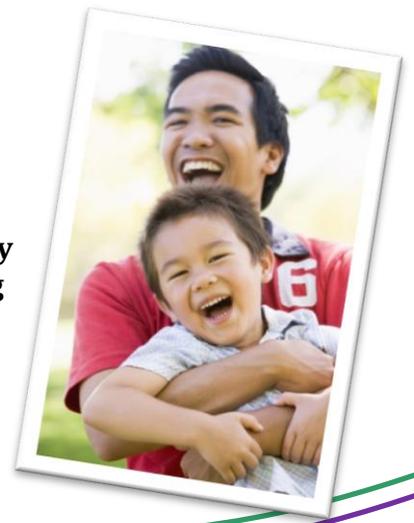


# Tips for Families: Rewarding Your Child

Your simple words of praise and support can help your child make healthy choices. As parents, we may sometimes focus on things a child does wrong instead of things a child does correct. Catch your child eating healthy foods or being active and encourage those healthy behaviors by giving frequent praise and meaningful rewards.



## 1 Say it Like You Mean it!

Be genuine with your praise.

## 2 Be Specific.

Make sure you tie the healthy behavior to the praise or reward so the child knows exactly why he or she is being rewarded. For example, "I love that you tried your broccoli today."

## 3 Make Sure the Reward is Special to the Child.

The reward does not have to cost money. The reward could be a hug or a pat on the back. Reward your child's healthy behavior with something that is special to him or her and this reward should encourage the child to behave the same way again.

## 4 Choose an Active Reward.

Reward your child with extra play time outside or with a fun activity like a family dance contest to increase your child's physical activity.

## 5 Reward the Behavior Right Away.

Giving praise or reward as close to the behavior as possible lets the child know exactly why she or he is being rewarded.

## 6 Avoid Using Food as a Reward.

Adults sometimes use food to bribe or reward their children for a certain behavior. Using food as a reward can make that food seem even better to children since they are having to do something they might not want to do (like try a new food) in order to get the food reward.

## 7 Stay Positive.

When trying to get your child to eat healthy or exercise more, use a positive tone to help increase your child's belief in his or her ability to make that behavior change.

## 8 Get the Family Involved.

The more people involved in providing support and encouragement for your child's healthy behavior change, the more likely you will see behavior change in your child.

## 9 Start a Sticker Chart.

Another fun way to encourage children to be healthy is to track their behavior with a sticker chart. Place a sticker on the chart every time they do a desired behavior like trying a new vegetable.

## 10 Be Consistent!

The more you can reinforce your child's healthy behavior, the more she or he will continue to make the same healthy choices.



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