



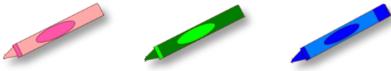
# TAKING CARE OF OURSELVES

July, 2018

Topic of the Month

Free - Help Yourself!

## Get Cooking, Kids!



**Learning to cook helps children build self-esteem and is a skill that can improve their health and nutrition for the rest of their lives!**

In the kitchen, kids can practice:

- Personal and food hygiene, as they wash hands before cooking and after touching raw meat.
- Math, as they measure, divide portions, and double recipes.
- Reading and moving from one step to the next.
- Following instructions, as they learn from success and failures.
- Fine motor skills, as they open, cut, carry, and pour ingredients.
- Exploring the different tastes and textures of a variety of foods.
- Patience, as they wait for their masterpieces to be done!

First and second graders might be ready to try:

- Cutting with a small knife. Watch this video to learn how to keep fingers safe: <https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/videos/techniques/knife-skills>
- Snipping herbs and leafy greens with scissors.
- Grating, as long as they don't go right up to the end of the food.
- Counting and measuring.
- Greasing and lining pans or trays.
- Peeling oranges or boiled eggs.
- Setting the table.

Third and fourth graders might be ready to:

- Plan a family meal, thinking about veggies, whole grains, & protein.
- Follow a simple recipe.
- Use a peeler, whisk, & can opener.
- Beginning to cook with heat on the stove, oven, or microwave.
- Making a salad by themselves.

# It's Elementary!

## Growing Strong in Grades 1 - 4

**E**lementary school age children are practicing more than just reading, writing, and arithmetic. They're practicing habits that will become part of their lives as adults!



### Practicing Friendship

Making and keeping good friends takes skills that have to be learned and refined.

- You can help your child learn to recognize (and be) a good friend by having frequent chats with him/her about how friends treat one another with kindness. Friends follow rules and share, and they're helpful to one another.
- Identify what's not acceptable as well. Don't focus on certain children or label them as "bad" or "good." Instead talk about what your family values (kindness, honesty, sharing...) and how specific behaviors can stand in the way of those things. Point out how people are happier when they are good to one another.
- Even if your child has good friends, bullying can still happen. Talk to him about walking away, speaking up, and asking for help.
- Show your child what healthy relationships look like by modeling them with your spouse or partner, your friends, and acquaintances.
- Focus on your connection with your child. When relationship between the two of you is built on respect, kindness, and honesty, you've set a great example of what healthy relationships look like.

Taking care of ourselves can take a lot of support.  
We're here to help!  
Ask a nurse or provider if you'd like to talk.

### Practicing Safety

According to the CDC, accidents are the leading cause of death for school-age kids, yet most of these injuries could be prevented.

- Car seats or a booster are required until the lap belt can

be worn low and flat on the hips and the shoulder belt is across the shoulder, not across the face or neck. Everyone in the car should be buckled up.

- Plan for fire safety. Practice what to do if the smoke alarm goes off. Have an escape route, and practice using it.
- Talk about gun safety. Curious kids and firearms can be a dangerous mix. Keep firearms unloaded and locked, with ammunition locked separately. When your child visits someone else's home, ask if they have guns, and how they are stored.
- Bike and walk safely. Make sure that they understand the rules of the road and that helmets are properly fitted and worn whenever they ride their bikes. Ride Right, Walk Left!

### Practice Study Skills

Establishing good study skills now will pay off way beyond elementary school.

- The place she does homework should be quiet, well-lit, as distraction-free as possible, with supplies nearby.
- Tailor the time of day that homework is done to your child's energy and attention levels, and let him be part of the decision.
- If she routinely needs lots of help to get homework done, talk with her teacher about the reason for the homework (checking for understanding? Skill practice and reinforcement?) She might not need you there the whole time.

For more information, visit:

[www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org)

# Building Strong Bodies

The elementary school years are a prime time to help kids develop a life-long love of physical activity. Nurturing the habit of physical activity is as important as nurturing healthy food choices or brushing and flossing their teeth.

Most kids love to move, but not all kids love to move in the same way. Some kids thrive on competition and enjoy being on sports teams, while some children don't want to compete - they just want to have fun with friends. Expose them to a variety of ways of being active. The more chances they have to try different activities, the more likely they'll find something they enjoy.

**Model movement. Moving together not only makes it "normal," it's important family time.**

Here are some ideas:

- Go for a dinner-time walk. Whether it's while dinner cooks or after the dishes are done, it's a time to talk and reconnect after a busy day.
- Have a dance party! Flashlights can provide the lighting and everyone can get their groove on.
- Work movement into other daily tasks. If you have to drive into town to get to school, could you park several blocks away and walk together the rest of the way? Where else are family opportunities for activity hiding?
- Lots of families have movie night; how about a family fitness night too? You could take turns deciding what fun will happen each week. Bike riding? Swimming? Soccer? Frisbee?
- Walk or run for charity. This models the values of fitness as well as the value of being of service to others.
- Get dirty! Yard work and gardening can be especially fun when they're done together.

**Start them young, but remember it's never too late.** If being physically active is just what's a normal part of family life, they won't question whether it's something they should do or not. They'll come to know themselves as an active, fit people, and they'll be more likely to act that way.

**Do as you say, and as you do!** As a parent, do you demonstrate with your actions and words that being physically active is important? Do you move around in ways that you enjoy or are you mostly sedentary? Do you talk about physical activity with positive or negative words?

**Make it fun!** Parental pressure to participate or perform can take all the fun out of fitness. It then becomes a battle between pleasing or disappointing a parent, instead of doing something healthy for themselves while they're also having a good time.

For more information, go to: [healthychildren.org](http://healthychildren.org)

# Building Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is the way that a person thinks and feels about herself and what she thinks about her ability to achieve the things that matter to her. Self-esteem is also affected by how she's treated by people that are important to her (parents, teachers, friends...).

**For healthy self-esteem, children need to develop:**

**A sense of security.** He needs to feel safe and secure, both now and when he thinks about the future.

**A sense of belonging.** Feeling accepted and loved, first at home and then out in the larger community, helps her to know she has a group of people to love and support her.

**A sense of personal competence and pride in the ways he can take care of himself.** If he is overprotected and overly dependent, he may feel powerless. If expectations are so high that he can never succeed, he may feel out of control of his own life.

**A sense of trust, in herself and in the people closest to her.** This means the adults in her life should keep their promises, believe what she says, and treat her as a honest person.

**A sense of responsibility and contribution.** Children that believe that they can be of service to others and that their service can positively impact someone else are more likely to step up, pitch in, and help out.

**A sense of his ability to make real choices and decisions.** Everyone wants to feel like they have some control over the events of their own lives.

**A sense of self-discipline and self-control.** If she believes that she can trust herself to put in effort and keep her cool, she can believe in her ability to work to achieve her goals.

**A sense of encouragement and support.** When he knows that there are people that believe in him and will support him in his efforts, he's more willing to try new challenges.

**A sense of accepting mistakes and failures.** When she understands that mistakes are part of learning, that they're to be expected and nothing to be ashamed of, she'll be braver as she steps out into new areas.

**A sense of family self-esteem.** Kids build self-esteem when their family members feel good about each other. This means that the family as a whole focuses on each other's strengths instead of weakness, speaks truthfully and kindly to one another, and supports one another, both at home and in public.

For more about kid's self-esteem, visit [healthychildren.org](http://healthychildren.org)