

Pandemic Presents Opportunity for 5-2-1-0

Did you know that Missoula is one of 450 cities, towns and counties nationwide that are home to a Let's Move! Initiative? What started as a nationwide effort launched by First Lady Michelle Obama has become a daily recipe for health that we use here in Missoula, known as 5-2-1-0. Eat 5 fruits or veggies a day, keep fun screen time to 2 hours or less, play hard for 1 hour and aim for 0 sugary drinks.

5: Covid has changed the landscape for LM!M, but it's presented opportunities, too. All schools operating the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program may now offer free school meals to *all students* for the entire 2021-22 school year. Studies show that kids who eat school meals get more fruit and vegetables (*Produce for Better Health Foundation, 2021*).

2: Missoula is lucky to be home to some amazing new resources that provide alternatives to screen time. Case in point: have you been to the new library yet?? *Wow*. The Missoula Public Library partners with SpectrUM, Families First, Missoula Community Access Television and UM Living Lab as part of a prestigious grant from the National Institutes of Health. Then there's the new Lowell School Westside Neighborhood Center. It's a community-based school and neighborhood center that supports student success while investing in the health and vitality of the neighborhood. It was formed through a joint use agreement between the City of Missoula and the Missoula County Public Schools. We are home a wildly diverse group of community partners offering screen-free opportunities!

1: Many of us are working from home, which gives us more flexibility in our schedules to exercise. How many walks have you taken this past year and a half, compared to usual? How many trips to a park? A river or bike trail? These are safe ways to socialize during Covid, which is all the more reason to get out there.

0: Staying hydrated can help the body fight off illness. Increasing the amount of water you drink can let your body process nutrients more efficiently, which is key to a robust immune system. If you don't normally drink lots of water, try increasing your water intake gradually. Keeping a pitcher of cold water in the fridge is a good option. Or try seltzer water with cucumber or fruit slices in it.

Let's Move! Missoula (LM!M) builds projects and partnerships that provide access to physical activity and quality nutrition to all residents, no matter where they live, work, play or learn, all while building social cohesion. The initiative is operated in partnership between the Missoula City-County Health Department and United Way. If you'd like more info on LM!M and how to get involved, visit our website at www.5210letsmovemissoula.org and subscribe. Thank you!

Peggy Schmidt, 5-2-1-0 Let's Move! Missoula Coordinator, Missoula City-County Health Department