

Why do kids eat healthful food? Perceived benefits of and barriers to healthful eating and physical activity among children and adolescents.

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Why do kids eat healthful food? Perceived benefits of and barriers to healthful eating and physical activity among children and adolescents [â†† â††â†† â~...](#)

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Abstract

The goal was to have children and adolescents identify and rank the major perceived benefits of and barriers to healthful eating and physical activity and to suggest strategies for overcoming barriers. Semistructured, in-depth focus groups were undertaken using standardized questions and prompts. Students in grades 2 through 11 (ages 7 through 17; N=213) from 34 randomly selected schools participated in 38 focus groups. Major benefits of healthful eating included improvements to cognitive and physical performance, fitness, endurance, psychological benefits, physical sensation (feeling good physically) and production of energy. Barriers included convenience, taste, and social

physically), and production of energy. Barriers included convenience, taste, and social factors. Benefits of physical activity included social benefits, enhancement of psychological status, physical sensation, and sports performance. Barriers included a preference for indoor activities, lack of energy and motivation, time constraints, and social factors. Suggested strategies for overcoming barriers included support from parents and school staff, better planning, time management, self-motivation, education, restructuring the physical environment, and greater variety of physical activities. *J Am Diet Assoc.* 2003;103:497-501.



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