



Family Support Pack...

Making healthy lifestyle choices together

Introduction

Welcome to **your** Family Support Pack

This pack is here to support parents and carers in helping their children lead healthier, happier lives. It gives simple tips and fun ideas to help children eat well, move more, and feel good every day. The whole family can get involved.

Whether you are just starting your child's wellness journey or looking to build on the good habits you have already begun, this pack provides the tools, tips, and encouragement you need to create positive changes.

Being healthy is not just about food or exercise. It is about building a balanced lifestyle that supports physical, emotional, and social wellbeing.

Inside, you will find:

- Easy to read information, covering everything from healthy eating and active play to emotional wellbeing.
- Encouragement to create positive changes.
- Goals to try.
- Ideas to get involved in as a family.

Every child is different, so you can use this flexible pack in a way that works best for them. Let us work together to build healthy habits that your child can use now and as they grow.

More information

Visit our website:

www.wchc.nhs.uk/services/lets-talk/

Email the team:

wchc.lets.talk@nhs.net



Contents

Energy needs for children	4
Talking about healthy weight	6
Drinks and staying hydrated	8
Fibre	10
Portion sizes	12
Breakfast	14
Healthier packed lunches	16
Meal ideas	18
Snacks	20
Supermarket swaps	22
Oral health	24
Physical activity	26
The HENRY Programme	28
Self-help ideas	30
Signposting	32
Notes section / Family goals	34

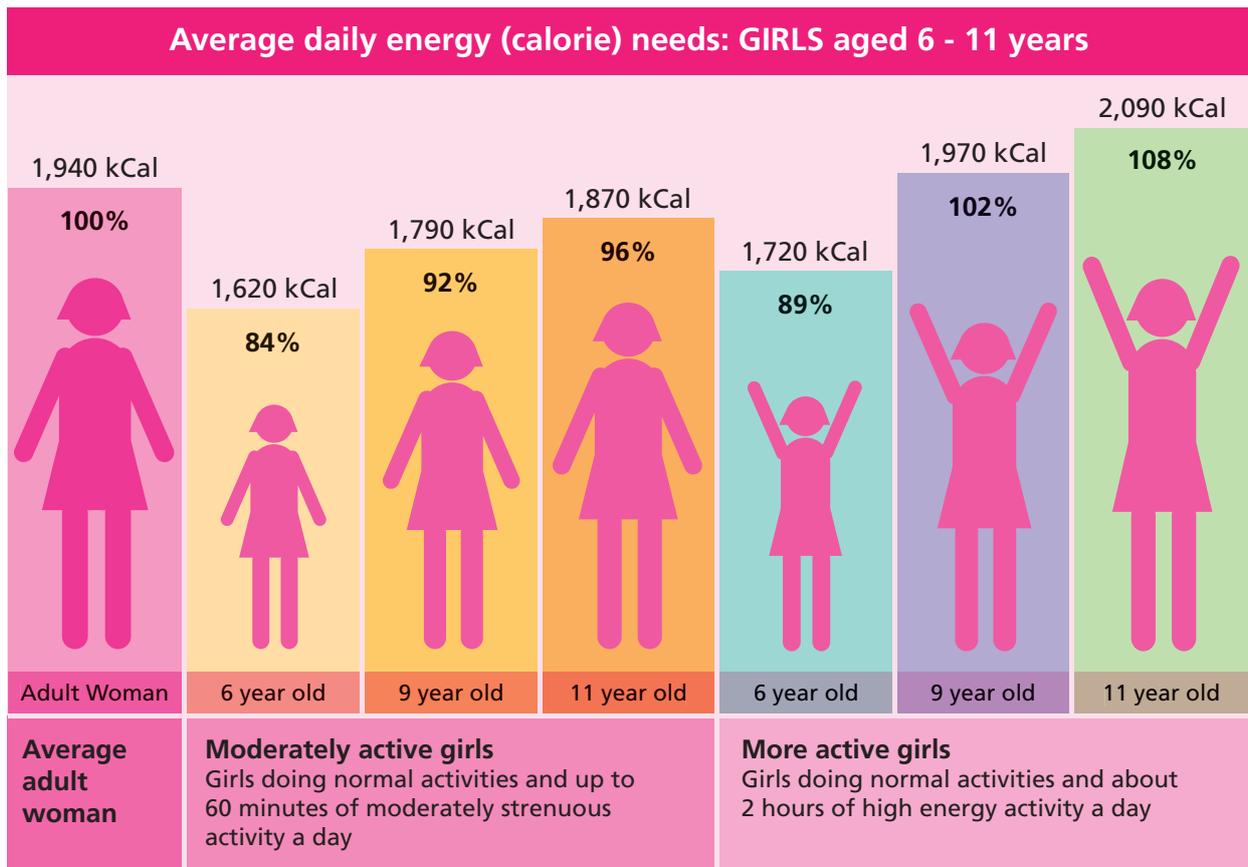
Energy needs for children

Children and teens need more energy than adults because they are still growing.

