

## Taking Care of Your Brain

In Module 4, your child learned about basic health practices. He or she learned that:

- Children should get 9 to 10 hours of sleep each night.
- Children should participate in at least 30 minutes of physical activity each day.
- Children should eat about 1,500 calories each day of foods from each of the food groups.

What your child may not have realized, however, is that following these basic rules is also a good way to keep the brain healthy. An important addition to this list is always wearing helmets while bike riding or roller-blading.

Try to reinforce these healthy habits at home. Discuss with your child why they are so important, and encourage your child to take responsibility for his or her body and brain.

This activity aligns with the standards "unifying concepts and processes" and "science in personal and social perspectives" from the National Science Education Standards, which reinforce the importance of following common health practices.

### Science at Home

With your child, go over his or her routine, including diet, exercise, and sleep. Discuss what you can do to make improvements, and then try to implement at least one of those suggestions. Some suggestions for healthy changes are:

- Having fruit for a snack instead of chips;
- Going outside and riding a bike or playing with friends, instead of sitting in front of the television; and
- Going to bed at a specific time each night.

After your child improves one habit, try to help him or her improve another one.



## What Does Your Child Think?

Suggest that your child draw a picture of two healthy things he or she does each day. The picture could show your child riding a bike with a helmet and eating a healthy snack.

### Additional Resources

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) — [www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov)  
301-443-1124

This Web site contains information about drug abuse and a section designed specifically for parents, teachers, and students. Publications and other materials are available free of charge.

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI) — [www.health.org](http://www.health.org)  
1-800-729-6686

NCADI is the world's largest resource for information and materials concerning substance abuse. Many free publications are available here.

Albee, S. *Watch Out for Banana Peels and Other Sesame Street Safety Tips*. New York, NY: Random House Children's Books, 2000. In this fun book, Officer Grover and Safety Deputy Elmo share important safety tips.

McGinty, A. *Staying Healthy: Sleep and Rest (The Library of Healthy Living)*. New York, NY: Franklin Watts, Incorporated, 1999. This book, written for young children, is a comprehensive overview of the importance of sleep.

McGinty, A. *Staying Healthy: Eating Right (The Library of Healthy Living)*. New York, NY: Franklin Watts, Incorporated, 1999. This book, written for young children, is a comprehensive overview of the importance of eating right.

