

# WELLNESS TIPS FOR YOU AND YOUR KIDS

**It's been a long summer, but fall is finally here! New seasons bring new opportunities to refocus your energy on taking care of you and your family.**

**How long has it been since you checked in with your kids? This year has likely been more disruptive for them than anyone. It might be a good time to reconnect and make sure they are feeling healthy and safe.**

## **FIVE. TWO. ONE. NONE.**

Keeping your kids in healthy routines has probably been extra challenging this year. But it doesn't have to be complicated! Follow these actions each day to help them build good habits that will last a lifetime:

- **5** servings of fruits and vegetables
- **2** hours or less of screen time
- **1** hour of physical activity
- **0** sugary drinks (drink more water)

You can get in on the fun, too. Consider turning off the TV and enjoying a family meal (with a couple servings of fruits and veggies, of course). Then, go on a family walk. Don't forget to bring a bottle of water!

Source: [Healthy Kids Ohio](#)

## **RESPONSIBLE SCREEN TIME**

Let's face it, screens are a necessary part of our daily lives. But, did you know that excessive use of recreational screen time (TV, computers, tablets and video games) increases risks of obesity, attention problems and lower reading scores? Here are some tips for moderating your child's use of screen time:

- Create technology-free zones in your house, and make sure their bedroom is one of them.
- Set aside certain times for screen usage and use timers to keep track.
- Keep other engaging activities around, like books and board games.
- Get involved—model good behavior and make screen time a family activity.
- Have your kids earn screen time with other actions, such as playing outside or doing chores.

Source: [Healthy Kids Ohio](#), [Very Well Family](#)

## CONNECTING WITH YOUR KIDS

With this year's stay-at-home orders, social distancing and self-isolation, sometimes we end up feeling lonely and disconnected, even from our families living in the same house. If your dinner conversations need a bit of a refresh, consider trying one of the conversation starters below.

Pro Tip: Don't ask your kids questions that can be answered easily with a "yes," "no," "fine" or "nothing." The secret to getting them talking is to ask open-ended questions. For example:

- Tell me about the best part of your day.
- Tell me about something you read in school.
- What is a game you played today?
- Can you show me something you learned today?
- What are you looking forward to this week?
- How were you kind to someone today?
- Tell me about your favorite... (book, subject in school, animal, food, etc.)
- What do you think you are good at?
- Describe your perfect day.
- Who would you most like to meet?

## TIPS FOR VIRTUAL LEARNING

If you are faced with the challenge of helping your kids learn virtually this fall, you might be feeling a little lost. You don't have to be an expert teacher, but these tips might help learning from home go a bit more smoothly:

- Try to keep a consistent schedule (but be flexible when you need to).
- Make sure to include time for breaks and physical activity.
- Provide your kids plenty of positive feedback and reinforcement.
- Create a space for learning and minimize distractions.
- Ask for help when you need it—reach out to your child's teacher or hire a tutor.
- Help your kids stay connected with their friends and practice virtual social learning.
- You know your kids best, so personalize the learning for them when you can.

## GOOD-FOR-YOU COOKIE DOUGH!

This concoction tastes like eating raw cookie dough, but it is actually *good for you*. It's egg-free and gluten-free, and it can be made dairy-free and/or sugar-free with the right chocolate chips. It's fast and fun to make, and a perfect kitchen project to get the kids involved.

### Chickpea Cookie Dough

#### Ingredients:

- 15 oz. can chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- ½ cup almond or peanut butter
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon sea salt
- ½ cup chocolate chips or chunks

#### Instructions

1. Add all the ingredients but the chocolate chips to a blender or food processor and process for 3-5 minutes, until creamy.
2. Transfer the mixture to a bowl and fold in the chocolate chips.

#### Tips:

- Look for no-sugar chocolate chips, like dark chocolate sweetened with stevia, to keep this snack sugar-free. You can even break up your favorite low-sugar chocolate bar to make it extra special!
- This dough is great on a spoon, as a spread or rolled into balls for a grab-and-go treat. It'll store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to five days, or in the freezer for up to three months.

Source: Dawn Jackson Blatner