

# THE MATCH CONNECTION

## Healthy Snacks:

Teens undergo a period of rapid growth and need regular nutrient-dense meals and snacks to fuel their growing bodies. Even though it may be convenient to grab a bag of chips or cookies, those snacks lack the nutrients teens need to nourish their bodies and brains effectively. Check out some healthy snack ideas that are packed with macro and micronutrients (AKA the good stuff)! Challenge yourself to try something new!



- Fresh fruit
- Frozen grapes
- Veggies and hummus
- Whole grain bread and peanut butter
- Apple and nut butter sandwich
- Trail mix (watch out for hidden sugar!)
- Fruit infused water
- Cheese
- Veggie, cheese, and egg muffins
- Overnight oats
- No bake protein bites
- Popcorn
- Protein bars (watch out for hidden sugar!)

## Physical Activity with Family:

According to the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention(CDC), kids and teens need at least 60 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity every day! The CDC recommends children and teen participate in three different types of physical activity as a part of their 60 total daily minutes, at least 3 times a week each:

- 1. Aerobic**  
(walking, running, dancing, swimming, biking)
- 2. Muscle Strengthening**  
(climbing trees/playground equipment, resistance bands, lifting weights)
- 3. Bone Strengthening**  
push-ups/pull-ups, sit-ups running, jumping, basketball, tennis)





- Take a walk together after dinner
- Do housework or yardwork together
- Go on a family bike ride
- Visit local, low-cost or free places like public parks, baseball fields, and basketball courts
- Have activity-based celebrations (skate park, roller park, water park)

Being physically active not only improves physical health, but cognitive health too, positively affecting academic achievement! Incorporating physical activity into your family's daily life is a great way to support each other's health and establish healthy habits for life.

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## Self-Management:

Middle school students are at the pivotal age of seeking autonomy. The desire to make their own decisions and choices becomes one of the most important things in their lives. But are they ready? Yes, with the right tools in place! One of these tools is a skill called self-management, part of a larger group of "executive functioning" skills. Executive functioning occurs in the frontal cortex of the brain, which doesn't fully develop until middle to late 20s. Since we can't wait to make decisions until our 20s, these behaviors must be taught and modeled to empower teens to make the best decisions they can!

### What is Self-Management?

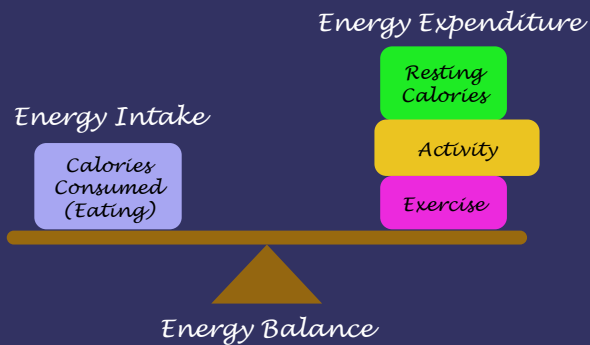
Self-management is the ability to manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations and to achieve goals and aspirations. This includes the capacities to delay gratification, manage stress, and feel motivation & agency to accomplish personal/collective goals.

The good news is that self-management skills can improve with practice and specific strategies! Check out some of these strategies to improve your self-management skills today!

- Use stress management techniques such as yoga, exercise, deep breathing, or meditation.
- Setting boundaries and using clear communication.
- Develop a time management log.
- Use checklists or rubrics to improve organizational and planning skills.
- Set short-term and long-term SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time-bound) goals.
- Engage in self-evaluation. Check-in with your goals and progress to see how you are doing. It can be helpful to have an accountability partner help with this step!



## Featured MATCH Lesson: Energy Balance



Your child will be receiving a variety of health and wellness-themed lessons as part of the MATCH program. One lesson they receive is “Energy Balance.” In this lesson, your student will learn how weight management is as simple as the difference between how much fuel goes in and how much burns up. Simple analogies are used to teach the basis of weight management. Your student will be able to calculate caloric balance from sample problems and summarize how the results affect weight management. We hope this creates a foundation of knowledge that prepares your student to make healthy choices throughout their life!



## MATCH Reminders

- Post SEAT Survey
- Post PANT Survey
- Post Heights and Weights
- Review Action Plan goals
- check in on any Physical Activity Challenges!

## MATCH History

**MATCH** - *Motivating Adolescents with Technology to CHOOSE Health™* is a 7th-grade, school-based program developed by a North Carolina teacher using an interdisciplinary approach to empower students to make healthy choices through lessons in nutrition education and by increasing physical activity.

**MATCH** meets the educational objectives of teachers, producing health outcomes simultaneously. It is unique among school-based wellness programs because it: (1) is teacher-developed; (2) is embedded within national curriculum standards; and (3) uses interdisciplinary lessons to teach individual skill-building in health choices.

**MATCH** uses relevant wellness examples to teach students how the health choices they make today will impact their future.

To implement **MATCH**, teachers are trained to deliver ready-to-use lessons. Most lessons are taught in the Healthful Living Curriculum (Health and P.E.). Lesson materials are made available via a secure website, and in a student-friendly workbook, provided to all students. By the end of the program, students increase aerobic fitness, decrease sugar-sweetened beverage and snack consumption, and improve weight status.

Although **MATCH** started in one middle school in Martin County, NC, the program is now in 69 schools across the state.

To learn more about the **MATCH** program, visit:

[www.matchwellness.com](http://www.matchwellness.com)