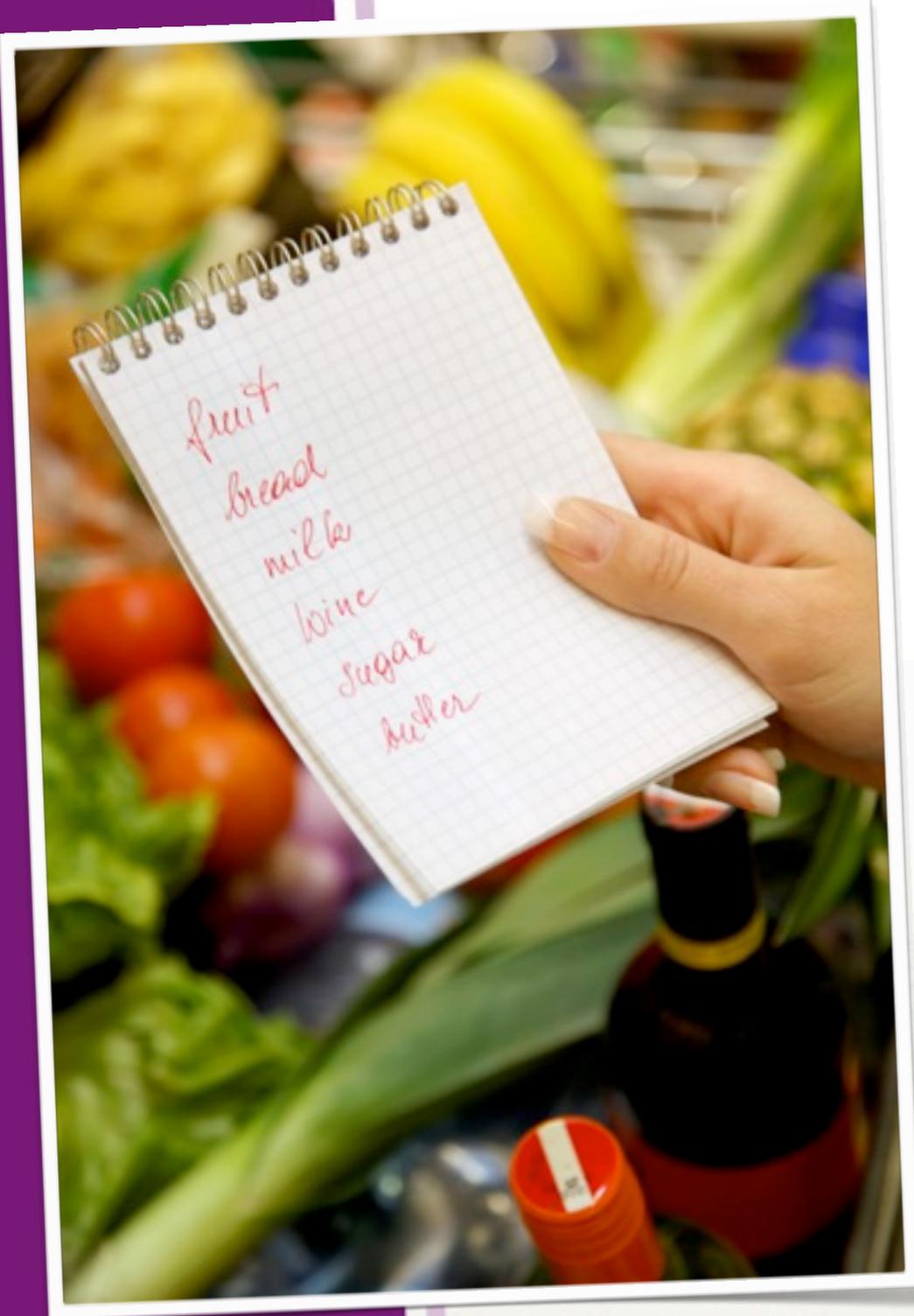
What are some barriers you think parents face to cooking at home?



# “I DON’T HAVE TIME”

A healthy, balanced meal can be prepared at home in about the same amount of time that it takes to order pizza or go through a drive-through.



