



2022 - 2023 Youth Survey Fact Sheet

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/data/youth-survey

* Insights



Nearly all students reported eating some fruits or vegetables in the previous week, and most did not drink sugary drinks daily in the same period.



69%

of students **did not consume sugary drinks** on a daily basis (and 66% of 6th grade students)



97%

of students **ate some fruits or vegetables** in the past week (and 98% of 6th grade students)



63%

of those **who used unhealthy weight loss methods also felt sad** or hopeless for two or more weeks in a row (vs. 25% who did not use unhealthy weight loss methods)

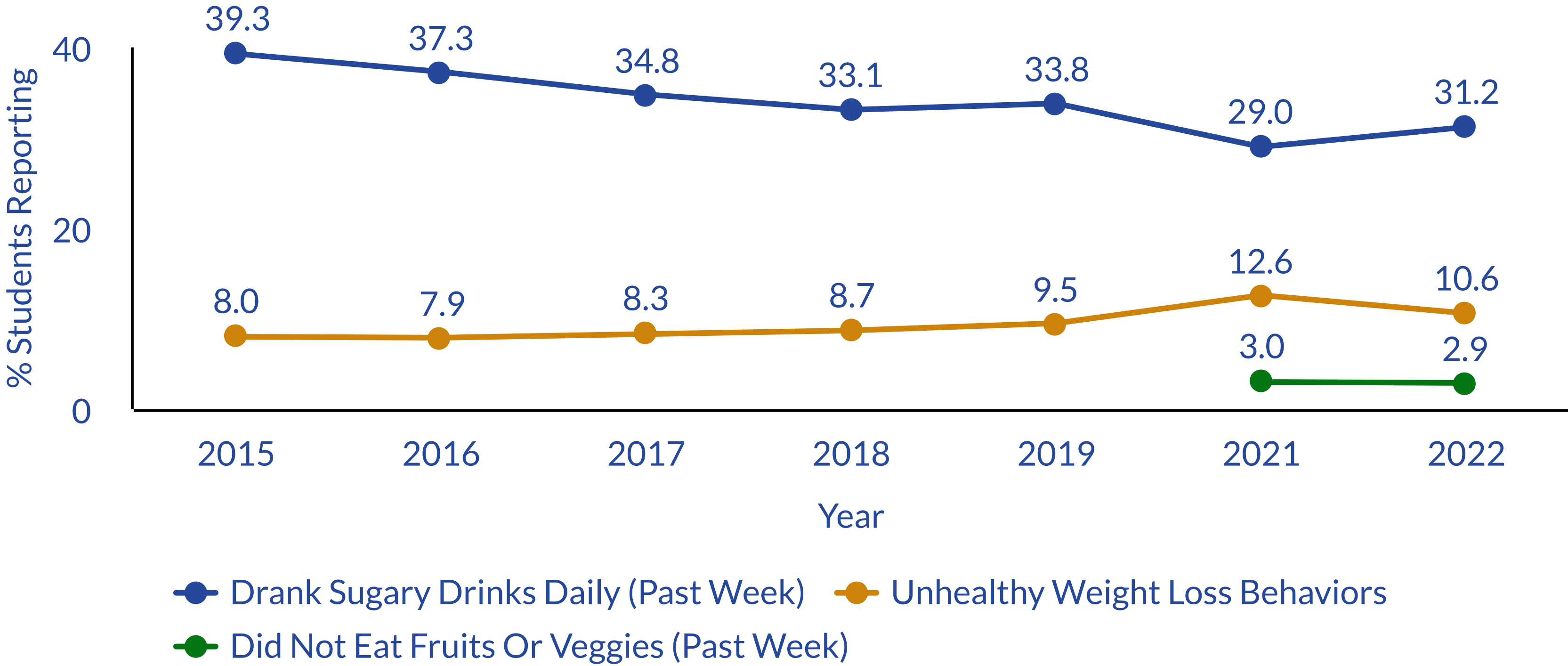


22%

of those **who used unhealthy weight loss methods also reported being bullied** in school in the past year (vs. 8% who did not use unhealthy weight loss methods)

