

5210 Articles for Employee Websites or Newsletters

The purpose of the 5210 articles is to reach Maine employees as parents, caregivers and role models with the same messages children are receiving through other settings in this program (schools, child care, etc.). Employers can encourage employees and their families to strive for healthy, active lifestyles.

These twelve articles support and explain the 5210 messages. Employers can incorporate these messages into their employee wellness campaign/s in a number of ways. Use the articles on internal/employee websites, in newsletters and/or in other materials provided to employees.

We ask that you retain the www.letsgo.org link in all articles. If you are able to include our logo, we can provide that to you. Contact Let's Go at info@letsgo.org.

This document includes three articles for each of the four 5210 messages:



- 5** or more fruits & vegetables
- 2** hours or less recreational screen time*
- 1** hour or more of physical activity
- 0** sugary drinks, more water & low fat milk

*Keep TV/Computer out of the bedroom. No screen time under the age of 2.

“5” Message Articles:

Five or more serving of fruits and vegetables every day.

Article 1: *Eat at least 5 fruits and vegetables a day*

A diet rich in fruits and vegetables provides vitamins and minerals, important for supporting growth and development, and for optimal immune function.

Most fruits and vegetables are low in calories and fat, making them a healthy choice anytime. They may also contain phytochemicals (fight-o-chemicals) that work together with fiber to benefit your health in many ways. Different phytochemicals are found in different fruits based on their color – that’s why it’s important to put a rainbow on your plate.

Try it:

- Try the three bite rule. Offer your family new fruits and veggies different ways and try at least three bites each time – it can take 7 to 10 tries before you like a new food.
- Many fruits and veggies taste great with a dip or dressing. Try a low-fat salad dressing with yogurt or get protein with peanut butter.
- Make a fruit smoothie with low-fat yogurt.

Mix it:

- Add them to foods you already make, like pasta, soups, casseroles, pizza, rice, etc.
- Add fruit to your cereal, oatmeal, or other breakfast foods.
- Be a good role model for your family and have at least one veggie at every meal.

Slice it:

- Wash and chop veggies and fruits so they are ready to grab and eat.
- Most people prefer crunchy foods over mushy ones. Enjoy them fresh or lightly steamed.

Choose with the seasons:

- Buy fruits and veggies that are in season.
- Don’t forget that frozen fruits and veggies are always available and are a healthy choice.

Be a Role Model:

- You are your family’s number one role model, so start practicing the healthy habits you encourage your family to practice.
- Start by making small changes.
- Encourage the whole family to embrace a healthy lifestyle.

For more ideas visit www.letsgo.org.

Article 2: *Encourage Healthy Eating Habits in Your Child*

Non-Food Rewards:

- Have your family create a reward system with a list of fun, non-food rewards that do not cost much, such as playing outdoors, family game night, going to a ball game, buying a new book or reading an extra book at bedtime.
- Post the list where the whole family can see it.
- Reward the desired behaviors with awards that work for your family.

Family meal time:

- Do not underestimate the importance of family meal time; take 10-15 minutes to sit down together.
- Involve your family in meal planning.

Be a Role Model:

- You are your family's number one role model, so start practicing the healthy habits you encourage your family to practice.
- Start by making small changes.
- Encourage the whole family to embrace a healthy lifestyle.

For more ideas visit www.letsgo.org.

Article 3: *What is a serving of fruits or vegetables?*

It is important to eat at least five servings of fruits or vegetables a day. What is a serving?

Adults

- A whole fruit the size of a tennis ball.
- ½ cup of cut up fruit or veggies.
- 1 cup of raw leafy greens.
- ¼ cup of dried fruits.

Kids

- Size of the palm of their hand.

For more information go to: www.letsgo.org.

“2” Message Articles:

Two hours or less recreational screen time every day. Remember, no screen time for kids under the age of two.

Article 4: *Limit Your Child's Screen Time*

According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, American children and adolescents spend 22-28 hours per week viewing television, more than any other activity except sleeping. By the age of 70 they will have spent 7 to 10 years of their lives watching TV.

Watching TV is associated with increased energy intake (sitting in front of the TV many children snack more than they should) and increased obesity. Too much TV has been linked to lower reading scores and attention problems.

Screen time includes: TV, computer, texting and videogames such as Wii, Playstation and Gameboy. It is important to limit your child's TV or computer use to two hours or less daily.

Healthy Screen Time:

- No TV/computer under the age of 2.
- No TV/computer in the room where the child sleeps.
- One hour or less of educational TV/computer time between ages 2 and 5.
- After the age of 5, 2 hours or less.

Set Limits:

- Know how much TV your child is watching.
- Set some basic rules such as no TV or computer before homework or chores are done.
- Do not watch TV during mealtime.

Participate:

- Keep TVs, computers, DVD players, cell phones and video games out of your child's room.
- Keep the TV in a common room and make TV viewing a family activity.
- Know what your children are watching on TV and doing online.

Be a Role Model:

- Children model behavior. Set a good example by limiting your TV and computer time.
- Avoid watching programs containing adult content when your child is in the room or nearby.
- Put on music and dance with your kids!

For more information, visit www.letsgo.org.

Article 5: *National Screen-Free Week*

Get ready for National Screen-Free Week <http://www.commercialfreechildhood.org/screenfreeweek/> in April by limiting recreational screen time to 2 hours or less daily. Set family guidelines for age appropriate shows. Help your child plan television viewing in advance. Keep books, magazines, and board games in the family room and make a list of fun activities to do instead of being in front of a screen. Here are some ideas:

Indoor Activities:

Puzzles
Charades
Read a book or magazine
Spend time catching up with your family
Play board games
Start a journal
Go to the library

Outdoor Activities:

Walk, run or jog
Ride a bike (don't forget your helmet!)
Go on a nature hike
Visit a park or beach
Play ball (catch, basketball, soccer, etc.)
Sled, ski or snowshoe
Rollerblade (don't forget your helmet!)