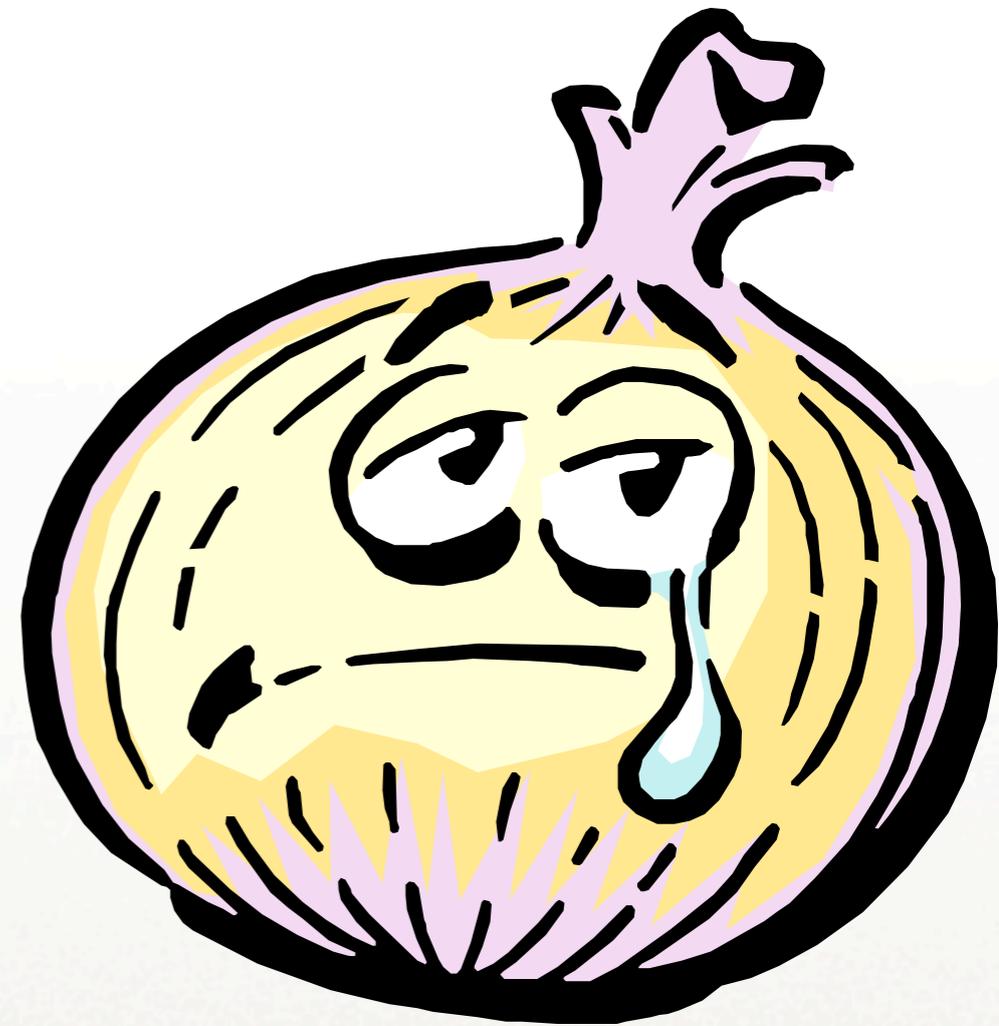


**“I NEVER HAVE  
WHAT I NEED”**

**Plan Ahead!!!**

# “MY FAMILY DOESN’T LIKE WHAT I FIX”

- Include everyone in meal planning
- Let children help with meal preparation
- Try healthier versions of fast-food favorites
- Keep lists of recipes that have worked well for your family



# “IT’S TOO EXPENSIVE”

- You can save a lot of money cooking at home!
- Watch for store sales, stock up on frozen foods
- If you eat fast food several times a week, you will **PAY** with your health!!



# “I DON’T KNOW HOW TO COOK”

- Anyone can do it!
- Start simple, it doesn’t have to be gourmet
- Find a few easy recipes to build your confidence, then get more creative



# HEALTHY EATING AT HOME

## Key Messages:

- Plan ahead!!
- Involve the whole family
- Meal time should be a happy time, enjoyed **TOGETHER** as a family
- Leave the TV off!!



