

FORWARD CORNER

September is National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month

FORWARD DuPage joins the [Office of Child Care](#) encouraging early care and education providers to promote healthy eating and physical activity with these examples and tips:

- **Attend Healthy Living/Habits training.** FORWARD DuPage and the YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago, through a donation from DuPage Medical Group Charitable Fund of the DuPage Foundation, are offering DuPage County early childhood and family child care programs access to training, technical assistance and implementation grants to improve children's nutrition and physical activity outcomes. For information contact taylor5008@sbcglobal.net or carrie.pierce@ywcachicago.org
- **Collaborate with FORWARD and others in DuPage and use community resources.** Look for other sponsors or groups in your area with an interest in addressing childhood obesity, healthy eating, well-being of children, etc. Review FORWARD DuPage resources [here](#).
- **Turn teaching concepts into movement for children.** For example, teach letter recognition by posting letters on the wall (or on the floor) as targets for bean bags. Review monthly tips for Physical Activity [here](#).
- **Eat together and make nutrition fun.** Serve meals family style so children get to choose what they want to eat and how much to serve themselves. Talk to the children in your care about which foods belong to which food group –fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, or dairy. Refine your family style dining strategy with this amazing [resource](#).
- **Keep it simple.** Try simple recipes like roasted veggies, bean soup, or baked chicken. You don't need a recipe with a lot of ingredients to create a delicious dish. Plus, when you choose a simple recipe, you can spend more time teaching children to prepare healthy foods and enjoy a meal together. Find an assortment of meal and snack ideas on KidsHealth.org

JOIN THE HEALTHY MOVEMENT TODAY!

Families: Help your child develop a healthy relationship with food by resisting the urge to use food as a reward (eat your broccoli and you can have more chicken fingers), as a way to comfort children (this cookie will make it all better) and as a way to celebrate milestones and events (a trip for pizza or ice cream is the way to celebrate everything from moving up to the next level at preschool, finishing a sports league, losing a tooth, etc.).

Early Childhood Providers: Commit to at least one training or professional development opportunity for all of your staff that will help build your program's capacity to tackle this childhood obesity epidemic.

For information on healthy eating and active living initiatives in DuPage county, check out www.forwarddupage.org. For more early childhood healthy resources for families click [here](#).