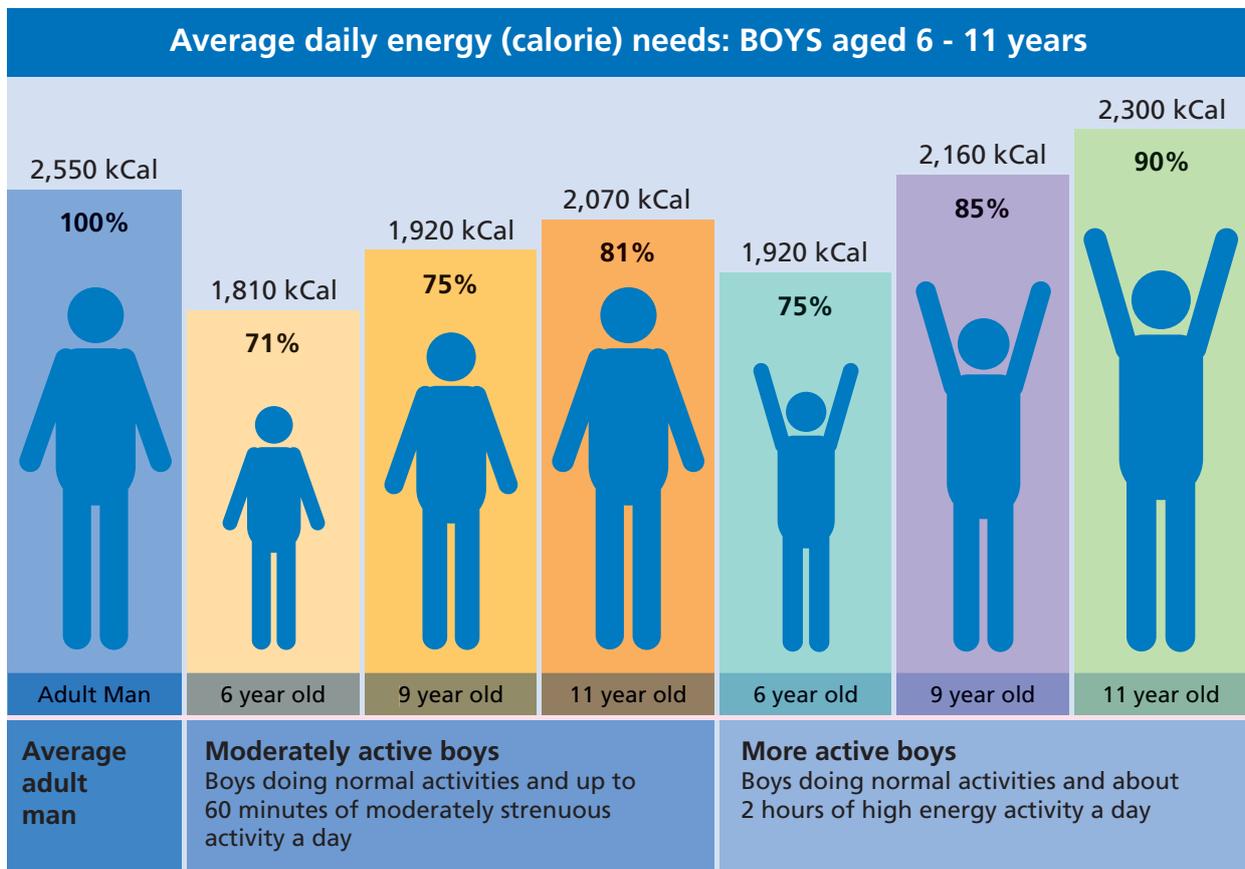
Children need to eat a mix of different healthy foods to help them grow, stay strong, feel good, and have energy to play and learn.

The diagrams below (from The Caroline Walker Trust) highlight the average daily energy needs of girls and boys aged 6 - 11 years.

They also compare how much energy kids need, to how much an adult needs. For example, an active 11-year-old girl needs a bit more energy than an average adult woman.



The percentage figures indicate the energy (calorie) needs as a percentage of the energy needs of an average adult woman.



The percentage figures indicate the energy (calorie) needs as a percentage of the energy needs of an average adult man.

Source:

The Caroline Walker Trust

www.cwt.org.uk

Additional information and support

Better Health: Healthier Families (NHS) - healthier food swaps

www.nhs.uk/healthier-families

British Nutrition Foundation

www.nutrition.org.uk

The Caroline Walker Trust

www.cwt.org.uk

NHS Food Scanner app - download via the App Store or Google Play

Talking about healthy weight

Talking openly about weight rather than avoiding the topic can help build trust and prevent it from feeling like something to be ashamed of.

Approaching conversations in a kind and supportive way can help children and young people feel good about their bodies.

The most important thing is that your child feels able to talk to you.

Some people prefer not to use the word 'weight' but to talk about **growth, health, exercise** or **healthy eating**. If this feels more comfortable for you and your child, that's absolutely fine. However, the word 'weight' shouldn't be treated as a banned or shameful term. Avoiding it completely can sometimes create unnecessary worry or stigma. If your child wants to talk about weight it's important to have open and supportive conversations.

It's important for your child to know that a certain weight doesn't always mean you are healthy, and that losing weight is the only way to improve your health. Explain to your child that we cannot know what a person is like based on how they look - just because someone is a smaller size does not mean they are kinder or more hard-working than someone who is larger.

Small conversations can work better than one 'big' talk.

Talk about growth and health where it comes up in everyday conversations and focus on these rather than weight itself.

Focus on the things your child can do to look after their health (keep active, eat their greens etc).

Don't feel you have to talk about everything in one go.



Pick times when it feels more natural to talk about food, activity or weight, eg:

- When cooking or food shopping.
- Reading a cereal box over breakfast.
- When it comes up on TV.
- When shopping for clothes.
- When a child talks about their own or someone else's size.
- When talking about what your child has done at school.

Remember, children look to their parents / carers first for guidance. You are important in helping them make sense of things.

Source: Talking to your child about weight: a guide for parents and caregivers of children aged 4-11 years. University of Bath. www.bath.ac.uk



Additional information and support

Better Health: Healthier Families

www.nhs.uk/healthier-families (children's weight)

Drinks and staying hydrated

Whilst water is the preferred drink to keep you hydrated, other drinks also count towards your fluid intake. We also get some fluids from the foods we eat.

The amount of fluid a child / teenager needs depends on many factors, but generally they should aim to drink about 6-8 glasses of fluid a day, using smaller glasses (150-200ml) for younger children. This is based on recommendations on fluid intake for children from the European Food Safety Authority.

