



For People Who Care for Young Children

HEALTHY HEART MONTH

February is Healthy Heart Month sponsored by the American Heart Association. It's a good time to remind people about the importance of exercise and good nutrition. In so many places February is dreary month when we find ourselves inside with less chances to be active and often less motivation to eat healthy. This month we will share some information and ideas directly from the American Heart Association (www.americanheart.org) Here are their *Top Ways to Help Children Develop Healthy Habits*—adapted for caregivers from advice to parents.

1. Be a positive role model. If you're practicing healthy habits, it's a lot easier to convince children to do the same thing.
2. Plan times for everyone in your program to get moving together. Take walks, ride bikes, garden or just play hide-and-seek outside.
3. Limit TV, video game and computer time. These habits lead to a non-active lifestyle and too much snacking, which increase risks for obesity and cardiovascular disease.
4. Encourage children to do physical activities that they really enjoy. Every child is special.

Let children experiment with different activities until each finds something that he or she really loves doing. They'll stick with it longer if they love it.

5. Be supportive. Focus on the positive instead of the negative. Everyone likes to be praised for a job well done. Celebrate successes in physical activities and sports and help children develop a good self-image.
6. Set goals and limits such as one hour of physical activity a day or two desserts per week other than fruit. Never reward children with food. Candy and snacks as a reward encourage bad habits. Find other ways to celebrate good behavior.
7. Make meal time a special group time. When everyone sits down together to eat, there's less chance of children eating the wrong foods or snacking too much. Get kids involved in cooking and planning meals. Everyone develops good eating habits together.
8. Make a game of reading food labels. Children will learn what's good for their health and be more conscious of what they eat. It's a habit that helps change the way they eat for a lifetime.
9. Talk to parents about good

nutrition and exercise. Help parents make good food choices at home. Tell them to make sure that their children's health care providers are monitoring cardiovascular indicators such BMI, blood pressure and cholesterol.

**DON'T FORGET
 TO SIGN UP ON
 WWW.EVERYDAYTLC FOR
 THE CAREGIVER CLUB!**

THIS MONTH IN EVERYDAYTLC

- ▲ Shadows and Groundhogs
- ▲ Learn with the Olympics
- ▲ A Special Valentine's Day Story
- ▲ Books and Activities for President's Day

**Learn-At-Home Training:
 Observing and Recording**