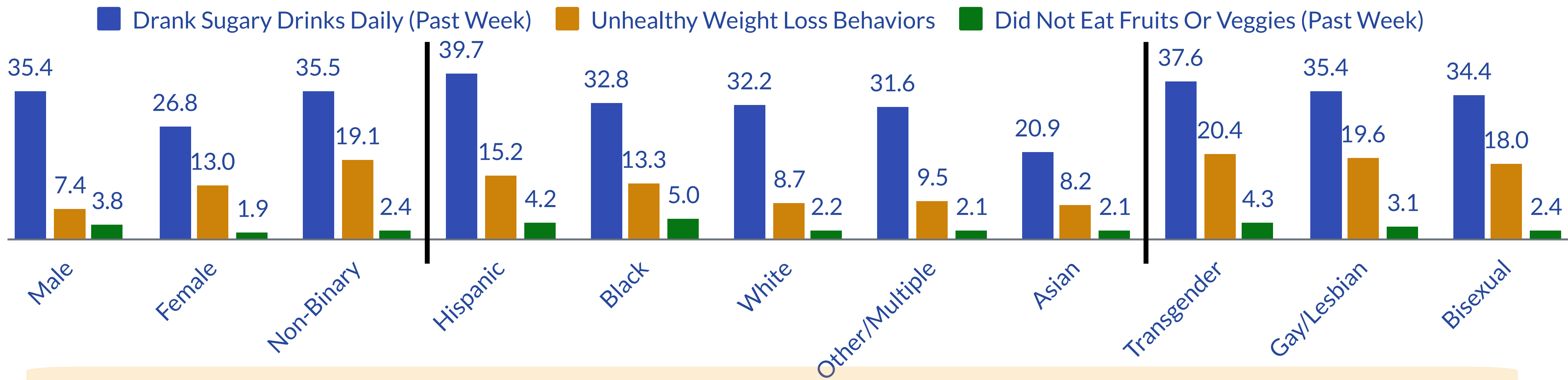
1 Trends

Since 2015, the share of those who consumed sugary drinks daily has decreased. However, the rate of unhealthy weight loss behaviors has risen from 8.0 to 10.6 (with a high of 12.6 in 2021). Fruit and vegetable intake in 2022 was similar to the previous year.



2 Differences by Demographic Factors

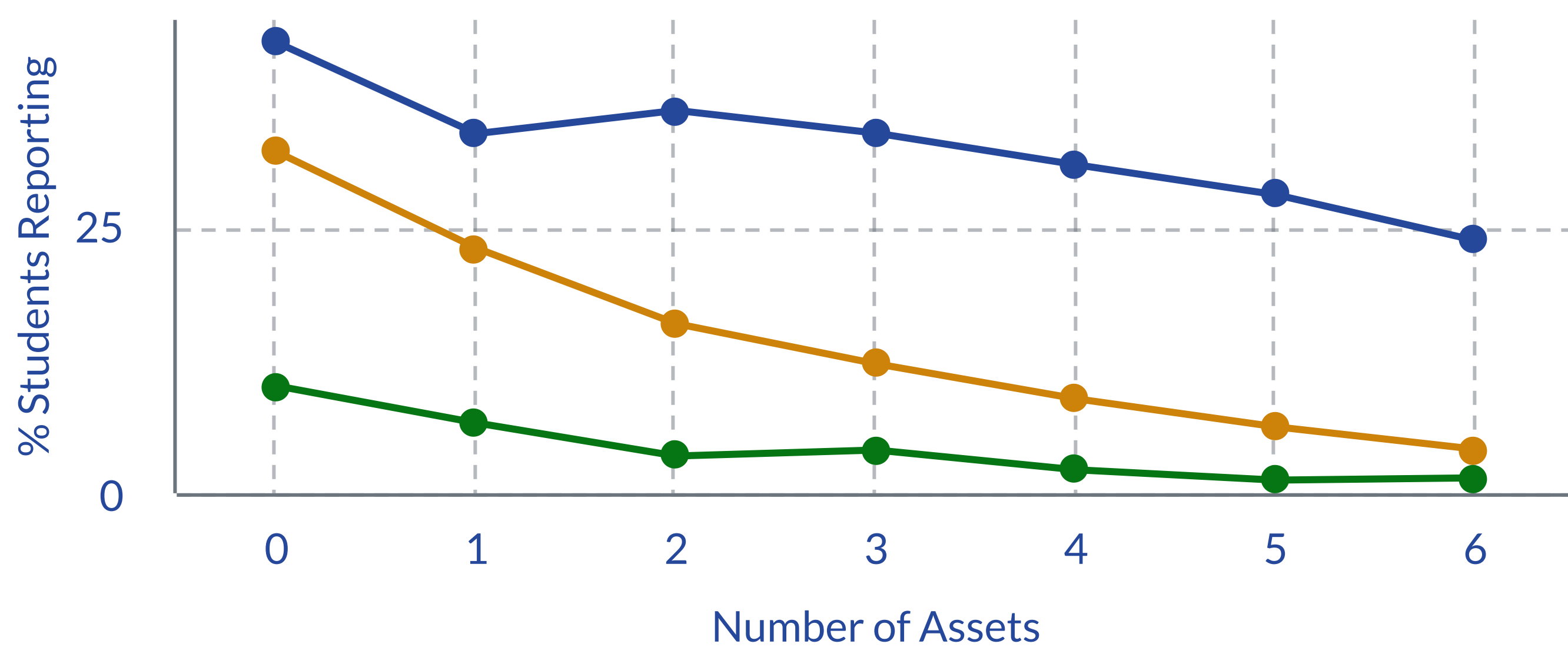
Sugary drink consumption was higher among male, Hispanic and LGBT students. Unhealthy weight loss behaviors were more common among Hispanic, Black/African American, female, and LGBT students.