The best drinks to give children are water and milk. Children should limit sugary fizzy drinks, squash and juice drinks. Children who drink a lot of sugary drinks are more likely to become overweight. The added sugar in these drinks can also damage teeth.

Tips for healthy hydration

Drink plenty

Water is a good choice throughout the day because it hydrates without providing extra energy (calories/kilojoules) or harming teeth.

Have regularly

Milk is a useful source of nutrients, especially protein, B vitamins, iodine and calcium. Most children can have lower-fat milks such as skimmed, 1% or semi-skimmed.

Occasionally

Sugar-free drinks hydrate without adding extra sugars, but it's a good idea for most drinks to be milk or water. Fizzy drinks may contain acids that can be harmful to teeth. Be aware that some of these drinks contain caffeine.



Occasionally (and in small amounts if caffeinated)

Tea and coffee - caffeine is naturally present in tea and coffee. Small amounts are harmless, but high intakes should be avoided, especially for young children. It's best for children to drink decaffeinated tea and coffee with reduced-fat milk and no added sugar.

Avoid

Sugary drinks - are best limited as they contain sugars, but few other nutrients. Fizzy/sugar-free drinks may contain acids that can also be harmful to teeth and some soft drinks contain caffeine.

Not suitable for children

Sports and energy drinks - can be high in sugars and may contain high levels of caffeine or other stimulants. These drinks are **not suitable** for young children.

Source: British Nutrition Foundation



Additional information and support

Save kids from sugar

See how your child's sugar adds up with the quick and easy sugar check. www.savekidsfromsugar.co.uk

Better Health: Healthier Families | Healthier drink swaps

www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/

Fibre

Most of us need to eat more fibre and have fewer added sugars in our diet. Choosing foods with fibre makes us feel fuller, and a diet rich in fibre can help digestion and prevent constipation.

Tips to increase your fibre intake

It's important to get fibre from a variety of sources, as eating too much of one type of food may not provide you with a healthy balanced diet.

Consider:

- Higher-fibre breakfast cereal such as plain wholewheat biscuits (like Weetabix) or plain shredded whole grain (like Shredded Wheat), or porridge as oats are also a good source of fibre.
- Wholemeal or granary breads, or higher fibre white bread.
- Wholegrains like wholewheat pasta, bulgur wheat or brown rice.
- Potatoes with their skins on, such as a baked potato or boiled new potatoes.
- Adding pulses, beans, lentils or chickpeas to stews, curries and salads.
- Plenty of vegetables with meals, either as a side dish or added to sauces, stews or curries.
- Have some fresh or dried fruit as part of a meal, or fruit canned in natural juice for dessert.
- Snacks - fresh fruit, vegetable sticks, rye crackers, oatcakes and unsalted nuts or seeds.



Try these fibre swaps from the British Nutrition Foundation

Lower fibre choice	Fibre (g)	Higher fibre choice	Fibre (g)	
Breakfast Orange juice White toast (2 slices) with jam	1.6g	Breakfast An orange Wholemeal toast (2 slices) with peanut butter	8.3g	Fibre Boosts
Eat the whole fruit + 1.9g				
Snack Low-fat plain yoghurt	0g	Snack Low-fat plain yoghurt with strawberries and almonds	5.5g	Add nuts
Lunch White spaghetti with tomato based sauce	3.9g	Lunch Wholemeal spaghetti with lentil and tomato based sauce	10.9g	Add pulses
Choose wholegrain + 1.9g				
Snack Cream crackers with Cheddar cheese	0.9g	Snack Rye crackers with houmous	8.5g	
Dinner Grilled chicken breast, mashed potato and carrots	4.7g	Dinner Grilled chicken breast, baked potato with skin, carrots and green beans	11.2g	More veg
Keep the skin on + 1.9g				
Total fibre: (% recommended intake):	11.2g 37%	Total fibre: (% recommended intake):	44.4g 148%	

Additional information and support

NHS

How to get more fibre into your diet

www.nhs.uk (search 'fibre')

British Nutrition Foundation

Information and tips

www.nutrition.org.uk

Portion sizes

Eating a healthy, balanced diet means having the right kinds of food and drinks in the right amounts.

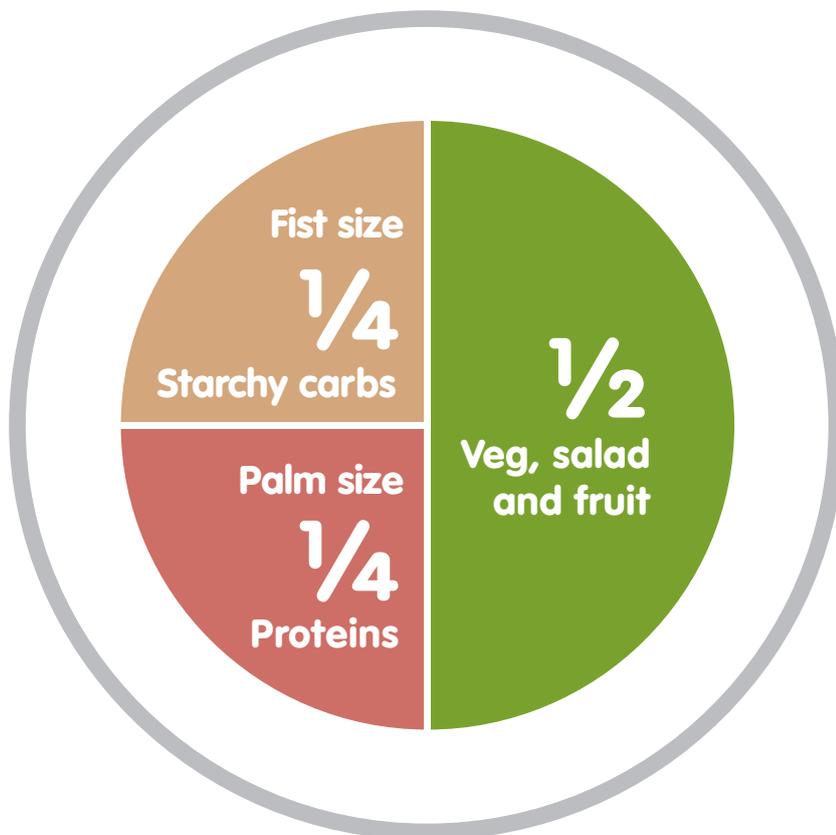
Adults and children should have at least five portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day. As a rough guide, one portion is the amount they can fit in the palm of their hand.

