



How to Help...What to do... Suggestions for promoting healthier children

Examine your own attitudes, beliefs, prejudices, and behaviors about food, weight, body image, physical appearance, health, and exercise.

Replace unhealthy attitudes with healthy ones.

“Model” healthy behaviors - Do not talk about or behave as if you are constantly dieting.

Encourage balanced eating of a variety of foods in moderation. Allow all foods in your home. Encourage eating in response to body hunger.

Similarly, “don’t eat that—it will make you fat” teaches that being fat makes one unlikable.

Encourage and compliment physical diversity—acceptance for all colors, shapes, and sizes, which is reality in our culture.

Become a critical consumer of the media—pay attention to and openly challenge media messages.

Encourage critical thinking. Both boys and girls need to learn that that they themselves have something important to contribute.

Develop a value system based on internal values. Help children accept and enjoy their bodies and encourage healthy and moderate physical activity. It isn’t all about the competition and being “the best”

Teach children about good relationships and how to deal with difficulties when they arise. Males and females alike may use food to express or numb themselves instead of dealing with difficult feelings or relationships.