# INCREASING ACTIVITY AT HOME



# INCREASING ACTIVITY AT HOME

- Every little bit counts!!
- You don't need a special place or special clothes
- Focus on play and fun
- Activity is important for every age, every size, all different levels of ability



# MENTION BENEFITS TO PARENTS:

- Stress Management
- Sleeping better
- Feeling better overall
- Improved self-esteem
- Healthy bones, muscles, and joints
- Weight control



# INCREASING ACTIVITY AT HOME

## Key Messages:

- Play and have fun as a family!
- Activity doesn't have to be strenuous and doesn't have to be all at once
- Every little bit counts!



# KEEPING SCREEN TIME IN CHECK



# KEEPING SCREEN TIME IN CHECK

- “Screen Time” is time spent watching TV, working at a computer, or playing video games
- TV tends to be used more by families with children
- Setting and keeping limits on TV watching and other screen time is important for staying healthy.



# KEEPING SCREEN TIME IN CHECK

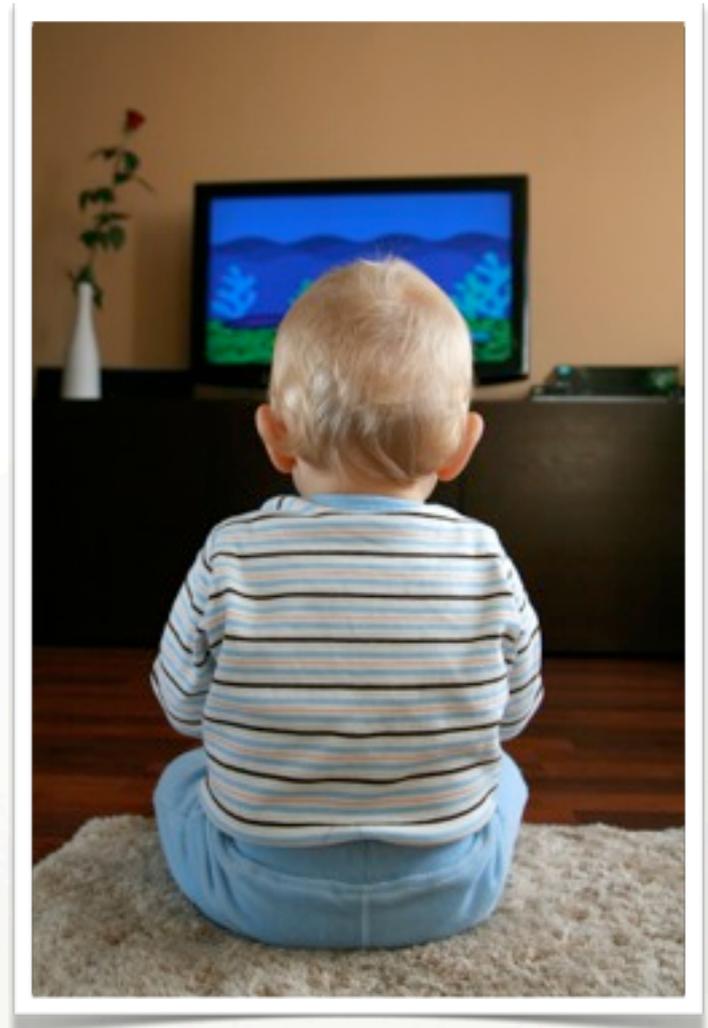
## Be informed!!

- 1-2 hours a day, maximum, recommended
- Most TV commercials targeting children advertise soft drinks, candy, sugar cereals, or fast food; this makes shopping harder!
- On average, American children spend 900 hours a year in school, and 1,023 hours a year watching TV



# KEEPING SCREEN TIME IN CHECK

- Kids who watch less do better in school
- Kids who watch more read less and do less homework.
- TV does not help children develop reading or social skills
- TV is thought to promote ADD in children.



# KEEPING SCREEN TIME IN CHECK

## DID YOU KNOW?

- 2 out of 3 children under 6 live in homes where the TV is usually left on at least half the time, even if no one is watching
- 1/3 of children under 6 live in homes where TV is on “almost all” or “most” of the time
- Children who live in homes where TV is on most of the time appear to read less than the other children and tend to be slower in learning how to read.