The amount of food a child needs varies with age, body size and levels of physical activity.

Useful tips

- Start meals with small servings and let your child ask for more if they're still hungry.
- Avoid making your child finish everything on the plate or eat more than they want to.
- Use smaller plates for younger children, as adult-size plates could encourage them to eat oversized portions.
- It may also help if you encourage your child to eat slowly and have set mealtimes. You can use mealtimes as an opportunity to catch up on what's happened during the day.
- Explain to your child how to get the balance of their diet right using our weight loss plate (adapted from the **Eatwell plate 2016** opposite). It shows how much we should all eat from each food group.





Veg, salad and fruit

Replace some starchy carbohydrates with more veg, salad and fruit. To boost fibre and feel fuller add beans/pulses.

Starchy carbs

Choose more complex carbs: wholegrain - cereal, rice, pasta and bread. Oats, potatoes (skin on).

Proteins

Leaner cuts of meat (remove visible fat eg chicken skin). More fish, including oily fish. Quorn, tofu, eggs and reduced fat cheese.



Highly processed sugary/fatty foods

Reduce intake to occasionally.

Dairy

Using reduced fat yoghurt/milk/cheese can help reduce calorie intake.

Additional information and support

NHS www.nhs.uk

Physical activity guidelines for children and young people
(search 'physical activity guidelines')

Portion sizes (search 'portion sizes')

Eatwell Guide (search 'Eatwell Guide')

Breakfast

A healthy breakfast is a great way to start any day. Mornings can be busy when you have a family to feed, but easy breakfast ideas are perfect for kids and the entire family.

Healthy breakfast tips

Try to have different breakfasts throughout the week. Start the day well hydrated with water or semi-skimmed milk. Choose wholegrain foods where possible eg wholegrain cereal, bread or porridge.

Try to avoid

Sugary food options such as sugary cereals / cereal bars (more than 5g sugar per 100g), energy drinks and foods high in saturated fat eg fried breakfast, pastries and croissants.



Toast

Wholemeal or granary bread is higher in fibre than white bread.



Scrambled egg on toast



Beans on toast



Bagel with fruit



Cereals

Wheat biscuit, wholegrain cereal or cornflakes - add some fruity goodness too as part of your child's 5 A Day.



Porridge oats

Oats contain vitamins, minerals and fibre. Make porridge with semi-skimmed, 1% skimmed milk, or water.



Natural yoghurt topped with chopped fruit

Additional information and support

Eat Well

Information and guidance about eating a healthy, balanced diet.
www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/

Better Health: Healthier Families

Sign up for Healthy Steps emails. Set simple, easy-to-achieve goals and track your family's progress to help cut down on sugar, enjoy cooking together and eat 5 A Day.
www.nhs.uk/healthier-families

Healthier breakfast recipes to make breakfast more exciting and help kids resist the temptation to snack. Ideas for the whole family to help get their five a day.
www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes

Save kids from sugar

See how your child's sugar adds up with the quick and easy sugar check.
www.savekidsfromsugar.co.uk

Healthier packed lunches

School meals are a great choice, but some children prefer a packed lunch.

Lunchbox tips

Get your kids involved in preparing and choosing what goes in their lunchbox. They are more likely to eat it if they helped make it.

Choose a variety of foods from each food group: fruit, vegetables, dairy, carbohydrates / wholegrains and lean meat / alternatives.

Yoghurts are often packed with added sugar, and some can contain up to four sugar cubes. If your child enjoys eating yoghurt try making your own. There are lots of flavours to try - visit www.savekidsfromsugar.co.uk (search 'Yoghurt').

Cut down on crisps - if your child really likes crisps, try reducing the number of times you include them in their lunchbox and swapping for plain rice cakes instead.

Ice packs help to keep food cool and a thermos flask keeps food warm.

Lunchbox ideas



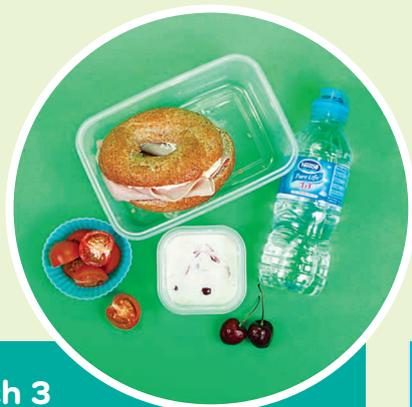
Packed lunch 1

- Tuna, sweetcorn and pepper pasta
- Banana
- 1 heaped tablespoon of raisins
- Carton of semi-skimmed milk



Packed lunch 2

- Egg, cress and cucumber seeded roll
- Rice pudding
- Satsuma
- Bottle of water



Packed lunch 3

- Wholemeal bagel with ham and soft cheese
- Handful of cherry tomatoes
- Frozen cherries mixed with fromage frais
- Bottle of water



Packed lunch 4

- Chicken, cream cheese and grated carrot wrap
- Fruit kebabs
- Sugar-free jelly
- Carton of semi-skimmed milk



Packed lunch 5

- Vegetable and lentil pasta (chopped tomatoes, carrots, celery, onion, red lentils, pasta)
- Small tub of grated cheese
- Canned peaches in natural juice
- Low-fat custard
- Bottle of water

Source:

