

A photograph showing the lower legs and feet of a child and an adult in a starting crouch on a reddish-brown track. The child is on the left, wearing blue shorts and white sneakers with blue accents. The adult is on the right, wearing dark shorts and black sneakers with white soles. The background is a blurred green park area.

# 5 Tips for Instilling Healthy Habits Early

As a role model, we establish structure and consistency through actions, behaviors, and habits that stay with our children into adulthood. Here are five tips to instill healthy habits for the long haul:

- 1. Be active, stay active—**Show the young ones the joy of riding bikes, hiking in the woods, running around in a park, swimming at the pool, or playing on a team.
- 2. For the love of veggies—**Involve the kids with grocery shopping and let them pick from the colorful rows in the produce section—and then enlist their help to prepare the next meal.
- 3. See the doctor—**Regular checkups with your doctor have a dramatic effect on long-term wellness. As a parent, lead by example; explain why a doctor's expertise is so important.
- 4. Enjoy routine dental hygiene—**Make brushing and flossing "necessary fun" by joining your child at the sink and explaining why it's so important.
- 5. Count pennies—**It's never too early to teach a child the gratification of earning, saving, and budgeting. The rewards of discipline, patience, and responsibility pay big dividends.

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