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New Year's Resolutions: Promoting Healthy Behaviors Year Round For Yourself and Your Family

Every year the same popular New Year's resolutions like eating healthy, losing weight and getting fit show up near the top of [America's resolution lists](#). What will future resolution lists include if the children of today made these lifestyle habits part of their daily routine? Children often mimic what they see. Now is the time to choose healthy behaviors and pastimes for yourself. If your child sees you physically active, eating well and that you have fun doing it, he or she is more likely to be active and follow similar healthy habits throughout their lifetime. Try incorporating these healthful habits into your family's routine this year.

Encourage Healthy Eating Habits

- Buy and serve more fruits and vegetables. Let your child help choose them at the store.
- Eat fast food less often. When you do visit a fast food restaurant, choose the healthier options, such as salads or small sandwiches without cheese or mayonnaise.
- Drink water or low-fat milk more often than fruit juice. One hundred percent fruit juice is a healthy choice but is high



- in calories.
- Plan healthy meals and eat together. Slowing down together at meal time helps children learn to enjoy a variety of foods and savor their meals, rather than grabbing snacks or meals on the go.
- Do not get discouraged if your child will not eat a new food the first time it is served. Some kids will need to have a new food served to them 10 times or more before they will eat it. Keep trying and demonstrating that you like it.
- Do not use food as a reward when encouraging kids to eat. Promising dessert to a child for eating vegetables, for example, sends the message that vegetables are less valuable than dessert. Kids learn to dislike foods they think are less valuable.
- Start with small servings. Let your child ask for more if he or she is still hungry. It is up to you to provide your child a healthy meal, but your child should be allowed to choose how much food he or she will eat.
- Be aware that many high-fat or high-sugar foods and beverages are marketed to kids. Talk to your child about the importance of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and other healthy foods — even if these foods aren't

given flashy advertisements on TV or in stores.

Encourage Daily Physical Activity

Regular physical activity can assist people of all ages with weight management. It may also improve energy levels and mood, and lower the risk of developing chronic conditions like heart disease and diabetes. Kids need about 60 minutes of physical activity a day, but this does not have to happen all at once. Short 5 to 10 minute periods of activity throughout the day are just as good. If you or your children are not used to being active, start with what you physically can do and build on it with time. Here are some ways to motivate yourself and your children to be active:

- Be active together as a family. Assign active chores such as making the beds, washing the car, or vacuuming. Plan active outings such as a trip to the zoo, a bike ride, bowling, or snowshoeing through the park. Remember, a pre-adolescent child's body is not ready for adult-style physical activity. Do not encourage your child to participate in activities such as long jogs, using an exercise bike or treadmill, or



- lifting heavy weights. FUN physical activities that kids choose to do on their own are often best.
- Set limits on screen time (TV, video games, and being online.) Help your child find fun things to do besides watching TV, like acting out favorite books or doing a family project together.
- Be active with friends and their families, for example, organize a nature hike or softball game. Having your kids see other families endorsing a healthy lifestyle also helps in reinforcing these lifelong habits.

Information for this article was found at [usa.gov](#).

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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

New Community Health Improvement Plan is Released

Are you interested in making positive changes in the health of our community? Feel like working with local leaders to tackle some of the biggest health issues in Sheboygan County? The new Community Health Improvement Plan which steers the work of Health Sheboygan County 2020 is completed and online for the community to review.

During the summer of 2011, local community leaders met with members of Healthy Sheboygan County 2020 and the Division of Public Health to prioritize the health needs of the community. With that input, the top areas of need were established. Dental care access, mental health needs, health literacy, alcohol and other drug abuse—including tobacco and obesity and nutrition became the top priorities of this plan. Community Health Committees for each of these focus areas have developed goals and plans to help

work towards improvements to the community's health.

To learn more about Healthy Sheboygan County 2020 and review the Community Health Improvement Plan, go to healthysheboygancounty.org.

If you are interested in getting involved with any of these committees, contact the Division of Public Health by calling 459-4382 or sending an email to publichealth@co.sheboygan.wi.us.



Check your Carbon Monoxide Detectors

It has been nearly a year since the new state law took effect requiring carbon monoxide, or CO, alarms to be installed in one and two-family dwellings. All multifamily buildings with fuel burning devices also require detectors.

In the midst of winter, when furnaces are working their hardest, make sure your carbon monoxide detectors are functioning properly and check or replace the batteries.

Carbon Monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas that is produced by the incomplete burning of fuels, including coal, wood, charcoal, oil, kerosene, propane, and natural gas. Exposure can occur from malfunctioning appliances such as furnaces, ranges, water heaters and room heaters; engine-powered equipment such as portable generators; fireplaces; and charcoal that is burned in homes and other enclosed areas.

People may not know they are being exposed. The initial symptoms of low to moderate CO poisoning can be mistaken for the flu but without the fever. They include: headache, fatigue, shortness of breath, nausea, and dizziness. High level CO poi-

soning results in increasingly more severe symptoms, including: mental confusion, vomiting, loss of muscular coordination, loss of consciousness and ultimately death. Young children are vulnerable to the effects of carbon monoxide and can be more severely affected or show symptoms sooner.



If your detector goes off, do not try to find the source of the carbon monoxide, get everyone out of the house as quickly as possible into fresh air.

Then call the fire department or 911 from a neighbor's home or a cell phone.

Information for this article was found from the [Safe Kids USA](http://SafeKidsUSA.org) and [US Consumer Product Safety Commission](http://USConsumerProductSafetyCommission.gov) websites.

