



## September is National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month

The start of the new school year is a good time to take stock of family wellness. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recognizes September as National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month. Alarming, according to the CDC, approximately 1 in 5 American children have obesity. Obesity was declared a disease in 2013 by the American Medical Association. The growing prevalence among children is a public health emergency. Here are three simple but powerful ways to support healthy weight in children.

### Make Breakfast a Priority

Research indicates that children and adolescents who skip breakfast are more likely to be overweight or have obesity. After “fasting” for 9-12 hours children need to refuel for the day when they wake up. Eating breakfast makes it less likely that they'll overeat later in the day because they're hungry. Some researchers also believe that breakfast may “jumpstart” a child's metabolism, helping their body burn calories. See this month's recipes for quick and easy breakfast ideas.



### Address Screen Time & Physical Activity

Too much screen time is correlated with poor sleep, weight gain, lower grades in school, and poorer mental health. Limiting screen time can free up time for other activities and improve sleep. Cutting back on screen time also limits cues to eat unhealthy food. See this month's Nutrition & Health Resource Centers featured site “Raising Active Kids” for tips on supporting an active lifestyle.



## Upcoming Events

### Food Safety Training

**For information contact:**  
 Sierra Puwalski or Caleb Miller at  
 631-873-4775.

### Senior (60+) Food Distributions

Please call for income eligibility requirements and registration.  
 at: 631-873-4775.

### Nutrition Workshops

**Topic: Health Benefits of Fiber**  
**When: September 10<sup>th</sup> at 1 pm**  
**Where: 126 Spagnoli Rd., Melville**



## The Sleep-Weight Connection

More than 35% of Americans don't get enough sleep. Good sleep is essential for peak physical and mental health. Children and teens need more sleep than adults--the amount varies by age. Too little sleep has been linked to overweight and obesity. It is believed this is partly due to lack of sleep causing us to eat more and be less physically active. Insufficient sleep is also a risk factor for other chronic health conditions later in life including diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. Learn more about good sleep hygiene here: [Sleep Tips](#)



## How much sleep do we need?



**Adults over the age of 18: 7-8 hours a day**



**Teens ages 12-18: 8-10 hours a day**



**Children ages 6-12: 9-12 hours a day**

**SOURCES:** National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute: Sleep Deprivation and Deficiency; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Short Sleep Duration Among U.S. Adults; American Academy of Sleep Medicine: Sleep Recommendations



## NUTRITION & HEALTH RESOURCE CENTER

### Back to School Safety

This American Red Cross site provides a detailed safety checklist for children and teens returning to school. Included are safety tips for children walking, riding bikes, taking the bus and driving to school, find more information here: [Safe](#)



### Raising Active Kids

Visit this American Heart Association site for information on the importance of physical activity to children's health and well-being, suggestions for encouraging children to be more physically active and a variety of ways to support physical activity for children and the whole family. For more information visit: [Active Kids](#)



### Quick & Easy Breakfast Ideas

#### Whole Grain French Toast & Berry Syrup



##### Ingredients

- 1 egg
- 1/3 cup low-fat or non-fat milk
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon vanilla
- 2 slices whole-wheat bread (or other whole grain)
- 1-2 tbsp. vegetable oil

##### Directions

1. Place eggs, milk, cinnamon, and vanilla, in a flat-bottomed bowl/container and beat together.
2. Place oil in a pan, heat on medium heat.
3. Dip both sides of the bread in the egg and milk mixture. Cook about 3-4 minutes on each side or until lightly brown and cooked through.
4. Top with berry syrup (crush and combine ¼ cup fresh or frozen berries with 1 tsp. maple syrup) and serve.

#### Whole Grain Waffles or Pancakes



Choose frozen waffles or pancakes with a whole grain listed as the first ingredient. Toast and top with low-fat vanilla Greek yogurt and berries or diced fruit. Boost the nutritional value by sprinkling with nuts (e.g./ pecans, walnuts) or top with peanut or other nut butter and sliced bananas.

#### "Leftover" Breakfast



Be flexible, we tend to think of breakfast as cereal, toast, eggs, etc. The truth is any healthy choice fits at breakfast. If your child is open to leftover black beans and rice or last night's pasta, chicken and veggies—serve it with their favorite fruit and milk or fortified milk substitute, for a complete breakfast.