

## FORWARD CORNER

### November is Eat Smart Month

*Fifteen percent of Illinois preschoolers, ages two to four, are obese. There is more and more evidence showing that even a child at four or five who is obese is already developing high cholesterol and high blood pressure. This early onset is setting children up for heart disease in adulthood. The good news is there is something we can do in our early childhood programs and in the home. Researchers say the early embrace of healthy habits is a key ingredient in tackling childhood obesity.<sup>1</sup> This November, FORWARD joins the American Heart Association in celebrating *Eat Smart Month*, focusing on choosing and building healthier life styles. Consider these American Heart Association *Eat Smart* suggestions.*

- Eat clean. (Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low- and non-fat dairy, skinless poultry, fish, beans and legumes, non-tropical vegetable oils, nuts, and seeds).
- Ask for healthier restaurant food (many restaurant foods are higher in sugar, fat and sodium).
- Reduce or eliminate processed foods (which are often high in sodium and other chemicals and preservatives).
- Cook a healthy meal (and eat together as a family).
- Select healthier fats (plant based like olives and avocados and omega 3 found in fish, seeds and variety of other foods. Limit saturated and Trans fats).
- Reduce or cut out added sugar (daily, no more than 9 teaspoons for men, 6 for women and less than 6 for children).
- Eat more fruits and veggies.
- Drink water to quench your thirst.

For more information on Eat Smart Month and to download the 2018 Tool Kit, click here:

<https://www.heart.org/-/media/files/healthy-living/eat-smart-month-toolkit/2018-esm-resource-guide.pdf?la=en&hash=AE7C49FD90B229FC04E7186C854DB1E294CC6DC9>

For a simple piece to share with families, check out this tip sheet: *At the Store – Save Money and Shop Healthy*

<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/wecan/downloads/tip-save-money.pdf>

For more healthy lifestyle resources go to [forwarddupage.org](http://forwarddupage.org)

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<https://www.usatoday.com/in-depth/news/50-states/2018/10/31/childhood-obesity-weight-gain-prevention-target-toddlers-preschoolers/1697891002/>