

Walking the dog

Correct Star!

Playing computer games

Incorrect X

Yard work

Correct Star!

Playing outside with children

Correct Star!

**Look in this pocket
to find stories from
families who made
healthy changes!**

**Look in this pocket
to find handouts
and recipes!**

be a healthy role model for children

10 tips for setting good examples

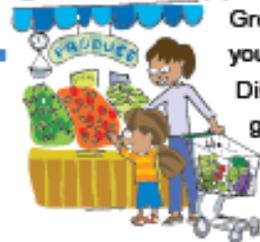


You are the most important influence on your child. You can do many things to help your children develop healthy eating habits for life. Offering a variety of foods helps children get the nutrients they need from every food group. They will also be more likely to try new foods and to like more foods. When children develop a taste for many types of foods, it's easier to plan family meals. Cook together, eat together, talk together, and make mealtime a family time!

1 show by example

Eat vegetables, fruits, and whole grains with meals or as snacks. Let your child see that you like to munch on raw vegetables.

2 go food shopping together



Grocery shopping can teach your child about food and nutrition. Discuss where vegetables, fruits, grains, dairy, and protein foods come from. Let your children make healthy choices.

3 get creative in the kitchen

Cut food into fun and easy shapes with cookie cutters. Name a food your child helps make. Serve "Janie's Salad" or "Jackie's Sweet Potatoes" for dinner. Encourage your child to invent new snacks. Make your own trail mixes from dry whole-grain, low-sugar cereal and dried fruit.

4 offer the same foods for everyone

Stop being a "short-order cook" by making different dishes to please children. It's easier to plan family meals when everyone eats the same foods.

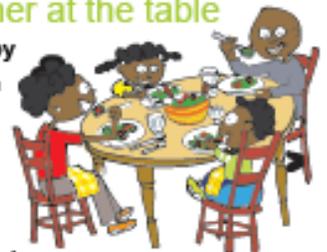


5 reward with attention, not food

Show your love with hugs and kisses. Comfort with hugs and talks. Choose not to offer sweets as rewards. It lets your child think sweets or dessert foods are better than other foods. When meals are not eaten, kids do not need "extras"—such as candy or cookies—as replacement foods.

6 focus on each other at the table

Talk about fun and happy things at mealtime. Turn off the television. Take phone calls later. Try to make eating meals a stress-free time.



7 listen to your child

If your child says he or she is hungry, offer a small, healthy snack—even if it is not a scheduled time to eat. Offer choices. Ask "Which would you like for dinner: broccoli or cauliflower?" instead of "Do you want broccoli for dinner?"

8 limit screen time

Allow no more than 2 hours a day of screen time like TV and computer games. Get up and move during commercials to get some physical activity.

9 encourage physical activity

Make physical activity fun for the whole family. Involve your children in the planning. Walk, run, and play with your child—instead of sitting on the sidelines. Set an example by being physically active and using safety gear, like bike helmets.



10 be a good food role model

Try new foods yourself. Describe its taste, texture, and smell. Offer one new food at a time. Serve something your child likes along with the new food. Offer new foods at the beginning of a meal, when your child is very hungry. Avoid lecturing or forcing your child to eat.

Stoplight Stuffed Peppers

What You'll Need

4 green bell peppers, tops and seeds removed	1 cup fresh spinach
1/2 pound lean ground turkey	1 14.5-ounce can diced tomatoes, drained
1 teaspoon olive oil, divided	1 tablespoon tomato paste
1/2 medium onion, chopped	1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 cup sliced mushrooms	1 teaspoon basil
1/2 cup zucchini, chopped	salt and pepper to taste
1/2 cup red bell pepper, chopped	cooking spray
1/2 cup yellow bell pepper, chopped	

Serves 4

Let's Cook!

