



New Year Goal Getters



The new year is a perfect time to help your kids build good habits through New Year's resolutions. As caregivers, we know the value of setting realistic and healthy goals, but giving kids ownership of their own resolutions is a great way to commit to a healthier, happier new year together. Consider making resolutions together with your children, focusing on one or two goals, and make sure to keep it fun!



Kids especially enjoying tracking progress on charts or earning rewards.

Suggestions for age-appropriate resolutions include preschoolers focusing on small chores and kindness, kids (5 to 12 years old) prioritizing healthy habits, and teens (13 years old and older) forming resolutions around the seven areas of human health – mental, physical, social, financial, spiritual, environmental, and vocational. Ultimately, involving children in decision-making and making resolutions enjoyable for the whole family can turn them into lasting habits. Remember to consult with your student's pediatrician for advice on other important habits for a happy, healthy, and safe new year.

For examples of age-appropriate resolutions, check out this blog:

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/family-dynamics/Pages/Healthy-New-Years-Resolutions-for-Kids.aspx>

Healthy Habits: Screen Time

Have you heard the phrase, "digital native?"

It's a term used to describe the students of today, who have emerged as the first generation born into a mostly digital world. While screens can be a cool tool for learning, it's good to know that too much screen time might have a few downsides. Especially at this time of year, when kids tend to spend more time indoors, it's important to remember that developing brains need screen-free time to truly engage with their surroundings, their peers, and their family members.

As we kick off a new year, it's a good time to re-evaluate our habits. Not sure where to start? The experts suggest setting limits, keeping screens out of bedrooms, and caregivers modeling healthy screen behaviors.

For more on the impact of screens for students, check out this study:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10353947/> - Screens can improve education and executive functioning and academic performance



Delicious & Nutritious

School meals are a daily opportunity for students to try delicious and nutritious new-to-them foods. Packed with fruits, veggies, whole grains, lean proteins, and milk, school meals are required to meet federal nutrition standards and are designed to meet students' nutritional needs. This month, consider engaging with your student about the school menu... Talk to them about their favorite and encourage them to try something new.

What makes school meals so special?

- Schools are currently the **healthiest** dining environment for Americans.
- Approximately **one in eight children** in the United States reside in households with inconsistent access to sufficient food.
- Each day, an average of over **29.9 million children** are provided with a school lunch.
- Research indicates that students who partake in school breakfasts demonstrate a **17.5% increase** in standardized math test scores and attend school 1.5 more days per year.

Sources:

https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/features/healthy_school_meals.htm#:~:text=Research%20shows%20that%20students%20who,than%20students%20who%20don't.&text=All%20students%20can%20participate
<https://schoolnutrition.org/resource/2023-position-paper/>