10 tips
Nutrition Education Series

cut back on your kid's sweet treats

10 tips to decrease added sugars

Limit the amount of foods and beverages with added sugars your kids eat and drink. If you don't buy them, your kids won't get them very often. Sweet treats and sugary drinks have a lot of calories but few nutrients. Most added sugars come from sodas, sports drinks, energy drinks, juice drinks, cakes, cookies, ice cream, candy, and other desserts.

1 serve small portions

It's not necessary to get rid of all sweets and desserts. Show kids that a small amount of treats can go a long way. Use smaller bowls and plates for these foods. Have them share a candy bar or split a large cupcake.

2 sip smarter

Soda and other sweet drinks contain a lot of sugar and are high in calories. Offer water, 100% juice, or fat-free milk when kids are thirsty.



3 use the check-out lane that does not display candy

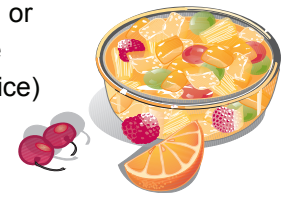
Most grocery stores will have a candy-free check-out lane to help moms out. Waiting in a store line makes it easy for children to ask for the candy that is right in front of their faces to tempt them.

4 choose not to offer sweets as rewards

By offering food as a reward for good behavior, children learn to think that some foods are better than other foods. Reward your child with kind words and comforting hugs, or give them non-food items, like stickers, to make them feel special.

5 make fruit the everyday dessert

Serve baked apples, pears, or enjoy a fruit salad. Or, serve yummy frozen juice bars (100% juice) instead of high-calorie desserts.



6 make food fun

Sugary foods that are marketed to kids are advertised as "fun foods." Make nutritious foods fun by preparing them with your child's help and being creative together. Create a smiley face with sliced bananas and raisins. Cut fruit into fun and easy shapes with cookie cutters.

7 encourage kids to invent new snacks

Make your own snack mixes from dry whole-grain cereal, dried fruit, and unsalted nuts or seeds. Provide the ingredients and allow kids to choose what they want in their "new" snack.



8 play detective in the cereal aisle

Show kids how to find the amount of total sugars in various cereals. Challenge them to compare cereals they like and select the one with the lowest amount of sugar.

9 make treats "treats," not everyday foods

Treats are great once in a while. Just don't make treat foods an everyday thing. Limit sweet treats to special occasions.

10 if kids don't eat their meal, they don't need sweet "extras"

Keep in mind that candy or cookies should not replace foods that are not eaten at meal time.

USDA United States Department of Agriculture
Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion

Go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov for more information.

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