



Rationale for 5-2-1-0 Preventative Health Message

5—Eat fruits and vegetables at least 5 or more times on most days

Scientific Rationale:

A diet rich in fruits and vegetables provides vitamins and minerals, important for supporting growth and development, and for optimal immune function in children. High daily intakes of fruits and vegetables among adults are associated with lower rates of chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, diabetes, and possibly, some types of cancers. Emerging science suggests fruit and vegetable consumption may help prevent weight gain, and when total calories are controlled may be an important aid to achieving and sustaining weight loss.

2—Limit “screen time” [unrelated to school] to 2 hours or less everyday

Scientific Rationale:

Watching television occupies many children for several hours each day, and is associated with physical inactivity, increased energy intake, exposure to marketing (sitting in front of the TV many people snack more than they should), and increased prevalence of overweight and obesity. The AAP recommends that children under age two shouldn't watch any television. Too much TV has been linked to lower reading scores and attention problems.

1—Get 1 hour or more of moderate to vigorous physical activity everyday

Scientific Rationale:

Regular physical activity is essential for fitness and prevention of overweight & chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, colon cancer and osteoporosis. While most school age children are quite active, physical activity sharply declines during adolescence. Children who are raised in families with active lifestyles are more likely to stay active as adults than children raised in families with sedentary lifestyles.

0—Drink less sugar. Try water and low-fat or fat-free milk instead of sugar-sweetened drinks and whole milk

Scientific Rationale:

Sugar-sweetened beverage consumption has increased dramatically over the past 20 years; high intake among children is associated with overweight/obesity, displacement of milk consumption, and dental caries.

Whole milk is the single largest source of saturated fat in children's diets. Switching to low or non-fat milk products significantly reduces dietary saturated and total fat, as well as total calories.

Sources

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