Healthy Schools Manchester

Additional information and support

Better Health: Healthier Families

Lunchbox recipes and tips.

www.nhs.uk/healthier-families

Save Kids from Sugar

See how your child's sugar adds up with the quick and easy sugar check.

www.savekidsfromsugar.co.uk



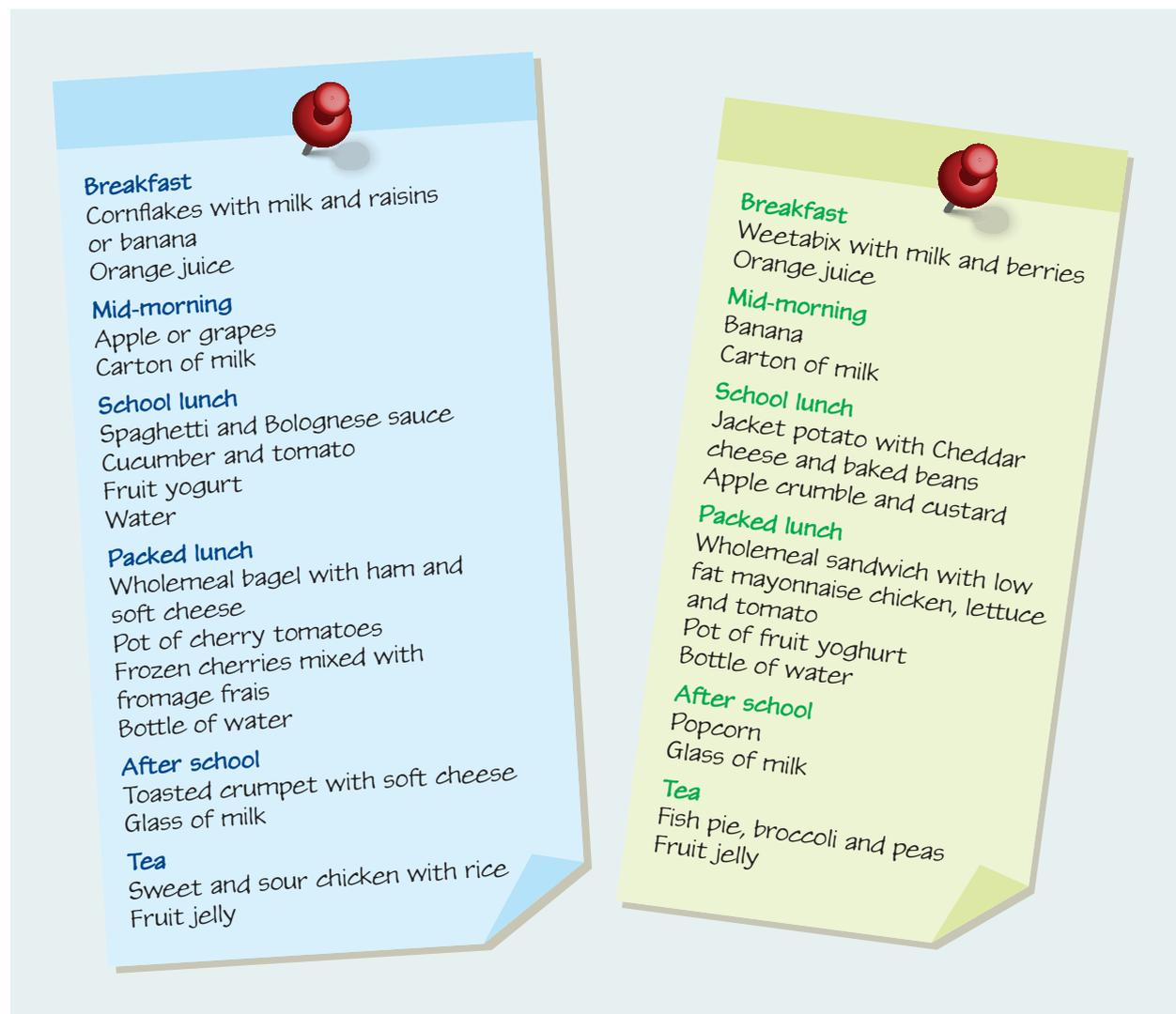
Meal ideas

The following examples of meals and snacks give an idea of the types of foods and amounts of foods, that meet the nutritional needs of 5-11 year olds.

Did you know your stomach is roughly the size of your fist? Using an open hand can be a helpful visual guide for portion sizes eg a palm size for protein, a cupped hand for carbs, and a fist for vegetables.

Aim for portion sizes of meals to be the same size as your child's open hand.

For more meal ideas visit The Caroline Walker Trust - www.cwt.org.uk



Source: The Caroline Walker Trust - www.cwt.org.uk

The Eatwell Guide

The guide shows how much of what we eat overall should come from each food group to achieve a healthy balanced diet. It highlights the importance of fruits, vegetables, starchy foods, proteins and dairy.

Looking at your child's meals, do you think they get a good mix of the different food groups? What small changes do you think could help make their meals more balanced?



Eat **less often** and smaller amounts.

Water, lower fat milk, sugar-free drinks including tea and coffees all count. Limit fruit juices and smoothies to 150ml per day.



Eat at least **5 portions** of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day.



Choose **wholegrain / higher fibre** versions with less added fat, salt and sugar.

Choose **unsaturated** oils, use smaller amounts.

Choose **lower fat and lower sugar** options.

Eat more beans and pulses
2 portions of sustainably sourced fish a week (1 oily). Eat less red / processed meat.

Additional information and support

NHS

www.nhs.uk

Portion sizes (search 'portion sizes'). Eatwell Guide (search 'Eatwell Guide')

Snacks

Snacking can be really useful to help maintain energy levels in between meals and provide extra nutrients.

We know it can be difficult to know what to do when it comes to snacks.

