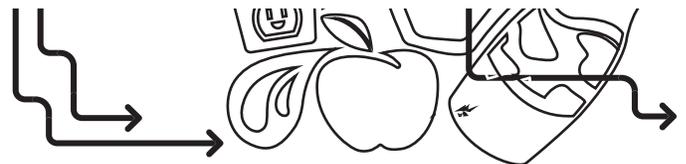




FOR ROLE MODELING

Most adults realize that what they say and how they act matters. It's easy to forget that what we eat and drink and how we talk about food are being watched. Parents and schools need to team up together to support each other in ways that help children develop healthy eating habits.

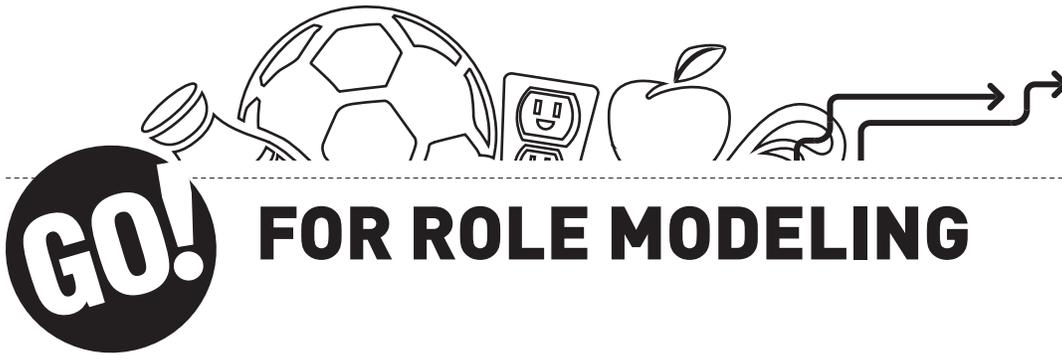
Research shows that parents and schools both play an important role in children's lives and eating habits. When adult role models eat more fruits and vegetables and drink milk, children are more likely to do that too. Adults have a right to make their own food and drink choices. However, it is important to look at the message that you are sending to children by what and how you eat. With the rise in child related health issues due to poor nutrition, the time to take action is now.



Ways you can be a role model for health

FOR SCHOOL STAFF:

- Use non-food items, not candy or dessert parties, for rewards. (See GO! Rewards handout.)
- Help plan parties with fun and healthy foods such as low fat dairy, fruits, vegetables and whole grains. (See GO! for Parties handout)
- Encourage positive self body image and self esteem. Don't talk about body weight or weight loss in front of students.
- Eat lunch (including healthy food options) with students when you can.
- Incorporate healthy nutrition messages into core lessons when possible. (e.g. check the Michigan Team Nutrition page for lists of books with positive nutrition messages for grades K-2)
- Drink water in front of your students. Conceal other drinks (such as coffee or soda) in a non-clear container.

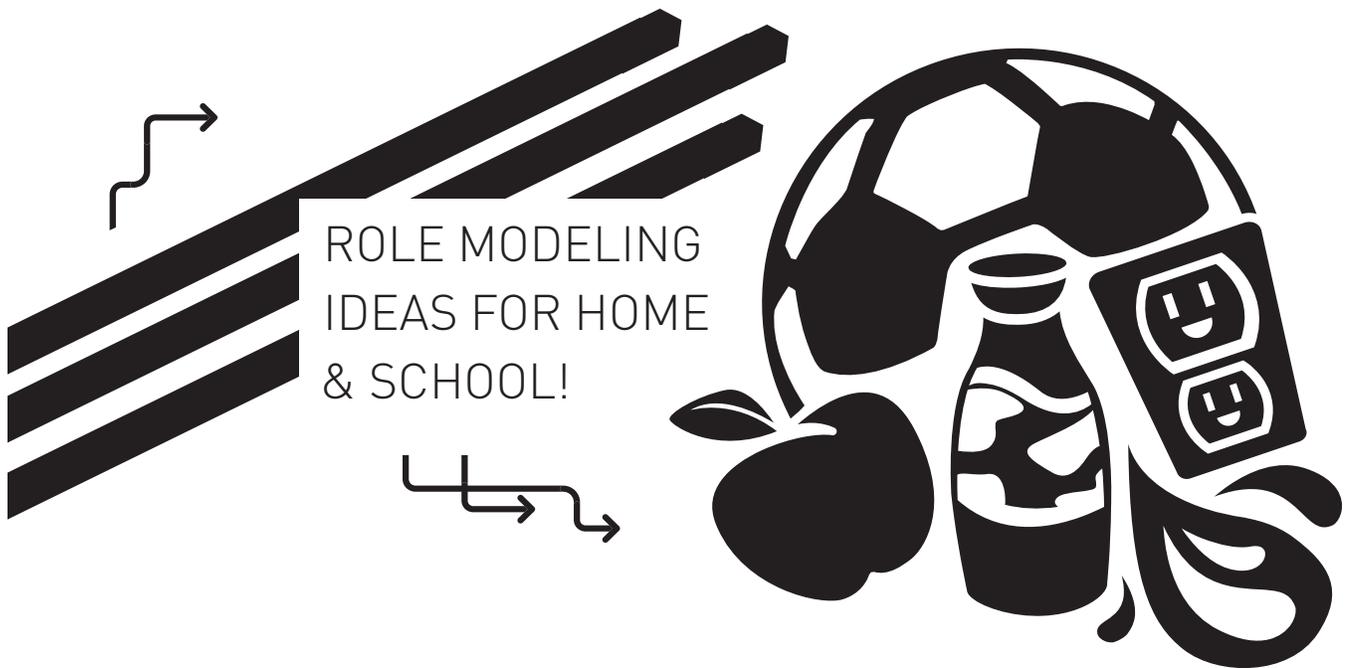


FOR ROLE MODELING

Ways you can be a role model for health

FOR FAMILIES:

- Don't skip meals—especially breakfast.
- Enjoy meals together. Family meals are known to improve food intake, grades and self esteem.
- Help plan meals together. Teach the importance of eating a variety of healthy foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low fat dairy. Teach kids to fill half of their plate with fruits and vegetables.
- Drink water and milk in front of your children. Children with milk-drinking families are more likely to drink milk themselves.
- Use non-food items for rewards such as family game time, a bike ride in the park, etc. (See GO! For Rewards families handout)
- Cook together.
- Talk positively about healthy food and drink choices.
- Don't talk about body weight or weight loss in front of children.



ADAPTED FROM Be a Healthy Eating Role Model, Dairy Council of California; Teachers Walking the Walk, North Carolina Division of Public Health. http://www.opi.mt.gov/Pdf/SchoolFood/WellnessSampleProced_StudentWellness.pdf

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