

# Pointers For Parents

## Teaching Your Child Healthy Habits

(NAPSA)—If you're like most parents, you work hard to make sure your children eat their veggies, brush their teeth and always say "please" and "thank you," but one important habit is often forgotten.

Experts advise parents to teach children the importance of smiling. Smiling can positively affect you and the people around you, and lower stress, which should improve your child's quality of life.

### What You Can Do

Here's a look at a few of the habits that can be crucial to ensuring children enjoy a healthy lifestyle:

#### 1. Setting a regular bedtime:

According to the National Sleep Foundation, children need at least 10 to 12 hours of sleep. By the age of 2, children have spent more time asleep than awake. Why is this? Sleep is vital to children's development and lets them be alert, fresh and ready to learn every day. While bedtime tantrums can be frustrating, they may well be an indicator that your child needs sleep. Avoid active endeavors right before bed and replace them with 30 minutes of relaxing, quiet activities. This will encourage a healthy bedtime routine for kids and may help them to see the importance of a good night's sleep.

**2. Keeping active:** Encourage your children to play outside, join a team or take part in some other activity outside of school. This provides a great opportunity to meet and socialize with other kids they may not meet otherwise. Developing hobbies from a young age helps keep children busy and gives them a chance to learn beyond the classroom.

**3. Eating fruits and vegetables:** Reinforcing a healthy diet will improve your children's mood, health and even their smiles. Instilling a healthy diet early will create lifelong habits that will benefit your child for years to come.



**Healthy kids are happy kids and instilling the right daily habits in your children can help you get a lot more smiles from your family.**

**4. Smiling more often:** Teach your child the importance of proactive oral care to ensure fewer trips to the dentist and a bright, healthy smile for life. Getting your children to brush and floss twice a day may not be easy, but parents can ensure their kids have a complete oral care routine by using Sunstar GUM®'s suite of toothbrushes, toothpaste and flossers for kids featuring popular themes such as Crayola™, Power Rangers™, Dragons™ and Lalaloopsy™. The new kid's toothpaste collection lets kids add color to their brushing routine. You can find your child's favorite colorful toothpaste, toothbrushes and flossers in retailers such as Target and online at [www.gumbrand.com](http://www.gumbrand.com).

**5. Reading for pleasure:** Encourage your kids to take a break from video games, social media and other distracting forms of technology and pick up a book instead. Reading for pleasure will help expand your children's imagination and develop their reading skills. Once their homework is complete, designate a daily "screen-free" hour or make it a family activity by reading a chapter or two together before bed each night.

### Learn More

For further facts and tips on proper oral care, you can visit [www.gumbrand.com](http://www.gumbrand.com) or find GUM on Facebook, Twitter @SunstarGUM and Pinterest.