Fruit and veg snacks are always the best choice, but if the kids are having packaged snacks, just remember to aim for a maximum of two a day. Look for healthier snacks of no more than 100 calories and limit them to two a day.

Top tips for healthier snacking from Better Health: Healthier Families.

After-school ideas - swap biscuits, sweets and chocolate muffins for healthier snacks like fruit and chopped veggies, plain rice cakes, toast with lower-fat spread or a toasted crumpet.

Get the kids involved - try making snack time exciting and more hands-on. Get your child involved by getting them to plan what they're going to eat.

Pack a snack - save money and time when you're out and about by taking bananas, apples or chopped-up vegetables with you.

Liquid sugar - a drink with a snack can be a double sugar overload. Swap sugary and fizzy drinks for diet or no added sugar drinks, lower-fat milks or water.

For more snack ideas visit www.nhs.uk/healthier-families



Snack ideas



Pitta bread or rice cakes with houmous



Toasted crumpet with soft cheese



Fruit kebabs



Sugar-free jelly

Additional information and support

Better Health: Healthier Families

Download the free NHS Food Scanner app. A speedy scan of your family's favourite products reveals a range of healthier swaps for next time you shop.

It's as easy as scan, swipe, swap! www.nhs.uk/healthier-families

Save Kids from Sugar

See how your child's sugar adds up with the quick and easy sugar check. www.savekidsfromsugar.co.uk



You can swap:

- Whole milk for **semi-skimmed milk**
- Crispy chicken and bacon wrap to **grilled chicken and bacon wrap**
- Mac and cheese for **10% fewer calories option**
- Mighty meaty pizza for **10% fewer calories option**
- Roast potatoes for **potatoes with herb butter**
- Chocolate bar for **low calorie chocolate bar**

- Chocolate brownie 240g for **chocolate brownie 220g**
- Mixed multipack crisps for **baked multipack crisps**
- Greek yogurt for **fat-free Greek yogurt**
- Lemonade for **diet lemonade**

Average kcals - 17,506 (-8.52%)

Source: NESTA

www.nesta.org.uk

Illustrations: Eva Bee

Additional information and support

NHS Food Scanner app

With a speedy scan of your family's favourite foods, you can find healthier swaps for next time you shop.

Download the free app via the App Store or Google Play

Better Health: Healthier Families

Sugar calculator - check how much there may be in your kids' favourite treats.
www.nhs.uk/healthier-families

Oral health

Sugar in foods is used by bacteria to produce an acid that damages teeth. A regular teeth-brushing routine is essential for good oral health.

Help keep your kids' teeth decay-free with these tips.

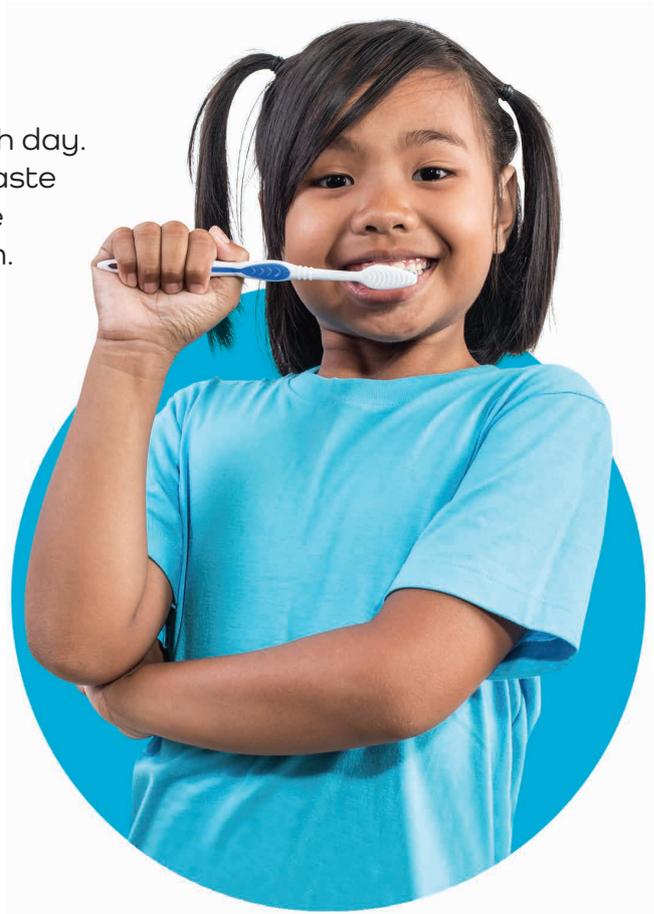
Children aged 3 - 12 years

Tooth brushing

- Brush teeth before bed and once more each day. Use a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste containing 1450ppm fluoride - check on the box. Use a small, medium-bristle toothbrush. Brush for two minutes with a manual or electric toothbrush.
- An adult should help until at least age 7.
- Spit out toothpaste, don't rinse. This leaves a protective layer of fluoride on the teeth.

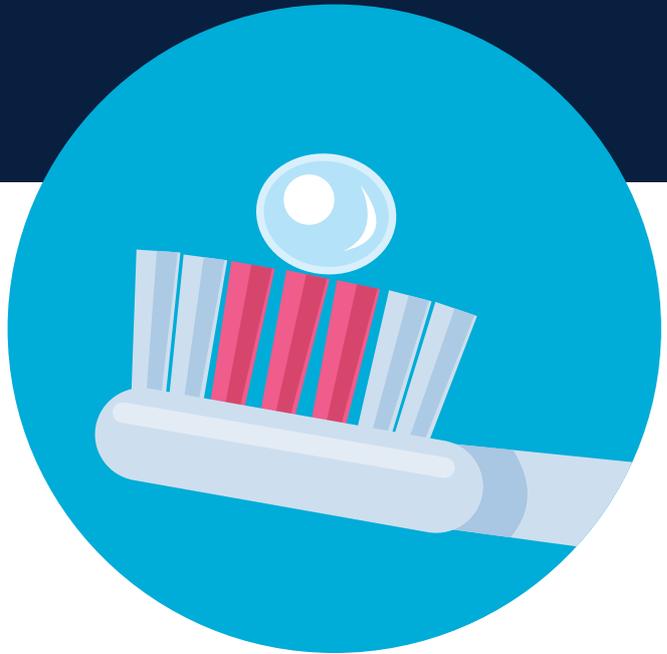
Diet and drinks

- Sugar can harm teeth. Save sugary food and drinks to mealtimes only.
- **Best drinks:** water or milk. Avoid brushing right after soft drinks or fruit.
- **Best snacks:** fruit, veg, or savoury foods.
- Save sweets and cake for mealtimes. Use stickers, not sweets, as rewards.
- Ask for sugar-free medicine.



