

# MENTAL HEALTH TIDBIT (BETTER INFORMED TOGETHER)

## HELP CHILDREN LEARN NEW SKILLS TO BE HEALTHY DURING THE SUMMER

DAUPHIN COUNTY MH/A/DP  
MAY 2024- MENTAL HEALTH TIDBIT

**Helping children have healthy bodies and minds is as important as it ever was.**

You can help your children prepare mentally, physically, and emotionally for the next school year with healthy and fun summer activities. Learning new ways to be healthy can help children:

- Handle stress well—through physical activity and taking steps to change upsetting thoughts.
- Relate to others—by encouraging positive social interactions and emotional awareness.
- Make healthy choices—about how they eat and play.

### **Physical Activity**

Children and adolescents need to be physically active for at least an hour every day. Here are some ideas for helping your child get more activity this summer:

Play games that encourage movement even when rain or heat keep you from going outside. Try new physical activities to strengthen their body with activities that include things your child can enjoy doing outside and around the house. For example - Jump rope challenge, Fitness Bingo, Fitness Monopoly.

Help your child get less screen time and more “lean” time doing physical activity. Get active in your community through camps and other youth programs outside of school.

### **Healthy Eating**

Children and adolescents need to eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat or non- dairy, and proteins. Here are some ways to help your child eat more healthy foods.

Use games or activities to promote healthy eating. Find a list of interactive websites and activities that are right for your children for different grade levels.

Try new foods and make a new meal with your child. Choose a child-friendly recipe that includes a fruit or vegetable they like. It is a great way to bond and encourage healthy cooking habits in the home.

Choose water and natural juices over sugary drinks. Provide a variety of healthy foods for breakfast.

### **Improve your child’s mental health and emotional well-being**

Help your child recognize and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, and make responsible decisions. Encourage your child to get enough sleep. Help your child discover their inner strength, build their confidence and know they belong and matter. Children are empowered when they feel understood, loved and trusted.

Excerpts from: [Help Kids Learn New Skills to Be Healthy During the Summer \(cdc.gov\)](https://www.cdc.gov/healthykids/healthykids-summer-activities/)