# KEEPING SCREEN TIME IN CHECK

**You don't have to give up TV entirely!**



**Just keep it under control! Here's how...**

# KEEPING SCREEN TIME IN CHECK

- Take TVs out of children's bedrooms
- Leave TV off during meal time
- Plan your TV watching each day.
- When you do watch, watch as a family. Talk about the characters you see and help your child learn from them.

**Set clear limits, and KEEP them!**





# KEEPING SCREEN TIME IN CHECK

**Make a list of activities you could do instead:**

- Put together a puzzle
- Go for a walk or bike ride
- Play “I Spy”
- Do an art project
- Play a board game
- Talk together about your day
- Play hide and seek
- Read a book
- Go to the park
- Play with your pet
- Play with toys

# KEEPING SCREEN TIME IN CHECK

## Key messages

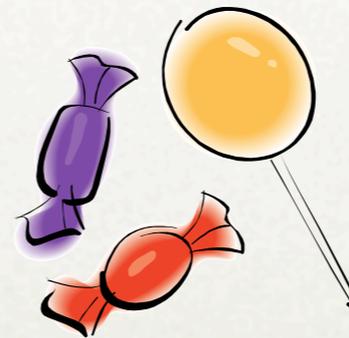
- No more than 1-2 hours of TOTAL screen time per day
- Set and keep limits on TV watching and other screen time activities
- Be informed about what your children are watching
- No TVs in bedrooms

# CELEBRATING HEALTHY



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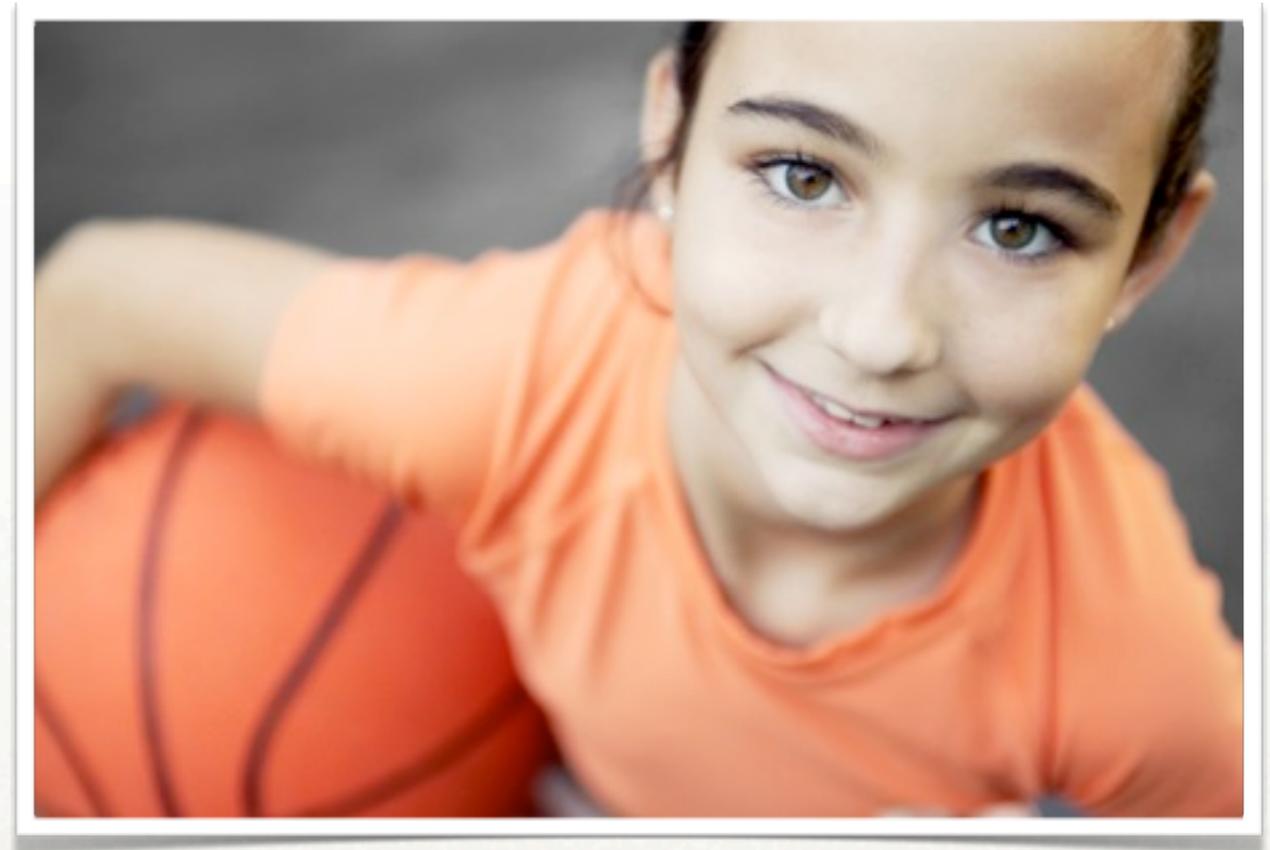
Parties and celebrations don't have to be centered around food.



