

Tips to Bring Your New Year's Resolutions Back on Track and Help Your Family Maintain a Healthy Weight

If you are like many people, January 1 marks the day that you and your family planned to begin eating better and to become more physically active. By now, though, you may have found that Valentine's Day and the winter doldrums are just a few of the many bumps on the road to a healthier new year.

If you are looking to jumpstart your New Year's resolutions, the **We Can!**[®] (**W**ays to **E**nhance **C**hildren's **A**ctivity & **N**utrition) program developed by the National Institutes of Health has some tips and tools for you and your family. The program provides parents, families, and communities with science-based activities and resources to help 8- to 13-year-olds stay at a healthy weight.

One of the first places to start is the grocery store. Knowing what to shop for can make bringing balanced nutrition home to your family *easier*. The program's *Go, Slow, Whoa* food chart can help you make healthier choices. By adding more "Go" foods—whole grain breads, fruits, vegetables, non-fat dairy products, and other foods that are low in calories and high in nutrients—to your grocery list, you can create family meals that are delicious and healthy. The chart can also help you identify "Slow" foods—those that are higher in fat and calories and should be eaten less often—and "Whoa" foods—those foods highest in fat and calories that should be eaten once in a while and in smaller portions.

Understanding the difference between portion size and serving size is another way to help your family maintain a healthy weight. A *portion* is the amount of a food or drink that you decide to consume, while a *serving* is a measured amount. The program offers tips to help you better understand the Nutrition Label on food packaging, which shows you how many servings are in a particular container so you can avoid having multiple servings in a single portion.

If the winter cold and snow have curtailed your plans to be more physically active, try moving indoors, including taking the stairs at work or walking briskly around the mall. Even shoveling snow can bring the family together for some physical activity. These are just a few of the tips you will find on the **We Can!** Web site.

You can learn more about the program and download free tip sheets and other tools at <http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov>. A mouse click or two could help you and your family find ways to get those good intentions back on track, and keep you moving forward to a healthier lifestyle through 2010, and beyond.