

# Family and Consumer Sciences “Connections” in Tom Green County

TEXAS A&M  
AGRI LIFE  
EXTENSION

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## Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans



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May is National Physical Fitness and Sports Month. The Department of Health and Human Services issued the federal government’s first-ever Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans in 2008 to help Americans understand the types and amount of physical activity that offer important health benefits. Physical activity is any form of exercise or movement of the body that uses energy. Some of your daily life activities—doing active chores around the house, yard work, walking the dog—are examples. The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommend 60 minutes of physical aerobic activity daily for children ages 6-17 (there are no specifications for those five and under), and 30 minutes daily for adults ages 18-64.

Physical activity is critical for overall health at every age, but today America’s youth are less active than ever before. Many settings provide opportunities to increase youth physical activity to include the places kids live, learn and play. Children and ado-

lescents should get 60 minutes or more of physical activity daily. Most of the 60 or more minutes a day should be either moderate or vigorous intensity aerobic physical activity, and should include vigorous intensity physical activity at least three days a week. As part of their 60 or more minutes of daily physical activity, children and adolescents should include muscle and bone strengthening physical activity at least three days a week.

Adults should get at least two and a half hours (150 minutes) each week of moderate intensity aerobic physical activity. You need to do this type of activity for at least 10 minutes at a time as intervals shorter than this do not have the same health benefits. Adults should also do strengthening activities, like push-ups, sit-ups and lifting weights, at least two days a week.

**Source:** [www.hhs.gov](http://www.hhs.gov)

### Fit Tips

- Having fun while active is the key. Find activities that you enjoy & include friends/family.
- Pack your workout clothes at night before bed. You’ll be prepared to be active the next day.

### Add Extra Steps to Your Day:

- Walk the dog with the whole family.
- Instead of calling friends, take a walk together to catch up.
- Walk up and down the field while watching your child(ren) play sports.



# Unplug and Be Screen-Free

Celebrate Screen-Free Week. On May 1-7, children, families, schools and communities will rediscover the joys of life beyond the screen. Plan to unplug from digital entertainment and spend all that free time playing, daydreaming, creating, exploring and connect with family and friends.

Screen-free week is a week for families to unplug from digital distractions or technology entertainment and connect with each other. We think spending time with families is valuable for many reasons including for our health. What better time to spend together than at the dinner table. Family dinner provides time for family members to share activities from the day or discuss upcoming events. Eating together provides an opportunity for families to talk about and model good nutrition and health behaviors. Family dinners are a good time for sharing family stories and creating memories.

Check out some of these Screen-Free Challenges:

1. Try a hula hoop contest after dinner. Get your family outdoors and see who can hula hoop the longest. You could also do a jump rope challenge, create obstacle courses, or take a family walk. As you unplug from technology in the evenings, reconnect with your family around fitness.
2. Connect with your family during dinnertime prep by getting children involved. Encourage children to participate in age appropriate tasks:
  - Let children help plan menu ideas and side dishes.
  - Take them grocery shopping and let them pick out a new fruit or vegetable to try with dinner.
  - Teach them about setting the table.
  - Guide them in basic food preparation (as they are developmentally ready for and can safely do)
  - Have them help clean up and clear the table.
3. Prepare after school snacks with your children that are easy enough for them to make and will provide a nutritional boost after school. Here's a quick & easy snack:

## Frozen Greek Yogurt Snack Bars

Ingredients:

2 cups low fat vanilla Greek yogurt

1.25 cups trail mix with nuts and dried fruit

Instructions:

Combine yogurt and trail mix in a large bowl. Spread evenly on a 9x13 baking pan layered with parchment paper (for thicker bars use a 9x9 pan). Place in the freezer for at least 3 hours. Serve frozen and enjoy.

**Recipe Source:** <http://dinnertonight.tamu.edu>

Staying unplugged doesn't have to end. Try these 7 parent-tested tips to unplug and play:

### **Tip #1: Rearrange the furniture**

Turn your living room into a place for family interaction and play by arranging the furniture so the TV is not the focus of the room.

### **Tip #2: Start the day screen-free**

Create a morning routine that doesn't involve screens.

### **Tip #3: Enjoy screen-free meals**

Make meals a time for your family to talk about the day without distraction from TV, smartphones, and other screens.

### **Tip #4: Encourage sensory play**

Provide easy play options, like sensory play—which gives children the chance to explore using their sight, touch and other senses—to engage kids while you get things done around the house.

### **Tip #5: Explore the outdoors**

Make memories by planning outdoor activities that the whole family can enjoy together.

### **Tip #6: Create Activity Kits**

Make activity kits using supplies you already have to keep children busy during transitions (the time between one activity and the next) and other tricky times of the day.

### **Tip #7: Limit your own screen time**

Take a break from your smartphone and other screens during periods of the day to give your child your uninterrupted attention.

- Reducing screen time can help prevent childhood obesity.
- Children who spend less time watching television in early years tend to do better in school, have a healthier diet, be more physically active, and be better able to engage in schoolwork in later elementary school.
- Television viewing at a young age is associated with later behavioral problems, but not if heavy viewing is discontinued before age six.
- Limiting exposure to television during the first 4 years of life may decrease children's interest in it in later years.