For more ideas, visit www.letsgo.org.

Article 6: *Interesting Facts About TV*

- Percentage of children ages 6-17 who have TVs in their bedrooms: 50%
- Percentage of childcare centers that use TV during a typical day: 70%
- Percentage of Americans that regularly watch TV while eating dinner: 66%
- Number of minutes per week that parents spend in meaningful conversation with their children: 38.5

Keep the TV out of your child's bedroom. Don't watch TV during meals or while doing homework. Limit screen time to two hours or less (no screen time for kids under 2). Check out www.screentime.org for more facts and information.

For more ideas, visit www.letsgo.org.

"I" Message Articles:

One hour or more of physical activity every day

Article 7: *Incorporate One Hour or More of Physical Activity into your Child's Day*

Physical activity makes you feel good. It helps keep you at a healthy weight, makes your heart happy, and makes you stronger and more flexible.

One hour of moderate physical activity physical activity means:

- Doing activities where you breathe hard, like hiking or dancing.

20 minutes of vigorous physical activity means:

- Doing activities where you sweat, like running, aerobics or basketball.

Free and Fun Activities:

- Take a walk with your family
- Play with your pet
- Walk the dog
- Play tag
- Take a bike ride (remember to wear your helmet)
- Turn on music and dance
- Jump rope
- Play Frisbee
- Make snow angels
- Take the stairs
- Park the car at the end of the parking lot

For more ideas, visit the *Get Up and Go Guide* on our website: www.letsgo.org.

Article 8: Encourage a “One Hour Rule” for Physical Activity

Kids and adults should be active for at least one hour every day. You are your family’s number one role model, so start practicing the healthy habits you encourage your child to practice. Encourage the whole family to embrace a healthy lifestyle.

Tips:

- Make gradual changes to increase your level of physical activity.
- Incorporate physical activity into your daily routines.
- Try tracking the level of your physical activity using a pedometer.
- Role model an active lifestyle.
- Turn off the TV and computer and keep them out of the bedroom.
- Limit TV and recreational computer time.
- Choose toys and games that promote physical activity.
- Encourage lifelong physical activity by incorporating physical activity into your routine.
- Keep physical activity fun!

For more ideas, visit www.letsgo.org.

Article 9: *Use Physical Activity as a Reward*

Using physical activity as a reward is a great way to strive for one or more hours of physical activity a day for your child. Reward good behavior with physical activity instead of extra TV or computer time or with unhealthy food treats.

- The Good Behavior Game:
 - Write a short list of good behaviors on a chart.
 - Mark the chart with a star every time you see the good behavior.
 - After your child has earned a small number of stars, give him or her a reward.
- Give your child extra play time before or after meals as a reward for finishing homework.
- Choose fun, seasonal activities.
- Encourage your child to try a new sport or join a team.

For more ideas go to: www.lets-go.org.

“Zero” Message Articles:

Zero sugary drinks, more water and low-fat milk every day.

Article 10: *Avoid Sugary Drinks for Your Child*

Soda has no nutritional value and is high in sugar. Just nine ounces of soda is equal to 110-150 empty calories. Many sodas also contain caffeine, which kids don't need. Try water and low-fat milk instead of soda and drinks with lots of sugar. If you choose to serve juice, buy 100% juice and limit the serving size.

Sports drinks contain lots of sugar that kids don't need. They should only be used when kids are active for more than 60 minutes and it is hot and humid.

Energy drinks are NOT sports drinks and should never replace water during exercise.

Water is fuel for your body:

- Water is the most important nutrient for active people.
- Between 70-80% of a child's body is made up of water.
- When you exercise, you sweat, and when you sweat you LOSE water and minerals – it is important to replace the water you lose when you sweat.
- Water is the #1 thirst quencher!

Be a Role Model:

- You are your family's number one role model, so start practicing the healthy habits you encourage your child to practice. Avoid soda and sugary coffee drinks!
- Keep bottled water or a water bottle on hand.

- Add fresh lemon, lime or oranges wedges to water for some natural flavor.
- Fill a pitcher of water and keep it in the fridge.

Don't replace soda with other sugar-sweetened beverages, such as juice or sports drinks. Remember, water is the best drink when you are thirsty.

For more ideas, visit www.letsgo.org.

Article 11: *Encourage Kids to Drink Low-Fat Milk*

According to the national dairy council, children ages 4-8 years should be consuming three, 8 ounce glasses of milk or other dairy each day. Children ages 9-18 years should be consuming four and a half, 8 ounce glasses of milk or other dairy each day.

Gradually make the change from whole milk to low-fat or no-fat milk. Make a smoothie using low-fat milk, ice, and your kid's favorite fruit/s.

For more ideas visit www.letsgo.org.

Article 12: *Put Limits on Your Child's Juice Consumption*

Juice products labeled "-ade", "drink", or "punch" often contain 5% juice or less. The only difference between these "juices" and soda is that they're fortified with Vitamin C. Always try to choose whole fruits over juice. If you choose to serve juice, buy 100% juice.

Each day, juice should be limited to:

- 4-6 ounces for children 1-6 years
- 8-12 ounces for children 7-18 years
- Children 6 months and under should not be given juice

Make changes slowly by adding water to your child's juice. Try mixing seltzer with a small amount of juice. Suggest a glass of water or low-fat milk instead of juice.

For more ideas, visit www.letsgo.org.