- 1 Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- 2 Place green bell peppers in a baking dish and cover with aluminum foil. Bake for 15 minutes in preheated oven.
- 3 Spray pan with cooking spray and add 1/2 teaspoon of oil. Cook turkey on medium heat until the temperature reaches 160 degrees with a meat thermometer. Drain fat and liquid.
- 4 Spray another pan with cooking spray, add 1/2 teaspoon of oil and cook onion, mushrooms, zucchini, red bell pepper, yellow bell pepper and spinach over medium heat until soft.
- 5 Mix cooked turkey with vegetables and add tomatoes, tomato paste and spices.
- 6 Spoon meat and vegetable mixture into green peppers.
- 7 Bake peppers, covered with aluminum foil, in oven for 30 minutes.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size (428g)	
Servings Per Container 4	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 190	Calories from Fat 70
<hr/>	
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 7g	11%
Saturated Fat 1.5g	8%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 300mg	13%
Total Carbohydrate 18g	6%
Dietary Fiber 5g	20%
Sugars 10g	
Protein 15g	
<hr/>	
Vitamin A 40%	• Vitamin C 350%
Calcium 4%	• Iron 15%



Xinia – San Diego, CA

A MESSAGE FROM SUSAN

I love a mother who takes charge and that's what San Diego's Xinia did when she personally asked local restaurant owners and chefs to put healthier foods on their menus. The El Salvador native is a role model to her teenage daughter Xinia, 19; and son Felix, 17. She is also trying to make life better for her entire community. She even helped raise money to completely overhaul a depressed local park. This mom doesn't take

no for an answer!

Xinia also believes in real foods. She grew up eating fresh vegetables from local stands. The foods would go from the ground to her plate. Xinia was taught this is the healthiest way to eat and tries to make sure that what she feeds her own children doesn't come out of boxes.

This mom has my respect because she makes sure her kids combine the healthiest diet with daily exercise.

KEYS TO HEALTHIER LIVING



Increase
Fruits & Vegetables



Increase
Physical Activity



Decrease
Screen Time



Decrease
High Energy
Density Foods



Decrease
Sugar-Sweetened
Beverages

Xinia is a mother who knows that one person can change everything.

Unhappy when she saw how many unhealthy menu items were offered at popular local restaurants near her San Diego home, she called and visited the eateries to ask owners and chefs to serve healthier foods instead of ones of the fried variety. So many slammed the door in her face that the mother of a teenage daughter and son was surprised when some of them actually listened.

Now some of those restaurants are serving fruit cups, whole-wheat sandwiches, lean turkey and chicken, and low-fat options. Many added a whole list of healthy options.

"Mothers need to ask for what they need for their children," Xinia says. "It doesn't hurt to have your voice heard. It can help everyone if you speak up."

This driven mom lives in a home full of sunshine where she always has a big bowl of mixed fruits on her kitchen table.

Xinia says that healthy living begins in your kitchen. For starters, she believes that what goes on your child's plate at every meal should look like a rainbow.

The general rule is that colorful, natural foods are usually free from artificial ingredients and packed with many vitamins and nutrients. Eating them regularly may even prevent obesity and other diseases like the common cold and the flu by building up your immune system.

Think about a ripe red apple, a deep green pepper, or a bright orange. Blue and purple foods like blueberries and eggplant

and deep yellow or red foods are also antioxidants. Orange foods are packed with vitamin C, which helps kids resist colds and infections. Dark green leafy vegetables like kale, spinach, and collard greens contain omega-3 fatty acids. These help build healthy cells in your body.

"The rule is simple: Each time you add a color, you add health to your meal," Xinia says.

At home, Xinia tries to be creative when making different dishes. Long ago, her kids

If you eat out, try to avoid fried food and order items such as lean meats that are grilled or baked, steamed vegetables, and whole grains.

didn't like steamed vegetables, so Xinia put a little bit of low-fat cheese on the top of them. It makes them more appealing to kids. Scrambled eggs are even tastier with some sautéed veggies in them.

Xinia even found substitutions for her favorite Latin recipes. She makes vegetarian quesadillas with whole-wheat tortillas, onions, red peppers, corn, cilantro, and a whole medley of veggies. She tops them with low fat cheese.

Rice is popular in Latin dishes. But it is a starch with little nutritional value. So Xinia makes sure to add tomatoes, zucchini, peppers, mushrooms, or onions to her rice in order to add vitamins, fiber, and minerals.

Quick Tips

- Eat foods that are colorful — the more the better. These have the most vitamins and nutrients.
- Eat foods that are ripe and in season. The food will go from the ground to your kitchen table.
- Don't buy unhealthy snacks like potato chips and candy bars. If your children don't find it in the house then they won't be able to eat it.
- Remember this rule: Everyone needs to exercise every day.
- Exercise could include walks, dancing, and even dropping down on the living room floor during commercials and doing sit-ups and push-ups. Turn on a CD and dance around the living room.
- Buying fresh fruits and vegetables costs much less than doctor bills!



