

Social media.  
Healthy relationship with food.

# Talk About It.

Digital citizenship  
Mental health.



## Talk To Your Kids About Healthy Relationship With Food

**Impacts of Social Media:** Social media can both positively and negatively impact an individual's relationship with food.

- Social media use has been linked to poor body image, placing children at greater risk for developing eating disorders.
- Reducing social media usage by 50% has been found to significantly improve how teens feel about their weight.
- Social media could be used to encourage healthier eating by increasing exposure to more healthy foods or choices.
- Content absorbed via social media can have a lasting impact on adolescents and adults alike. Unfollowing anyone that generates negative thoughts or feelings around exercise, diet or eating habits can help alleviate this.

### “Walk the Talk”

Children and adolescents learn and imitate behaviors by watching and listening to others, particularly parents and caregivers. Do your best to surround your children with constructive models and situations where positive behaviors are reinforced.

- Prioritize family meals, if possible. Frequently eating meals together has been shown to prevent disordered eating behaviors such as restricting, bingeing and purging. It also provides opportunities for you to model healthy behaviors in front of your child (e.g., food/meal choices, how you talk about food and food consumption habits).

For parenting resources, blogs and videos, visit [southbayfamiliesconnected.org](https://southbayfamiliesconnected.org)

For mental health resources, visit [bchd.org/resources](https://bchd.org/resources)

**Whatever “it” is, have the talk.**

Find tips at [bchd.org/talk](https://bchd.org/talk).

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- Involve your child in menu planning. Curating a sense of ownership over their meals increases their willingness to try new foods.
- Be mindful of how you talk about your own food choices. For example, “I had a stressful day, I need a cookie.” suggests that eating is a coping method for stress and anxiety.
- Avoid talking about body image or appearance to or in front of your child. Your child’s body is changing and developing during the adolescent years, and it could leave them feeling awkward or self-conscious.
- Build helpful habits with food such as drinking a glass of water before juice and soda or trying at least one bite of a new item on your plate.

### Tips to talk about it by age:

Early Elementary School (grades K-2)	Elementary School (grades 3-5)	Middle School (grades 6-8)	High School (grades 9-12)
Your responsibility as a caregiver is to provide varied, nutritious foods for your child. It is their responsibility to decide how much to eat. Keeping this in mind helps build a trusting, positive relationship with food.	Implement principles of intuitive eating. Encourage your child to use hunger and fullness cues to determine when and how much to eat.	Avoid a diet mindset. Utilize the phrase “everything in moderation” to ensure your child is eating a variety of foods.	Implement an “all foods fit” model. Making space for all foods can help break down the negative associations diet culture can place on sugars, carbs or fat.

### Recognize the following signs that may indicate the need for additional support:

- Changes in what, when and how much they eat
- Being restrictive or regimented about their eating
- Unusual weight fluctuations
- Expressing unhappiness with their body or weight
- Exercising more than usual

### Have the talk. Find tips at [bchd.org/talk](https://bchd.org/talk).

**Information sourced from:**

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