For comparison: Heterosexual: Drank sugary drinks- 30.9%, Unhealthy weight loss- 8.8%, Did not eat fruits or veggies - 2.8% ; Non-transgender: Drank sugary drinks- 30.9%, Unhealthy weight loss- 10.0%, Did not eat fruits or veggies -2.7%.

*All data are self-reported and are from the 2022 - 2023 Youth Survey for 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students, unless otherwise noted. The survey was not administered in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Questions on the frequency of eating fruits and vegetables were modified in 2021. Unhealthy weight loss behaviors include vomiting, taking laxatives, taking diet pills or liquids without a doctor's advice, and going without eating in the last 24 hours. Sugary drinks include soda or pop, energy drinks, and other sweetened beverages.

3 Three to Succeed



- Drank Sugary Drinks Daily (Past Week)
- Unhealthy Weight Loss Behaviors
- Did Not Eat Fruits or Veggies (Past Week)

Data shows that having at least three of the six protective factors, or assets, reduces the likelihood of engaging in risky behaviors and builds personal resilience among the youth:

- Accepting responsibility for one's actions
- Having teachers recognize good work
- Participating in extracurricular activities
- Performing community service
- Having community adults to talk to
- Having parents available for help

Be an asset in a young person's life and help build a stronger, more positive community for all.

4 What Can We Do?

Make Healthy Food Choices

- Try to **eat a balanced diet** consisting of fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains.
- **Limit sugary drinks and processed foods.**
- **Compare nutrition labels** and choose foods that are lower in fat and calories such as fat-free and low-fat milk products and lean meats and fish.
- Know how much is in a serving size of the food you eat and teach kids how to **measure food servings.**
- In restaurants, eat smaller portions, choose foods lower in fat and **choose healthy substitutions.**
- **Avoid supersizes** of drinks, as calories come from what you drink as well as what you eat.
- **Engage kids** in menu planning and cooking and experiment with new and different fruits and vegetables.

Watch for Signs of Unhealthy Weight Loss Behaviors

- **Educate yourself** on eating disorders.
- **Look for changes in behavior around food such as:** often says they are not hungry; skips meals (or eats unusually small portions); stops eating food they used to enjoy; eating a lot of food that seems out of control; talks a lot about weight, food, calories, or dieting; goes to the bathroom right after meals.
- **Notice changes in activities such as:** exercises all the time, even when sick/injured; stops doing regular activities, spends more time alone; believes they are too big; and asks often how they look.
- **Listen openly** and talk with your child in a calm and nonjudgmental manner.
- **Be a good role model** and do not engage in "fat talk" about yourself.
- **Seek professional help** if you are concerned and notice any of these signs.

5 For Help & More Information

Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board
bit.ly/FairfaxCSB
Entry & Referral
703-383-8500
24-Hr Emergency Services
703-573-5679

Fairfax County Public Schools Food and Nutrition Services
<http://bit.ly/FCPSfood>
703-813-4800

Fairfax County Public Schools Intervention and Prevention Services
bit.ly/FCPSspecialsvcs
571-423-4020

Fairfax County Health Department
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health
703-246-2411

- **Fairfax Food Council:** www.fairfaxcounty.gov/food-council/
- **MyPlate | USDA:** <https://www.myplate.gov/>
- **Cooking Matters:** <https://cookingmatters.org/>
- **National Institute of Health:** <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/wecan/>
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:** <https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/>

- **Partnership for a Healthier America:** <https://www.ahealthieramerica.org/>
- **Academy for Eating Disorders:** <https://www.aedweb.org/home>
- **FEAST:** <https://www.feast-ed.org/>
- **Eating Disorders | FCPS:** <https://www.fcps.edu/node/37440>
- **National Eating Disorders Association:** <https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/>