

## Little Ways to become a better Healthy Role Model

You may not be a perfect health model for your kids, but if they see you making a real effort to improve your own habits, they will start to realize that being healthy is really important. Here are simple things you can do to help yourself and set a good example for your kids.

- **Make gradual changes:** Drink one more glass of water every day. Walk 10 minutes longer every week. Cut down one less indulgent food or drink every week.
- **Balance bad habits with good ones:** Watch TV while you're on the treadmill. And don't go cold turkey on your favorite foods—it's ok to have an occasional treat. You'll be more likely to stick to your commitment if you don't feel that you are depriving yourself.
- **Start walking:** Take the stairs instead of the escalator. Park at the back of the parking lot and walk instead of cruising for the closest spot
- **Drink more water and less soda:** You can't expect your kids to cut back on soda if you won't.
- **Listen to when you're full:** Ban the "clean your plate" rule. Push your plate away when you're no longer hungry; don't eat until you're stuffed. An adult's stomach is the size of a loosely clenched fist, so it doesn't take much food to fill it.
- **Grocery shop on a full stomach:** It really helps prevent buying unhealthy snacks on an impulse.
- **Slow down!:** It takes 20 minutes for your stomach to tell your brain you've been fed. By slowing down your eating your brain will realize you are fuller sooner and you won't eat as much. Try little tricks to slow yourself down such as putting your fork down between every bite.
- **Be positive:** Don't talk about your weight or put yourself down in front of your kids. You don't want them to think that a healthy lifestyle is only about how much they weigh. And try not to complain about how much you may dislike exercising or eating healthy foods—your kids will hear you.
- **Focus on the why as well as the how:** Knowing why being healthy is important will lead to meaningful change. When you learn something new or a little tip that works for you, share it with the family.