

Healthy Living –  
Eat Right and Be  
Active





# DDS SafetyNet

PROMOTING CHOICE AND OPTIONS IN THE COMMUNITY  
FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

## Healthy Living - Eat Right and Be Active

**Healthy Living** - All people can be healthy by learning about and living healthier lifestyles. *TWO OF THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS YOU CAN DO TO LEAD A HEALTHY LIFE ARE:*

-  Eat healthy foods in healthy portions, and
-  Be physically active every day.

Eating right and being active:

- Increases your chances of living longer,
- Helps you keep a healthy weight,
- Keeps bones and muscles strong,
- Makes you feel good!

Physical activity, along with a healthy diet, helps prevent diabetes, heart problems, high blood pressure, and other serious medical conditions.

Learn how to live a healthy life. Get food smart! Try it yourself and then help others to learn how to eat right. You will motivate others by your example! Follow these easy tips:

- ✓ Eat more fruits and vegetables.
- ✓ Cook at home. Eat out less often.
- ✓ Drink water instead of sugary sodas.
- ✓ Enjoy your food, but watch portion sizes.
- ✓ Use less salt. Be aware of added salt in foods.
- ✓ Eat beans and nuts as good sources of protein.
- ✓ Eat or drink fat-free or low fat milk, yogurt and cottage cheese.
- ✓ Eat small portions of lean meat, chicken without the skin and fish.
- ✓ Eat whole grains such as brown rice. Eat whole grain breads, cereals and pasta.
- ✓ Cut back on foods high in fat and sugar such as ice cream, candy, pizza, bacon and hot dogs.

## Eat More Fruits and Vegetables, Drink Water, and Get Active

Use the healthy eating learning tools which you will find at <http://www.ddssafety.net/health/eating-healthy-and-staying-active/healthy-living-tips-and-tools-eating-right>. These tools can help you and the people you support learn to eat right and be active. Watch SafetyNet videos together and talk about what you learned. Talk about the foods that are good to eat and why.

If you prepare meals for others, follow the tips for healthy eating. Provide plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Serve foods with less fat, sugar and salt. Choose lean meats. Encourage individuals to drink lots of water. Make healthy snacks available. Look for ways to make dishes healthier. For example, substitute non-fat milk for whole milk. To learn more about healthy eating click on MyPlate [www.ddssafety.net/MyPlate](http://www.ddssafety.net/MyPlate).

**Food Banks** - If the people you support receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits, they may be eligible to get free food from their local Food Bank. Food Banks can be a good source of free fruits and vegetables. To find one near you go to [www.cafoodbanks.org/Find A Food Bank.html](http://www.cafoodbanks.org/Find_A_Food_Bank.html).

Food Banks are another source for tips on healthy eating. Click on <http://www.cafoodbanks.org/produce-toolbox-evaluation-report.html> for more learning tools about healthy eating.

**Farmers Markets** - For fresh fruits and vegetables find your local farmers market. Farmers may let you taste food and may offer healthy recipes. Fruits and vegetables at farmers markets are often less expensive than at supermarkets.



## Be Active – Get Moving Every Day

**Be Active.** Physical activity is anything that gets your body moving. Here are tips to get started:

- Take a walk, work in the garden, ride a bicycle, jump rope, go swimming – do something that you enjoy!
- Start at your comfort level. Don't do anything that hurts you or that you are uncomfortable with. If you have been inactive and you do too much, you can hurt yourself.
- Start out slowly and add new activities little by little. After a few days or weeks, increase your level of activity – exercise a little longer and more often.
- Look for ways to be more active each day. Build activities into your normal daily routines. Take a walk at lunch.
- Don't be a couch potato! The more television you watch, the more you sit, the more likely you are to be overweight. You can exercise and watch TV. You can dance to anything. Get up and dance while you are watching your favorite show!
- Exercise with a friend. Join a team. Take a class. Have fun!

Make time for exercise in your own life. It is easier to motivate others if you have taken the first step. Start out slowly and add new activities little by little. After a few days or weeks, increase your level of activity – exercise a little longer and more often.

Look for ways for you and the people you support to be more active each day. Build activities into normal daily routines. Take a walk at lunch.

Use the Be Active learning tools provided at <http://www.ddssafety.net/health/eating-healthy-and-staying-active/healthy-living-tips-getting-active> both for yourself and with the people you support. Get started!

Walking is great exercise. It is free and easy. Make sure people you support have comfortable shoes, plenty of drinking water and stay safe. For more on walking safety go to: <http://www.ddssafety.net/health/eating-healthy-and-staying-active/healthy-living-safe-walking-tips>

## Start an “Eat Right – Be Active” Campaign

Make eating right and being active a regular topic of conversation with the people you support. Brainstorm with others in your community on how you can work together to promote healthy living. Start an exercise class with the people you support. Help them join a community class. Get connected on-line.

Plant a garden in a yard or in pots. Grow fresh fruits and vegetables to eat and share. Find out if there is a community garden in the neighborhood and get involved. Gardening helps a person to both eat right and be active.

Celebrate success! Everyone likes to be recognized for their achievements. Celebrate changes to healthy living habits – big and small! Here is what Jackie and Jim have to say about the benefits of healthy living.

*I'm almost 40 years old, and there are a lot of health issues that might come up, so I want to avoid them by exercising and eating better...I want to do this to be a better person for myself.*  
Jackie Dubios

*Riding my bike helps me... “burn calories, keeps my weight at a healthy stage, gets rid of stress, makes my workday better and energizes me!”*  
James “Jim” Shaffer

Excerpted from Watch Out! Newsletter  
[http://www.farnorthernrc.org/selfadvocacyrocks/Watch\\_Out\\_Newsletter/Watch\\_Out.htm](http://www.farnorthernrc.org/selfadvocacyrocks/Watch_Out_Newsletter/Watch_Out.htm)



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