

# Healthy Children

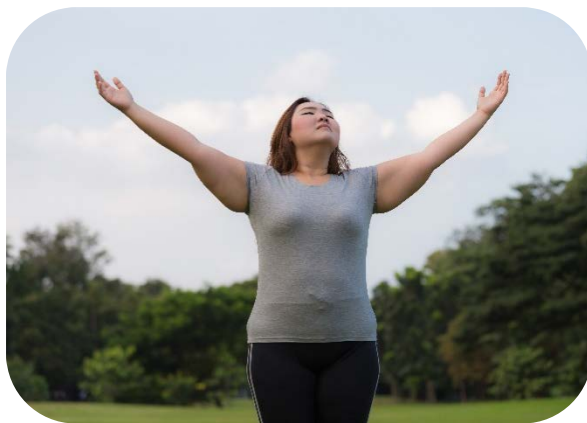
March 2020 Parent Newsletter

## Self-management

Why it's important to you and your child

One part of self-management is having the ability to control your emotions and your responses. If you can identify your emotions and how they influence your actions, you will be better able to act on the emotions you experience. Being able to take a breath and calm yourself in a challenging situation to avoid over-reacting, yelling or getting into a fight is what self-management looks like in daily practice. Everyone experiences both positive and negative emotions, but knowing how to regulate and act appropriately on those emotions is key to self-management.

Have you ever done something or said something you wish you hadn't. We all have! For improved self-management skills, throughout the day, take time to deal with stress and teach your child this too. In a challenging situation, before doing anything else, take a deep breath (5 seconds in, 5 seconds out). By doing this you can actually calm your body's "fight or flight" response to strong emotions. In addition, learn to accurately name your



emotions. These actions will allow your brain to start processing your emotions using your brain's cortex (thinking part). Practicing these two things can help you problem solve and think more clearly.

Reflecting on your emotions and how they influence your reactions is important for self-management. It can also help you think of how you can best model appropriate emotional responses for your child. Admitting to having emotions is not a sign of weakness or failure. It's okay to say, "I'm feeling upset right now, just give me a few minutes and then we can talk about this." It models that everyone has difficult emotions at times and that they can be managed in appropriate and safe ways.

(Adopted from [www.parenttoolkit.com](http://www.parenttoolkit.com))

## Articles

Self-management

Role Modeling a Healthy Relationship with Food

### Health advice is as easy as 8-1-1

Did you know you can get trusted health advice around the clock from a registered nurse by dialing Health Link at 8-1-1?

Health Link is Alberta's free 24/7 health information and advice line. They can help assess symptoms and help you decide if you need to seek medical attention.



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## Role Modeling a Healthy Relationship with Food

Kids often model what they see their parents do – and eating is no exception! It's important to know how your own relationship with food can affect children. By eating a variety of healthy foods, you can set a positive example for your kids.

Tips for healthy role modeling:

- **Eat together.** Enjoy meals as a family as often as you can. Meals are a time to connect with your children and share food traditions. Keep distractions like TVs and phones away from the table. For fun mealtimes, try these conversation cards: [www.ahs.ca/assets/info/nutrition/if-nfs-conversation-cards.pdf](http://www.ahs.ca/assets/info/nutrition/if-nfs-conversation-cards.pdf)
- **Offer healthy foods.** Offer healthy meals and snacks and let kids decide how much to eat. Do not use food to bribe, punish, or reward. Children are more likely to enjoy meals and learn to try new foods when eating is their own choice.
- **Cook together.** Children learn about healthy eating and build skills in the kitchen when they help plan meals, shop and cook.
- **Learn to identify fad diets.** Fad diets usually promise quick health fixes. Avoid fad diets and role model healthy eating to help your child develop a healthy relationship with food. Avoid diets that:
  - Cut out foods: Some diets may promise better health by cutting out entire food categories, such as gluten,



- or dairy products. This can be a problem, as different types of foods provide important nutrients needed for good health.
  - Promise fast weight loss: Diets that promise weight loss of more than 2 pounds in a week are likely fad diets.
  - **Talk positively about bodies.** Focus on health, not size. This can help children develop positive self-esteem and body image.
- **Do you want to know more about helping children to develop healthy habits and positive body image? Visit Raising Our Healthy Kids:** <https://vimeo.com/160413076>