Parents play a major role in supporting health behaviours and providing children with opportunities for healthy, active living. In Canada, between 1979 and 2004, rates of obesity in children more than doubled. Healthy eating is important for promoting and maintaining healthy weights.

This infographic presents results from a telephone survey of 3,206 parents living in Ontario, conducted between February and March, 2015. All results are parent-reported. Indicators used to measure healthy eating include consumption of saturated and trans fats, sugary beverages, and fruits and vegetables.

HOW ARE PARENTS DOING?

34% Eat meals from fast-food restaurants with child
84% Eat meals as a family away from the TV
86% Encourage child to help choose and prepare food
88% Serve raw fruits and vegetables for snacks between meals
98% Encourage child to eat breakfast

AGE AND HEALTHY EATING

As children get older, the proportion meeting guidelines for fruit and vegetable consumption decreases. Moreover, as children age, they may be more likely to skip breakfast and less likely to participate in family dinners. Barriers to children’s fruit and vegetable consumption include:

- Adolescent autonomy
  Children’s increasing independence with age
- Limited availability
  Cost may limit amount of fruits and vegetables in the home
- Limited accessibility
  Fruits and vegetables may not be convenient for child to access

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

E.A.T. HEALTHY!

Eat fruits and vegetables
Away from the TV and other screens
Together as a family

EAT TOGETHER AND AWAY FROM SCREENS

Children and adolescents who often have dinner together with family members tend to consume more healthy foods. However, when families often eat together in front of the TV, children tend to consume more unhealthy foods and sodas, and fewer fruits and vegetables.