



HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS

It's clear people eat healthier foods and enjoy more physical activity when it is easy to do. So how can we make it easier?

It's important that people have access to healthy foods and opportunities to be active right in their neighborhoods. Look at yours. Is it easy to get fresh, healthy foods? Or is junk food unfortunately the easier choice? Are there parks or recreation centers nearby and other safe places to ride bikes, take walks and play hopscotch?

Here's a quick list of some simple things you can do to make your neighborhood healthier. By working together, we can make it easier for everyone to have access to healthier food and more opportunities for physical activity.

Eating Healthy

- **Request healthy foods.** Ask for fruits, vegetables and other healthy foods—and less junk food—at your neighborhood stores and restaurants.
- **Request healthy drinks, meals and snacks.** Ask your child's school, after school program, camps, sports leagues and child care provider to serve healthy food and drinks instead of junk food and sugary drinks.
- **Buy locally grown produce.** Visit [Minnesota Grown](#) to find farmers markets and farms that deliver food boxes. If you qualify for WIC or EBT (food assistance), you can use it to pay for food at many local farmers markets.
- **Share what's important to you at childcare.** Let your child care provider know that you want your child to have time for active play every day, healthy foods for meals and snacks, and water and low-fat milk instead of sugary drinks.

Being active

- **Identify safety concerns.** Talk with your neighbors about things in your neighborhood that make it unsafe for kids to be physically active.
- **Limit screen time at childcare.** Start a conversation with your childcare provider about limits for TV and video games (and no screen time for children under two). [Learn more](#) about healthy childcare.
- **Speak up.** Visit your city's website to find contact information for your city council and to look for listings of community meetings and other opportunities to get involved. Let them know why parks, sidewalks, crosswalks and bike paths are important to you. Your opinion can make a difference!
- **Join a group.** Get involved with local groups (such as your neighborhood association or bike club) that share your interest in safe places for active living. Work with the group to participate in community planning meetings and other city planning efforts.
- **Keep the playground and gym open.** Ask your local school's principal about keeping the playground and gym open for use when school is not in session.

Additional Resources

[Bike.Walk.Move.](#)

[Minnesota Grown](#)