

# THE SCIENTIFIC **RATIONALE**

## **5** or more fruits and vegetables.

A diet rich in fruits and vegetables provides vitamins and minerals, important for supporting growth and development, and for optimal immune function in children. High daily intakes of fruits and vegetables among adults are associated with lower rates of chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, diabetes, and possibly, some types of cancers. Emerging science suggests fruit and vegetable consumption may help prevent weight gain, and when total calories are controlled, may be an important aid to achieving and sustaining a healthy weight.

## **2** hours or less recreational screen time.\*

Watching too much television (TV) and use of other screen media is associated with an increased prevalence of overweight and obesity, lower reading scores, and attention problems. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends no more than 2 hours of screen time a day and that children under age 2 not watch any TV or other screen media. The AAP recommends keeping the TV and computer out of the bedroom.

## **1** hour or more of physical activity.

Regular physical activity is essential for weight maintenance and prevention of chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, colon cancer, and osteoporosis. While most school age children are quite active, physical activity sharply declines during adolescence. Children who are raised in families with active lifestyles are more likely to stay active as adults than children raised in families with sedentary lifestyles.

## **0** sugary drinks, more water.

Sugar-sweetened beverage consumption has increased dramatically since the 1970s; high intake among children is associated with overweight and obesity, displacement of milk consumption, and dental cavities. The AAP recommends that children 1–6 years old consume no more than 4–6 ounces of 100% juice per day and youth 7–18 years old consume no more than 8–12 ounces. Water provides a low-cost, zero-calorie beverage option and is a healthy alternative to sugary drinks.

\* Screen time includes time spent watching television, playing video games, using a computer, smartphone, and tablet. Recreational screen time is screen time used for non-educational purposes.

Baker S, Cochran W, Greer F, et al. The use and misuse of fruit juice in pediatrics. *Pediatrics*. 2001;107(5):1210-1213. National Association for Sport and Physical Education, Physical Activity for Children: A Statement of Guidelines for Children Ages 5-12. (2004). Position of the American Dietetic Association: Dietary Guidance for Healthy Children Ages 2-11 Years. *J. Am. Diet. Assoc.*, 2004; 104: 660-677. Strasburger VC, Hogan MJ, Mulligan DA, et al. Children, adolescents, and the media. *Pediatrics*. 2013;132(5):958-961. The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, Issue Brief: The Role of Media in Childhood Obesity, February 2004. USDHHS and USDA, 2005 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee Report, retrieved during 12/04 from [www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines](http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines) Walter C. Willett, M.D. Eat, Drink and Be Healthy: The Harvard Guide to Healthy Eating, 2001, Free Press, NY. Adapted from the Harvard School of Public Health Prevention Research Center, Maine Youth Overweight Collaborative (MYOC) 6/5/15