

# HEALTHY WEIGHT KIDS GOALS CHART



Here is some important information about how to use this Goals Chart and how to be most successful with adopting new health habits.

A. Several important keys for success with habit change:

1. Monitoring health habits on a Goals Chart makes a parent accountable for their actions or lack of action.
2. Children who help parents monitor new health habits on a Goals Chart are significantly more successful with adopting new habits.
3. It is the parent's job to choose which new health habits they are going to help their child adopt.
4. Talk to your child about healthy habits that you will be working on together. Give your child an opportunity to ask questions and voice concerns. Stay calm, encouraging, and empathetic while staying consistent with communicating the plan. Your child may put up a fuss.
5. Tell your child how they will benefit from these new habits (i.e. stronger, run faster, jump high, grow tall, smart brain, etc.). Express excitement about all the benefits your child is going to get from these new habits. Enthusiasm is contagious.
6. Find ways to involve your child in the habit change process. Let your child help pick out success stickers for the Goals Chart (remember, they need to be small) or let them help pick the spot where the Goals Chart will be hung up. If you trying to decrease juice consumption and increase water drinking, let them pick out a water bottle.
7. Change 1 habit at a time. Children don't do well with big changes in their daily habits. If your child needs to make big changes, you may need to break these big habit changes down into several smaller goals (i.e. child drinking 24 oz of juice per day – first cut back to 16 oz/day, and next cut down to 8 oz/day, and finally cut down to 4 oz a day).

B. Setting up the Goals Chart:

1. Choose 1 highlighted goal from the Healthy Habit Goals Worksheet and write the number in the top "GOAL #" square.
2. Next to the top "GOAL #" square, write out the healthy habit goal.

3. Below the "GOAL #" square, write the start date. Please note that each blank box after the "Start Date" box, represents a day. These blank boxes are for daily success stickers.
  4. That's it. Your Goals Chart is ready to be hung up for use. Hang the chart where your child can see it (at eye level). Most parents like to use the fridge door.
- C. Use the Goals Chart every day:
1. Track daily accomplishments. Toward the end of each day, you and your child should decide if the healthy habit was accomplished. If the answer is YES, have your child place a sticker in the square (blank box) for that day. If the answer is NO, place an X in the square.
  2. Take a moment to celebrate successes with your child (i.e. high five, special happy dance you do together, leap for joy, or have a special saying like "We're rocking this" and include a double fist bump). Success makes us feel good and motivates us to keep moving forward.
  3. If a day that gets an X, think about why things didn't work out that day and plan for the next day. You can include your child in this by asking, "How do you think we could do better tomorrow?"
  4. Measure weekly success. At the end of each week, count how many days that week you two accomplished your healthy habit goal. Don't expect perfection right away. Look for improvements in accomplishing goals with each passing week.
- D. When to add additional healthy habits and how long to track habits:
1. The Goals Chart is set up on a 3-week schedule. It takes your brain and body 3 weeks to start getting comfortable with a new health habit.
  2. Every 3 weeks look at your Healthy Habit Goals Worksheet and choose a new healthy habit from the list of highlighted goals. Write the new healthy habit on the Goals Chart under the habit you have already been working on.
  3. Rewrite the healthy habit you have already been working on, under the new habit. You should try to track each habit on your Goals Chart for 12 weeks. It takes about 12 weeks for a new habit to become a comfortable, automatic habit. This means that each time you add a new habit to the Goals Chart, you will also rewrite habits you have already been working on, in the space below the new habit.
  4. Continue this habit-adding process until you and your child have adopted all the new healthy habits on your list. If your list is long, you may need to make additional copies of your Goal Chart pages.
- E. Consider using positive reinforcement and rewards with your child. Offering rewards and providing positive reinforcements for accomplished health goals increases a child's motivation and desire to cooperate.
1. Positive reinforcements are small consistent markers of daily success. Placing success stickers on the Goals Chart is a form of positive reinforcement. Another example of positive reinforcement would be – a child receiving a special token to put in a jar each day that they meet their goal (i.e. limited fruit juice to 4 oz or limited TV to 1 hour). You could buy some beads and string, and give your child a bead to add to a necklace or bracelet each time that they eat a serving of fruit or vegetable. It is a great way for your child to watch their successes add up. Positive reinforcement will have a stronger influence on your child if it is given at the time that the child has just practiced their new habit.
  2. A reward can be given when a child accomplishes a health goal over a period of time. Parents usually space rewards out by one to three weeks. Rewards can be a special activity, a privilege, or an object that a child likes.

	Week 1	Week Total	Week 2	Week Total	Week 3	Week Total
GOAL #						
Start Date:						
GOAL #						
Start Date:						
GOAL #						
Start Date:						
GOAL #						
Start Date:						
GOAL #						
Start Date:						
GOAL #						
Start Date:						
GOAL #						
Start Date:						
GOAL #						
Start Date:						
GOAL #						
Start Date:						
GOAL #						
Start Date:						