She even chops fresh garlic and slices her own fresh vegetables to put into dishes. "Sometimes, I will go to three supermarkets to make sure my children are eating the freshest fruits and vegetables," she explains.

Over a 15-year study, adults who ate fast food more than twice a week gained 10 pounds more than those who ate fast food less than once a week.

Even when some of the foods are expensive, they are cheaper than doctors' bills. So she's willing to make the sacrifice.

The key for this mom is that her children eat fresh foods. Foods in a can or box often contain chemical additives. For example, fruit in cans often contains high fructose corn syrup (sugar) and include chemicals to preserve the fruit. Some canned vegetables contain extra salt (sodium) for flavor and are therefore a less nutritious choice.

Xinia loves to make steamed chicken with veggies on the side. She covers both with a homemade tomato sauce. And Xinia says any mom can make homemade sauce. You just need to boil a few tomatoes, mash them up, and add some garlic, onions, and spices. She also cuts out some of the fat by buying lean meats.

When it comes to snacks, Xinia is the boss. She absolutely refuses to buy chips, candy, or cookies. Of course, her kids have complained, but mom stays firm. She just ignores their protests and offers fruits and nuts as snacks. Her children eventually eat the healthier foods because there are no other choices.

She cautions moms to really know what's healthy and not. For example, she checks

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Increase Physical Activity



Decrease Screen Time



Decrease High Energy Density Foods



Decrease Sugar-Sweetened Beverages



her juice labels. Even when it says apple juice, it's not always 100 percent juice. It might only be 10 percent juice.

Beyond making sure her children are eating the best foods possible, Xinia tells her children that they must find time every single day for physical activity. It's like brushing their teeth or eating. It's a necessity of their daily schedule. She walks with her husband for an hour each night. Her daughter Xinia takes dance classes, including hula lessons. Her son lifts weights at home and does push-ups on the living room floor.

"We encourage 60 minutes of regular exercise a day for children," Xinia says.

Xinia also works with the University of San Diego State Foundation and the Network for

a Healthier California by holding community seminars on nutrition, exercise, and healthy living. It's a great way for her to pass on her know-how to other moms.

A woman who practices what she preaches, she also helped revamp a neighborhood park with the help of other moms. They raised an amazing \$400,000 for the project by asking for state funding. A once-dilapidated piece of land, the park now has new playground equipment and trimmed grassy areas for children to play baseball and soccer.

"As a mother, it's your job to make sure your children have every chance in life. That begins with health," she says. "I can't think of a better gift to give your children than strong bodies and minds."



Debra – New York, NY

A MESSAGE FROM SUSAN

It's tough to figure out which is bigger — Debra's heart or her dining room table. A resident of New York's Harlem, Debra is a social worker and single mom to daughter Giovanni. Just two years ago, Giovanni reached her 10th birthday, but looked like a six-year-old. Doctors told this mom that her daughter had stopped growing, and it was heartbreaking for her. The reason was a lack of vitamins and minerals in her body. The solution to the problem would be found on a

plate served with love.

Debra began to notice that other children in her building also looked unhealthy. Their mothers worked two or three jobs and weren't home much to cook meals. Debra took it upon herself to open her home and her kitchen. Each night, she serves dinner to upwards of seven children who lovingly call her "Auntie." Debra has ingenious ways to help children get what they need to grow strong and be healthy.

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Debra is a mom on a nutrition mission each night. She is not a trained chef, but the Harlem native is a savvy parent. Debra believes in healthy, home-cooked meals that can really be stretched.

She is on a limited budget, yet sets her table for 12. It doesn't have to be this way because Debra is a single mom with just one daughter. But this social worker can't stand to see children suffer, which is why 10 kids from her building have been eating dinner at Debra's for more than a year.

Debra feels she has no choice but to open her heart — and table — to kids needing a boost in nutrition.

She noticed kids in her building who had no energy. Some were small for their ages because their bodies weren't growing and others were overweight. Debra went to their mothers and simply asked if these kids could come over for dinner ... every night.

"I couldn't allow these children to eat poorly anymore. These kids were eating a steady diet of fried chicken wings from a takeout place, pork-fried rice, French fries, and soda. One mother fed her children that exact meal for breakfast, lunch, and dinner for two whole years," Debra explains.