Teenagers

- Brush twice a day - before bed and once more.
- Use a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste (1450ppm).
- Use a small toothbrush with medium bristles.
- Don't rinse - just spit.
- Ask your dentist about cleaning between teeth.



Diet and drinks

- Too much sugar = tooth decay.
- **Best drinks:** water or milk.
- Soft drinks and fruit are acidic - don't brush straight after consuming them.
- **Best snacks:** fruit, veg, or savoury foods.
- Save sugary drinks, sweets, cakes and chocolates to mealtimes.
- Sugar has many names: honey, syrup, glucose - all harm teeth.
- Ask for sugar-free medicine.
- Drink through a straw to limit acid erosion on teeth.



People should have a dental check-up every 6 months, but some may not need to go so often and others may need more frequent checks. Dental care is free until the age of 18.

Additional information and support

Save kids from sugar

See how your child's sugar adds up with the quick and easy sugar check.

www.savekidsfromsugar.co.uk

NHS website (search 'children's teeth') www.nhs.uk

Physical activity

Physical activity for children and young people (5 – 18 Years)

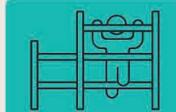
 BUILDS CONFIDENCE & SOCIAL SKILLS	 STRENGTHENS MUSCLES & BONES	 MAINTAINS HEALTHY WEIGHT
 DEVELOPS CO-ORDINATION	 STRENGTHENS MUSCLES & BONES	 IMPROVES SLEEP
 IMPROVES CONCENTRATION & LEARNING	 IMPROVES HEALTH & FITNESS	 MAKES YOU FEEL GOOD

Be physically active

Spread activity throughout the day

Aim for an average of at least **60** minutes per day across week

All activities should make you breathe faster & feel warmer

 PLAY	 RUN/WALK	 BIKE	 ACTIVE TRAVEL	
 SWIM	 SKATE	Activities to develop movement skills, and muscle and bone strength ACROSS WEEK		
 SPORT	 PE			
 SKIP	 CLIMB	 WORKOUT	 DANCE	
Get strong		 INACTIVITY	Move more	

Find ways to help all children and young people accumulate an average of at least 60 minutes physical activity per day across the week

UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines, 2019

Exercising safely

Children and young people should:

- Find an activity they enjoy.
- Get medical advice about exercising if they have a health condition.
- Do exercise that is suitable for their age, ability and experience.
- Start any new exercise slowly and increase it bit by bit.
- Use protective equipment, for example when cycling and skateboarding.

Young people can use weights for resistance exercise if a qualified adult trains them to use weights correctly and supervises them.



Additional information and support

Activate

Joe Wicks' animated physical activity series which aims to get children moving and having fun.

@The Body Coach TV YouTube channel

Active All Sports Programme

For children and siblings with additional needs.

www.activewirral.com/active-allsports/

Active Wirral

www.activewirral.com (active kids)

NHS

Exercise guidelines

Strength and flexibility exercises.

Running and aerobic exercises.

www.nhs.uk

parkrun

www.parkrun.org.uk

Playground Buddy app

Free app to help families find playgrounds including wheelchair access.

Wirral Holiday Activities and Food

Activities, delicious nutritious meals and a chance for young people to meet new friends in a safe and fun environment, during school holidays.

haf.edsential.com/wirral/

Wirral Infobank

www.wirralinfobank.co.uk



The HENRY Programme

The Let's Talk Team deliver the HENRY Programme for parents and carers of primary school children, aged 5-12 living in Wirral.

HENRY's (**H**ealth, **E**xercise, **N**utrition for the **R**eally **Y**oung) free 8 week programme '**Healthy Families: Growing Up**' is designed to make family life easier, covering everything from fussy eating and managing behaviour to family routines, emotional wellbeing and getting active together.

What's involved?

The weekly sessions are delivered by trained facilitators in schools and community venues across Wirral.

Each sessions helps to build confidence and provides practical tools to use straight away to help your children flourish.

Sessions are structured around:

- Feeling more confident as a parent/carer
- Physical activity for the whole family
- Mealtimes
- Family lifestyle habits
- Enjoying life as a family

The sessions are fun, friendly and free of charge. You will also receive a **FREE** '**Healthy Families Growing Up**' workbook giving you practical tools and tips.



Feedback from parents and carers who have attended previous HENRY Programmes:

"This was the best thing I could possibly have done to help me be a better mum."

"This was so much better than I expected. I would encourage every parent to do it."

The team also run one-off workshops with quick tips on topics like fussy eating, healthy eating on a budget and more.

How to get involved

To find a HENRY Programme or workshop near you, please contact the Let's Talk Team - wchc.lets.talk@nhs.net

For more information about the programme visit www.wchc.nhs.uk (search 'HENRY Wirral').

You can also read real stories and experiences from parents and carers - scan the QR code.



Self-help ideas

Making small, manageable changes to your daily routine can lead to lasting improvements to your family's health.

While snacks can play a part in meeting nutritional needs, it's important to be mindful of foods high in fat and sugar.