# CELEBRATING HEALTHY

**Plan parties around activities such as:**

- Ice skating
- Kickball
- Swimming
- Slip 'n Slide
- Basketball
- Rollerblading
- Sledding



# CELEBRATING HEALTHY

- Offer fruits, cut up vegetables, and other healthy options along with less healthy treats
- Always include water in addition to other drinks, consider replacing sugar drinks with 100% juice
- Present healthy foods in fun, creative ways

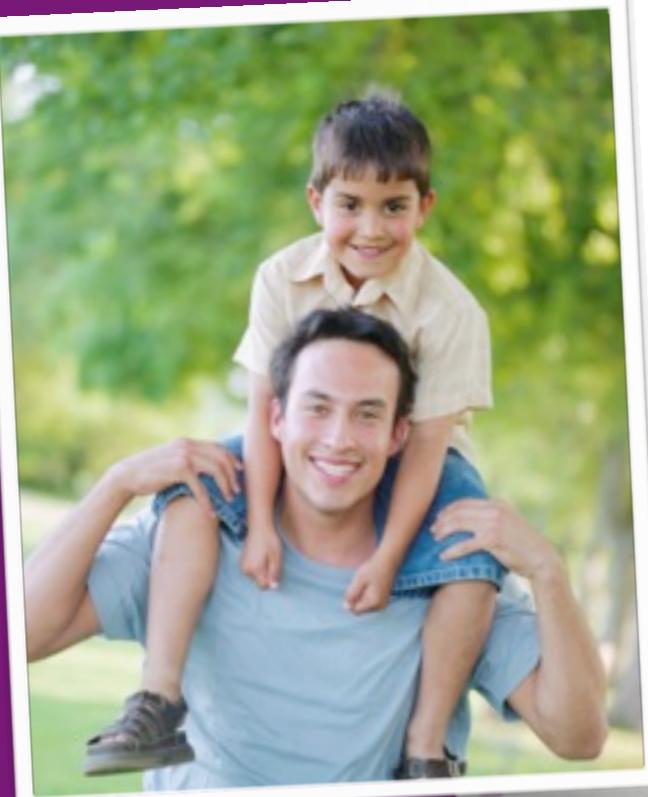


# CELEBRATING HEALTHY

## Key Messages

- Think outside the box for holidays and birthday celebrations. Move beyond cake and ice cream and plan an activity.
- Include healthy options such as fruit and vegetables and water instead of juice and soda for at parties.

# WHERE TO START



- There's no need to change everything at once
- Encourage parents to think about setting a few specific goals at a time
- Just increasing awareness makes a difference!

# ABOVE ALL...

- ENCOURAGE
- SUPPORT
- SUGGEST



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# ACTIVITY

## Building Healthy Families

- Brainstorm changes you would like to make in communicating healthy messages to parents and how you can achieve these changes.
- How can you reach out to parents to encourage healthy behaviors at home?



# SUMMARY

- Remember to be positive and encouraging when communicating with parents
- Encourage parents to eat healthy and be active at home, to keep screen time in check, and to celebrate healthy
- Try to think outside the box, be creative, and have fun!
- Remember, that together we can make a difference