



### Statistics:

- The percent of overweight youth, ages 6 to 11 years, increased from 4 percent in 1965 to almost 20 percent in 2004.

— *National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), June 2003-2004*

- Approximately 68 to 75 percent of youth in the United States exceed the current dietary recommendations for intake of total or saturated fats.

— *Dietary Guidance for Children ages 2-11 years old, Journal of the American Dietetic Association, 2004*

- Overweight and obese youth, ages 10 to 13 years, have a 70 percent likelihood of remaining obese in adult years.

— *National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 1999-2000*

- Youth who are overweight have been found to have risk factors for heart disease, Type II diabetes, sleep apnea, poor self-esteem and social discrimination.

— *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2006*

### Recommendations for parents and guardians:

- Be a positive role model. If you practice healthy habits, it is much easier to teach your children to do the same.

- Be supportive. Focus on the positive instead of the negative. Everyone likes to be praised for a job well done. Celebrate successes and help children and teens develop a good self-image.

### Encourage Good Nutrition:

- Promote healthy eating patterns by offering nutritious snacks, such as vegetables and fruits, low-fat dairy foods, and whole grains; encourage children to regulate their own food intake while setting appropriate limits on choices; and model healthy food choices.

- Avoid the use of food as a reward. Candy and snacks as a reward encourage bad habits. Find other ways to celebrate good behavior.

- Make dinnertime a family time. When everyone sits down together to eat, there is less chance of children eating the wrong foods or snacking too much.

— *American Heart Association, 2006, www.americanheart.org*

### Encourage Physical Activity:

- Promote regular physical activity. Regular physical activity improves strength and endurance, helps build healthy bones and muscles, helps control weight, reduces anxiety and stress, increases self-esteem, and may improve blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

— *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2006, www.cdc.gov*

- Plan regular physical activities as a family such as an after-dinner walk.

- Limit television and computer screen time to a maximum of two hours per day.

- Do not make physical activity a punishment. Try using physical activity to counter something your child does not want to do. For instance, make it the routine that your child can ride a bike for 30 minutes before starting homework after school. Your child will beg for 20 more minutes outside just to put off the homework.

— *American Heart Association, 2006, www.americanheart.org*

### Daily recommended servings

#### for youth, ages six to 11 years:

The following recommended servings for grains, vegetables, fruits, milk, meat and beans are based on an 1,800-calorie diet.

- Six ounces of grains every day; at least half should be whole grains.

### AMA Alliance

515 North State Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60610  
Tel: 312. 464. 4470  
Fax: 312. 464. 5020  
www.amaalliance.org



- Two-and-a-half cups of vegetables every day; vary your vegetables.
- One-and-a-half cups of fruit, every day; go easy on juice and make sure it's 100 percent.
- Three cups of skim or one-percent milk every day; for children, ages two to eight years, it's two cups.
- Five ounces of meat and beans every day; eat lean or low-fat meat, chicken, turkey, and fish baked, broiled or grilled.

— *United States Department of Agriculture, 2006*

**Where to go for more information on healthy lifestyles and nutrition for youth:**

- [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) – the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is a federal agency protecting the health and safety of all Americans and providing essential human services.
- [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org) – the American Heart Association is a national voluntary health agency whose mission is to reduce disability and death from cardiovascular diseases and stroke.
- [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org) – the American Academy of Pediatrics is a professional organization committed to the attainment of optimal physical, mental, and social health and well-being for all infants, children, adolescents and young adults.
- [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org) – the American

Dietetic Association is a professional organization for registered dietitians and serves the public by promoting optimal nutrition, health and well-being.

- [www.aafp.org](http://www.aafp.org) – the American Academy of Family Physicians is a professional medical member organization dedicated to preserving and promoting the science and art of family medicine and to ensure high-quality, cost-effective health care for patients.
- [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov) – the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion is an organization devoted to improving the nutrition and well-being of Americans.

The AMA Alliance, Inc. is a national health advocacy network committed to promoting better health. The Stop America's Violence Everywhere (SAVE) program assists victims of abuse, teaches children about bullies and conflict resolution and educates the public about child health and safety. All resources, including health-focused coloring books and bookmarks for children, are available at [www.amaalliance.org](http://www.amaalliance.org).



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