**Source:** [www.commercialfreechildhood.org](http://www.commercialfreechildhood.org)

# Rethink Your Drink

When it comes to weight loss, there's no lack of diets promising fast results. There are low-carb diets, high-carb diets, low-fat diets, grapefruit diets, cabbage soup diets, and blood type diets, to name a few. But no matter what you may try, to lose weight, you must take in fewer calories than your body uses. Most people try to reduce their calorie intake by focusing on food, but another way to cut calories may be to think about what you drink.

Calories in drinks are not hidden (they're listed right on the Nutrition Facts label), but many people don't realize just how many calories beverages can contribute to their daily intake. Be aware that the Nutrition Facts label on beverage containers may give the calories for only part of the contents. For example, a 20 oz. bottle of soda is actually 2.5 servings. The information on the label is only for an 8 oz. serving which is 100 calories. However, the entire bottle would be 250 calories. Substituting no or low calorie drinks for sugar-sweetened beverages can cut up to about 650 calories a day.

**Here's an example. Take a look at the nutrition facts for the Unicorn Frap!**



Nutrition Facts Per Serving (24 fl oz)	
<b>Calories 450</b>	Calories from % Daily Value*
<b>Total Fat 12g</b>	<b>18%</b>
Saturated Fat 8g	40%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 40mg	13%
Sodium 300mg	12%
<b>Total Carbohydrate 80g</b>	<b>27%</b>
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 76g	
<b>Protein 0g</b>	
Vitamin A 15%	Vitamin C 0%
25%	Iron 0%
Caffeine 0mg**	

\*Percent Daily Values are based on a diet.  
\*\*Each caffeine value is an approximate



**THIS DRINK = 3 SNICKERS BARS**



Now that you know how much difference a drink can make, here are some ways to make smart beverage choices:

- Choose water, diet, or low-calorie beverages instead of sugar-sweetened beverages.
- For a quick, easy, and inexpensive thirst-quencher, carry a water bottle and refill it throughout the day.
- Don't "stock the fridge" with sugar-sweetened beverages. Instead, keep a jug or bottles of cold water in the fridge.
- Serve water with meals.
- Make water more exciting by adding slices of lemon, lime, cucumber, or watermelon, or drink sparkling water.
- Add a splash of 100% juice to plain sparkling water for a refreshing, low-calorie drink.
- When you do opt for a sugar-sweetened beverage, go for the small size. Some companies are now selling 8-oz. cans and bottles of soda, which contain about 100 calories.

Source: [www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy\\_eating/drinks](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy_eating/drinks)

## High-Calorie Culprits in Unexpected Places:

Coffee drinks and blended fruit smoothies sound innocent enough, but the calories in some of your favorite coffee-shop or smoothie-stand items may surprise you. Check the Web site or in-store nutrition information of your favorite coffee or smoothie shop to find out how many calories are in different menu items. At the coffee shop, request that your drink be made with fat-free or low-fat milk, order the smallest size, forgo the extra flavoring and skip the whip. At the smoothie stand, order a child's size and hold the added sugar.



## Unicorn Popsicles

Yield: 6 servings

### Ingredients

2 cups non-fat vanilla yogurt  
1 cup strawberries, hulled  
1 cup blueberries  
1/4 cup coconut milk

### Instructions

1. Wash your hands and clean your preparation area.
2. Run your strawberries, blueberries and the top of the can of coconut milk under cool running water.
3. Blend 1 cup of the yogurt and the strawberries together in a blender until smooth. Reserve strawberry mixture.
4. Blend 1 cup of the yogurt and the blueberries together in a blender until smooth. Reserve blueberry mixture.
5. In popsicle mold evenly distribute coconut milk, then strawberry mixture, then blueberry mixture. Freeze for a minimum of 3 hours.

### Nutrition Facts:

Calories—97  
Fat—1.8 g  
Saturated Fat—1 g  
Cholesterol—4 mg  
Carbohydrates—17 g  
Sodium—57 mg  
Fiber—1 g  
Protein—4 g  
Sugars—8%

## Blueberry Nutrition Facts

There's a lot of buzz about blueberries and how this little berry can play a big part in a healthier you. Let's take a look:

- Blueberries contain 80 calories per serving, which is one cup.
- With 3.6 grams of fiber per serving, blueberries help you meet your daily recommended intake of fiber.
- Blueberries contain naturally occurring sugars and fiber, which are both carbohydrates.
- Blueberries contribute vitamins and minerals including vitamin C, vitamin K and manganese, making them a good choice to help meet nutrient needs.

### Source:

[www.blueberrycouncil.org](http://www.blueberrycouncil.org)



## Tom Green TEEA News

TEEA Club Meetings for May:

**Live Oak :** May 18, 2017  
10:00 a.m.  
@ United Methodist Church in Christoval  
Program: Crafts by Jean Wilde

**Veribest:** May 9, 2017  
11:30 a.m.  
@ The Main Street Cafe

**Wall:** May 10, 2017  
10:00 a.m.  
@ County Extension Office  
Spring Gathering & Bunco!

Family Consumer Sciences "Connections" is provided by the following

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