



# Focus on Health Nutrition, and Physical Activity Information for Parents

F.S. 381.0056

St. Johns County School District, Health Services Dept.  
School Year 2022-23

Healthy  
Vegetables  
Fitness  
Nutrition  
Running  
Fruits  
Walking  
Activity  
Happy  
Exercise

## Physical Activity Facts

Source: CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd edition* recommend that children and adolescents ages 6 to 17 years do 60 minutes or more of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity daily.



## Benefits of Physical Activity

Regular physical activity can help children and adolescents improve cardiorespiratory fitness, build strong bones and muscles, control weight, reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression, and reduce the risk of developing health conditions such as:

- Heart disease
- Cancer
- Type 2 diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Osteoporosis
- Obesity

## Recommendations for Physical Activity:

- **Aerobic:** Most of the 60 minutes or more per day should be either moderate- or vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity and should include vigorous-intensity physical activity on at least 3 days a week.
- **Muscle-strengthening:** As part of their 60 minutes or more of daily physical activity, children and adolescents should include muscle-strengthening physical activity on at least 3 days a week.
- **Bone-strengthening:** As part of their 60 minutes or more of daily physical activity, children and adolescents should include bone-strengthening physical activity on at least 3 days a week.

## Cooking Healthy Together

Cooking together with your children provides an opportunity to spend time together, talk about the importance of eating healthy, and discuss portion sizes. Pizza can be healthy and 90% of kids/teens say it is a favorite.

### Easy Flatbread Pizza

#### Ingredients

4 flatbreads  
1 jar pasta sauce (about 1 cup)  
2 cups mozzarella cheese  
Variety of pizza toppings to choose from (try and use from the different food groups – diced chicken, cherry tomatoes, pineapple, spinach, broccelli, shredded carrot, for example)



Source: Bless This Mess

#### Instructions

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Place the flatbread on a rimmed baking sheet.  
Add a few tablespoons of tomato sauce and spread it over the top of the flatbread with the back of a spoon. Top with cheese. Add your favorite toppings.  
Bake for 10-15 minutes until the cheese is melted and starting to bubble.

### Watermelon Pizza

#### Ingredients

4 oz cream cheese, softened  
4 oz cool whip  
1/4 cup powdered sugar  
1/2 tsp vanilla  
2 slices watermelon  
1/2 cup sliced strawberries  
1/2 cup sliced peaches  
1/2 cup sliced kiwi  
1/2 cup blueberries



Source: The Gunny Sack

#### Instructions

Beat the softened cream cheese.  
Mix in the cool whip.  
Stir in the powdered sugar and vanilla.  
Spread 1/2 cup of the cream cheese frosting on each slice of watermelon.  
Top with sliced fruit.



Source: Verywell

## Sizing up Portions

One easy way to size up portions if you don't have any measurements is to use your hand as a guide. Kids have smaller hands than adults, so it serves as a reminder that kids should eat smaller portions:

- A closed fist is about a cup — and a cup is the amount experts recommend for a portion of vegetables, and fruit.
- A meat portion should be about as big as your palm.
- A cupped hand is about a serving of carbs such as pasta.
- Limit the amount of added fats (like butter, mayo, or salad dressing) to the size of the top of your thumb.

## A Divided Plate

A great way to think about healthy portion sizes is to use the concept of the "divided plate." Think of a plate divided into four equal sections:

- Use one of the top sections for protein.
- Use the other top section for starch, preferably a whole grain.
- Fill the bottom two sections with veggies (or fruit and veggies).
- The foods in each section should not overlap or be piled high.

Dividing the plate this way not only will help you keep portions under control, but will help to serve more balanced meals.

**Focus on Health**  
**Water Safety Information for Parents**

F.S. 1003.225

St. Johns County School District, Health Services Dept.  
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**Water Safety for Kids and Teens**

**Source:** Florida Department of Children and Families; <https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/child-welfare/summer-safety-tips/water-safety-for-kids.shtml>; and Healthy Children.Org <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-play/Pages/Water-Safety-for-Older-Children.aspx>

Teaching water safety and how to swim is a key part of reducing child drownings. In Florida, drownings are one of the leading causes of child deaths.

**The following information is important to teach to your teen or younger child:**

- **Always supervise; it saves lives.** Remember that knowing how to swim will not "drown proof" a child of any age. Even among older children and teens, most childhood drownings happen when there is no adult supervision. Make sure your teen knows to swim only where there are lifeguards on duty and to never swim alone. Urge them to use the buddy system, even when swimming with large groups of friends. It is important for young children to know that the fun can't begin until a "Water Watcher" is present. Once an adult is watching, the swimming fun can start. Make sure your child knows never to go near the water alone and always has a swimming partner.
- **Wear a lifejacket.** Like adults, adolescents should always wear life jackets whenever they are on boats, jet skis and other watercraft. Younger children should also wear life jackets including while in a floating device or on a dock. If a child cannot swim or is an inexperienced swimmer, lifejackets should be utilized at all times while in the water. Never rely on inflatable tubes and rafts as life preservers.
- **Learn how to swim.** Swimming lessons have been shown to reduce drowning incidents, which is why the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children ages 4 and older learn to swim. Even if your child has taken swimming lessons, never assume that their risk of drowning has subsided. Always be cautious of pool floats or toys that could interfere with your child in the water. If your family hasn't been able to learn basic swim and water survival skills yet, it's not too late! Many organizations offer lessons specifically geared toward teens and adults.
- **If there is an emergency, call 9-1-1 or find an adult.** Although a child may have had swimming lessons or is utilizing a life jacket, sometimes water accidents do happen. Make sure your child knows to call for help or find an adult when trouble occurs. When watching a child swim, always make sure to have a cell phone nearby in order to call 911 if a dangerous situation arises. Stress the importance of staying away from pool drains and suction fittings in order to have a fun, safe swimming experience.

To find swimming lessons in your area. Contact your local YMCA, city facilities, or swim school.

**YMCAs in St. Johns County are listed below**

**Ponte Vedra YMCA**

170 Landrum Lane  
Ponte Vedra Beach,  
FL 32082

Website:  
<https://fcymca.org/locations/ponte-vedra-ymca/>

**St. Augustine YMCA**

500 Pope Road  
St. Augustine, FL  
32080

Website:  
<http://fcymca.org/locations/st-augustine-ymca/>

**Solomon Calhoun  
Community Center  
Pool**

1300 Duval Street  
St. Augustine, FL  
32084

Website:  
<http://www.co.st-johns.fl.us/recreation/cc/sccc.aspx>