In Harlem, it's very difficult to eat healthy. A lot of parents work as many hours as possible to survive. You can't buy fruits and vegetables easily because the corner markets don't carry them. There are children in this area who have never eaten a salad.

Debra is a wonder because she will go to any length to act as a healthy-food fairy godmother.

She takes buses to faraway stores and farmers markets to buy fresh fruits and vegetables. She makes meals from scratch. Her mantra is to serve her daughter and the other children the freshest, healthiest foods possible so they can grow to be strong individuals. She even coaches other moms in her building and gives them healthy cooking tips.

When reading food labels, pay close attention to the amount of calories, fat, sugar, and sodium in each serving.

Debra's bag of magic also includes clever ways to get the kids to eat what's right for them. Her approach is to make eating fun for children.

First, she appeals to tiny taste buds. Knowing that children love anything sweet, she puts a little bit of honey or natural maple syrup over vegetables. Debra got rid of boxed breakfast pastries that kids love. Instead, she now serves homemade wheat pancakes full of bits of natural chocolate. She has a special "appetizer," a dip made with yogurt and honey, which she surrounds with fresh vegetables — perfect for dipping.

Debra knows how to deal with stubborn dinner guests. When the kids didn't want to eat skinless turkey dogs because they weren't "real hot dogs," Debra got creative. She got out her sewing needle, sterilized

Quick Tips

- Try to buy as many fresh fruits and vegetables as possible — avoid processed fruits and vegetables that contain added sugar, salt, or sauce.
- Frozen vegetables are good alternatives in winter months.
- Make special dips with a little honey or natural maple syrup. Kids enjoy dipping their veggies!
- Think of fun games to do with food like veggie necklaces or making a forest out of your veggies and eating all the trees.
- Put salad fixings in little bowls — carrots, celery, lettuce, peppers, tomatoes, etc. Ask each child to use at least four things in their salad. Stick with low-fat dressings or homemade ones.
- Avoid foods filled with fat and sodium by reading food labels.

it, and then grabbed some thread to make "necklaces" out of cooked turkey dogs and raw vegetables. She's made similar "necklaces" out of everything from shrimp to fresh fruit.

One of Debra's "regular customers" wouldn't eat his broccoli so Debra appealed to his love of fairy tales to get him to try it. She stood little pieces of broccoli up on a plate, creating "trees" in a magical forest. The boy — pretending to be a brave prince — had to eat the "trees" in order to save the princess. In five minutes, the broccoli was gone.

Debra's fight to save children comes from a personal place. Her own daughter was starving, and this kind and caring mom didn't even know it. Giovanni ate plenty of food each day. But what she ate was

According to the American Heart Association, the estimated calories needed by children range from 900 per day for a 1-year-old to 1,800 per day for a girl between the ages of 14 and 18 and 2,200 for a boy between the ages of 14 and 18.

severely lacking in vitamins and minerals. "I gave my daughter what she wanted to eat — not what she needed," Debra says.

Giovanni's body stopped growing at age six. She was a frail girl who had thin bones. Exhausted or sick all of the time, she would catch every flu bug or cold around. She even had pneumonia three times one year and broke her arm several times because her

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bones were weak.

After administering various tests, doctors told Debra that her daughter was severely lacking in nutrition. She was deficient in important vitamins, which were not entering her system. Her daily diet included fast foods and greasy meals from a local Chinese takeout restaurant. Her doctor gave Debra a list of healthy food options — lean meats, skinless chicken, fish, fruits, and vegetables — that Giovanni needed for healthy growth. She was also told to buy as much fresh produce as possible.

Giovanni's new meal plan would include whole-wheat pancakes, eggs, or waffles for breakfast. For lunch, Debra was told to make Giovanni healthy sandwiches with fresh meats and low-fat cheeses along with fruits and vegetables. Dinners would

also become a new adventure of fresh vegetables, salads, grilled lean meats, and skinless chicken plus a few surprises. She wasn't allowed to eat white bread, fried foods, or drink sugary sodas.

A strange thing happened. After exactly one month of healthy eating, Debra remembers that Giovanni walked into the living room carrying her three new pairs of summer shoes, which had been bought a month earlier. They were much too small! All of sudden, she was growing ... and growing.

Now Giovanni runs, dances, and doesn't slow down for a second. Her grades have improved. She sprints out of bed in the morning and races to the dinner table each night. She rarely gets sick. Each night, she eats healthy dinners with her friends who call Debra "Auntie."