Eating these too often can lead to weight gain. 'Treat' type foods (snacks) can still have a place in a balanced diet, but they should come after the essential foods from the four main food groups (grains, fruits, vegetables and meats / dairy) our bodies need to thrive.

The suggestions you'll find here are practical and achievable, and based on what has worked for local families just like yours.

Introducing simple swaps can help build healthier habits over time.

"If physical activity were a drug, we would refer to it as a miracle cure, due to the great many illnesses it can prevent and help treat."

(UK Chief Medical Officer, 2019)

Small changes, big impact!

Breakfast

Serving size for cereal / toast based on your child's hand span size.

Choose low sugar options: cereal or wholemeal toast.

Limit processed foods such as bacon, sausages, white bread / pastries.

Yoghurt and fruit.

Eat breakfast at home or school rather than both.

Snack ideas

Piece of fruit rather than crisps or confectionery.

Buy fewer crisps, chocolates, biscuits and cakes.

Buy lower calorie options.

Role model - choose healthier snacks together.

Reduce confectionery at birthdays, celebrations or religious holidays.

Lunch

Include 1 treat in your child's packed lunch, instead of 2.

Aim for: ½ plate salad/vegetables

¼ starch foods - ideally wholegrain varieties, ¼ protein and ½ salad and vegetables on your plate.

Take up free school meals if eligible.

Don't opt for the large option if having fast food as a takeaway treat.

Use smaller plates.

Evening meals

Swap to wholemeal versions of bread, pasta and rice.

Have a portion size based on your child's hand span size.

Follow the serving suggestion on the packaging.

Try plant-based meals.

Batch cook for the week ahead. Get the family involved by planning meals, buying groceries and cooking meals.

Drinks

Swap from full sugar to diet drinks. Use the NHS Food scanner app to help identify healthier swaps. Aim for green and amber categories, not red.

Give your child a refillable water bottle for school.

Keep pure fruit juice to 150ml a day.

Save sugary drinks until mealtimes and use a straw to reduce dental damage.

Follow the recommended serving size on the bottle - many screw tops are 2 servings not 1.

Increasing activity

Try walking to or from school instead of taking the car.

Family walks, cycling, swimming or park visits are great ways to increase activity and spend time together.

Encourage your child to join lunch/ afterschool clubs.

Take part in local activities as a family.

Encourage your child to learn to swim or ride a bike.

Agree a family challenge: walking, cycling, swimming.

Signposting

BEAT

The UK's leading eating disorder charity that offers support for anyone living with or worried about an eating disorder. The website provides tons of support and they have counsellors you can contact in various ways including a web chat, email and a phone helpline.



Better Health, Healthier Families

An NHS webpage where you can access help and guidance about creating a healthier family. Including; recipes, healthy swaps ideas, movement and activity both indoors and outdoors, guidance on salt, sugar and fat intake, and information on weight.



Branch

Is an online mental wellbeing hub for children and young people in Wirral, from 0 all the way to 18 (and up to 25 with additional needs). It doesn't deliver services directly – it's more of a guide, helping people to find the best tools and local support.

It can be used for any child or young person, no matter how big or small their worries feel. It's packed with tips to help them feel better and, when they need a bit of extra support, gives simple routes into local services.



Family Toolbox

The number one resource for families in Wirral, Family Toolbox provides practical advice, links and contacts to support parents.



HAF

HAF stands for Holiday Activities and Food (programme). It's a Government-funded programme in the UK that provides healthy meals, enriching activities, and free childcare places to children from low-income families during school holidays.



hatch

Provides a range of services to improve mental health and emotional wellbeing, in a relatable and non-clinical way. These include; 1-1 mental health and wellbeing support, hatch youth club, half-term activity days, summer camps, fitness and wellbeing sessions.



Kit Link Wirral

Is a recycling scheme for sports equipment and clothing, run by Active Wirral. It allows residents to donate used or new sports kit and equipment, which is then made available to adults and children in Wirral who may not be able to afford sports equipment.



Kooth

A free, safe, and anonymous online mental health support service for young people, primarily those aged 10-25. It's a UK-based platform that provides digital counseling, emotional well-being support, and self-help resources. Kooth's services are designed to be accessible 24/7 and are often delivered through text-based chat sessions with qualified practitioners.



Let's Talk

Let's Talk is Wirral's NHS Risk and Resilience Service for young people. The service helps children and young people develop knowledge, skills, and confidence to make informed decisions about their health and wellbeing.



Open Door

Provides free, fast and effective mental health support without waiting lists to young people and adults, while reimagining what mental health support looks, sounds, and feels like. Designed by young people, for young people, Open Door delivers a range of award-winning services that improve the wellbeing and mental health of young people and adults, using innovation, arts, and culture as catalysts for change.



SENDLO

Brings together information about the Wirral services and support available across education, health and social care for families with children and young people aged 0 to 25, who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.



ZILLO Wirral

ZILLO is a website for young people living in Wirral. It is a go-to place for helpful advice about health and wellbeing as well as the latest events, arts, culture, news, all made for young people.



Free Apps

NHS Food Scanner, NHS Couch to 5K and NHS Weight Loss Plan.



Wirral Community Health and Care
NHS Foundation Trust

LET'S TALK
Helping young people thrive

NHS

Disclaimer

This pack includes general advice and information about healthy lifestyles. It does not replace advice from a GP or healthcare professional. While every effort has been made to ensure that the information is accurate, up-to-date, and based on public health guidance, individual needs may vary.

Every child is different. Before making substantial changes to food, exercise, or other routines, please speak to your GP or relevant healthcare professional especially if your child has existing health problems.

The creators of this support pack do not accept liability for any loss, injury, or damage resulting from the use or misuse of the information provided. By using it you acknowledge that any actions taken based on the content are at your own discretion and responsibility. Please use this pack in a way that feels right for your child and family.