A New Year, A Healthier You!

The New Year is a great time to implement healthier lifestyles for the entire family. It is important not to diet as they can do more harm than good. Research suggests children who diet end up weighing more than non-dieters, have lower self-esteem, and have a greater risk for eating disorders. Here are tips to establish a healthier lifestyle:

- **Be an active family.** Children need at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day. Look at your local community center for family-friendly activities during the winter months or go to the park, bike, or walk during the summer months.
- **Eat breakfast.** Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. It kick starts your metabolism and prevents you from eating too much throughout the day. Choose whole grain cereal with less added sugars, eggs, yogurt, fruit, or whole grain bread as health options.
- **Encourage mindful eating.** Refrain from using technology at meals to help kids stay focused on their food and to prevent over-eating. Discuss what it feels like to be hungry, a little bit hungry, comfortably full, and uncomfortably full to help them trust and listen to their internal body cues.
- **Don’t forbid foods or use food as a reward.** Forbidding foods only increases a child’s desire for that food. Instead of eliminating foods, limit the portion size they eat. Use non-food rewards for a good behavior such as stickers or allowing your child to invite a friend over to play.

**Tips to Establish a Healthier Lifestyle for the Entire Family**

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