



Hey, Kids!

Keep your family healthy this winter —and earn prizes— with the 5210 Challenge

by rhea maze

Healthy kids learn better. Research shows that good nutrition and daily physical activity leads to improved concentration, energy levels, academic performance and overall brain function.

The Schools on the Move 5210 Challenge, sponsored by University of Colorado Health's Healthy Kids Club, encourages elementary school students, teachers, staff and families to adopt the 5210 healthy habits every day in February.

The daily goal is to get five servings of fruits and vegetables, two hours or less of recreational screen time, one hour or more of physical activity and to drink no sugary drinks. Participants use a log to track which 5210 habits they accomplish each day and can earn prizes like T-shirts and money for their school's wellness or PE programs.

"Parents love this challenge just as much as kids," says Melissa Baatz, a health educator with Healthy Kids Club. In addition to reinforcing healthy behaviors, the challenge helps families identify what they could be doing better—whether that's spending less time in front of the TV or eating more vegetables.

For challenge information, logs and to sign up, contact your PE teacher or visit healthykidsclub.org

"We do this challenge in February because it's one of the most inactive months of the year," Baatz says. That means finding new ways to fit in physical activity.

"Last year, my kindergartner set up timed exercise circuits around the house and had us go through them as a family. Many schools and participants get really creative with this challenge, which increases awareness and makes it more fun and exciting." ✨

5

Eat five servings of fruits and vegetables every day.



A lack of nutritious, vitamin-rich foods like fruits and vegetables is associated with lower grades, inability to focus and more missed school. For kids, a serving size is roughly the size of the palm of their hand. Try adding more fruits and vegetables to the meals you eat most often and having fruits and vegetables available as snacks.

2

Limit recreational screen time to two hours or less every day.

Time spent in front of a screen (TV, computers, video games, tablets, phones, etc.) should be limited. Too much screen time has been linked to increased obesity, lower reading scores, attention problems and other health issues. Set some basic rules, such as no recreational screen time before homework or chores are completed or during meal-times. Use a timer to track it.



1

Get one hour or more of physical activity every day.



Do something that raises your heart rate. PE class and extra activity breaks at school count. You can break it up into 10-20 minute intervals and make it fun by coming up with new activity ideas. Try dancing, playing indoor hopscotch, or bundling up and taking a walk with your family.

0

Avoid sugary drinks every day.



Sugary drinks are high in calories and lack essential nutrients. Swap out soda, sports or energy drinks and sweetened juices with water, milk and unsweetened beverages.