

Media statement

8 July 2019

Keep your kids happy and healthy this Winter

Do your kids tend to want to eat more during the colder months? Are they more reluctant to go outside and play due to shorter daylight hours and the cold? What can we do to make them feel fuller for longer and keep active this winter?

Tanzia Butterfield, Paediatric Dietician from the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service (SCHHS) Child Healthy Lifestyle Team says there are many reasons why a child's weight may move into the unhealthy weight range, especially during the cooler months.

"There are plenty of straightforward tips that may help kids ward off unwanted winter weight gain," she said.

"We are lucky on the Sunshine Coast to have some beautiful mild sunny days, look at how you can adjust exercise routines to reflect the change in season. For example, make the most of the weekends and get active as a family, head to the beach or explore the national parks.

"Diet is also critical to keeping our kids healthy over winter. Include a good quality lean protein or reduced fat dairy with each meal. A homemade chicken pizza on a wholemeal pita pocket with cheese and veggies is a quick and filling family favourite," she said.

"To save time in the busy evenings, why not pop on the slow cooker earlier in the day. It's a delicious way to get a variety of nutritious vegetables and legumes on their plates.

"During winter kids often spend more time indoors which can lead to unnecessary grazing or boredom eating. Try and establish structured meal and snack times and don't allow snacking outside of these times."

If you are concerned about your child's weight being above the healthy range for their age the Child Healthy Lifestyle Team can help. The team consists of dietitians, physiotherapists and parenting specialist. In just the past 12-months they have worked with more than 50 families.

They'll work with you and your family, discuss where you feel your family are experiencing difficulties and help you make practical changes. Each situation is unique, so they'll tailor to the needs of each individual family.

A previous client, 17-year old Mason, said he learnt lessons that have put him in good stead as he has grown older and more independent.

"I really feel there isn't a great understanding around food for kids my age. I was lucky, I was able to get a good foundation at a young age from the Child Healthy Lifestyle Team.

Sunshine Coast

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“My mates at school head across the road to grab fast food for lunch because it is cheap and convenient, they don’t understand how it effects them physically and mentally, not just for the rest of the day but the rest of their lives.

“Being educated on how to take care of my health has helped me work towards my goal of applying for the Australian Defence Force. It’ll be tough, but I know because I have taken good care of my health by eating well and keeping fit, I’ll be able to do it,” he said.

Mason’s Mum Nemone said that seeking out education and support while her son was younger was the best thing she could have done.

“I can feel confident now he is old enough to make his own choices that he’ll make the right ones when it comes to what he eats.

“The Child Healthy Lifestyle Team were so helpful, they shared some great recipes we still enjoy years later. They also taught us the basics, like how to read energy content on food labels so that it was quick and easy to choose lower calorie options”.

To make an appointment, contact Child Health Access on 5319 4824. Clinic and home visits can be provided as well as group sessions.

Media Opportunity:

When: Thursday 11 July, 10am

Where: Nambour Child & Family Health Service, 5 Waterfall Road, Nambour

Who: Meet with previous client Mason and Tanzia Butterfield, Paediatric Dietitian

ENDS

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